



FREE

Santa Monica Daily Press

April 16-17, 2005

A newspaper with issues

Volume 4, Issue 133

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

34 38 42 43 45
Meganumber: 19
Jackpot: \$16 Million

FANTASY 5

9 20 22 27 33

DAILY 3

Daytime: 5 8 0
Evening: 6 4 0

DAILY DERBY

1st: 08 Gorgeous George
2nd: 04 Big Ben
3rd: 06 Whirl Win

RACE TIME: 1:45.67

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ At the annual Muslim "stone the devil" ritual near Mecca in January, clerics had feared a repeat of 2004, when more than 250 people were trampled to death (among the 2 million in attendance), but fatalities dropped to the average level this year (just three, according to one report) after larger targets were installed so that participants did not have to get so close to stone them. On the other hand, in the same week, an annual Hindu goddess-worship ritual in Maharashtra state in India resulted in as many as 300 deaths when a fire broke out in a roadside stall near the Mandhar Devi temple, provoking a stampede.

■ News of the Weird last reported on "furies" in 2001, after 400 of them gathered at a convention in Chicago, but the TV show "CSI" recently featured a similar convention as backdrop for a show, and the number of their practitioners has grown, with 1,700 attending "FurCon" in January in San Jose, Calif., for a weekend of dressing as animals, assuming animal personalities, petting and scratching each other, and even, after hours, engaging in what one called "cross-species mating." An estimated 300 were in full-body makeup (with lions, tigers and foxes popular) while most others wore partial outfits (a tail or perhaps whiskers or ears).

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Fighting at Samohi prompts lockdown

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

SAMOHİ — A lunchtime melee involving dozens of students prompted the campus here to go into lockdown, alarming parents who received anxious phone calls from their children relegated to their classrooms.

School officials acknowledged they were aware an altercation may have been brewing between students late in the morning at Santa Monica High School. They responded quickly when at least six fights broke out on the campus during the lunch hour. The Santa Monica Police were called to the scene at 12:44 p.m. to help secure the campus after a message was broadcast announcing students were to return to their classrooms for a lockdown.

John Deasy, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District superintendent, said 30 to 40 students stopped fighting, but wouldn't return to class.

"This was not a lockdown that occurred, say, because there was a shooting on campus," Deasy said. "Samohi officials erred on the side

See **SCHOOL FIGHTS**, page 6



Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II/Daily Press

A Santa Monica High School student is escorted away shortly after a series of fights broke out on campus around lunchtime. No serious injuries were reported and police had yet to determine if the melee was gang or racially motivated.

Gay bar's lights to dim

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

SM CANYON — It's a last chance to have cocktails with the boys, as the oldest standing gay bar in Santa Monica celebrates its final hurrah this weekend.

The Friendship, tucked away at 112 West Channel Rd. in the Santa Monica Canyon, is throwing its "Last Voyage Party" on Sunday. The bar's lease is up and the landlord wants market value for the site, a price the owner's not going to pay, according to Smokey Hammond, 51, who has bartended at Friendship for 18 years.

Hammond said Friendship, which opened its doors in 1938, was patronized by servicemen during World War II and for years had a mixed clientele, all the while attracting local gays who hung out at Will Rogers Beach and lived in Santa Monica.

"There used to be five gay bars around here," Hammond said. "There were four on Main Street. Santa Monica was popular with the boys, but Friendship is the only one left. Everyone comes here."

Hammond said increasing rents have forced the gay bars out, but

See **FRIENDSHIP**, page 8

Governor looks to Penny Lane

By Daily Press staff

Delia Isabel Soto, of Santa Monica, has been appointed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to deputy director of communications and legislation for the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Soto has served as the marketing and development director for Penny Lane Centers from 2001 to 2004. Penny Lane's mission is to help abused and neglected children that cares for

See **SOTO**, page 8



Ryan Hyatt/Daily Press

Smokey Hammond, a bartender at the Friendship, struggles with saying good-bye to the longtime Santa Monica staple.

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★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★★-Average ★★-So-so ★-Difficult



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Be smart — handle errands and other domestic responsibilities. Clearing out time to enjoy the special people in your life is always important. Many want your attention. You hear news when allowing more happiness in the door. Tonight: Act like it's Saturday night.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20))

★★★ You might be on cruise control this morning, not stopping to find out details and others' plans. Slow down. By late afternoon, schedule time for some nibbles and conversation with family and/or friends. Tonight: You don't have to go far.)



GEMINI (May 21-June 20))

★★★ Spending money might be necessary. Don't buck the trend or go hog-wild. You might ultimately cause yourself a problem. Relax and go with the flow. Use your gift for words, and caring exchanges will happen. Tonight: Favorite people — fun talk and great times.)



CANCER (June 21-July 22))

★★★★ Visualize and create more through chatting with friends. Many different ideas appear and add to your happiness. Don't negate any possibilities. An expenditure might feel a bit extreme but does prove its worth. Tonight: Dinner out.)



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22))

★★★★★ You know the beginning and the end of a saga that plays out in your life today. Jump right in and enjoy yourself. The less you worry, the better the end results. Throw yourself into whatever you do. Do nothing halfway, my dear Lion. Tonight: You are the cat's meow.)



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22))

★★★ Use the daylight hours for what you deem important. You have been so energetic lately that you collapse quite quickly late this afternoon. Make it OK to be a couch potato. Tonight: Put out the "leave me alone" sign.)



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22))

★★★★ You know what you want, but achieving this goal will take responsibility and concentration. The good news is, you achieve results early on, leaving some extra time for frolicking and getting together with friends. Tonight: Go for the party.)



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21))

★★★★ What starts out as an adventure and escape could once more toss you into the limelight. Right now you don't want to be in the public eye. Be willing to accept responsibility as a pacesetter. Others admire you. Tonight: A force to be dealt with.)



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21))

★★★★★ Life offers you a carousel of opportunities if you are willing to take them. Someone you adore happily clears his or her day in order to spend quality time with you. Adventure happens if you let go of your need to control. Tonight: Venture out to a new restaurant.)



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19))

★★★★★ Others have ideas and the energy to follow them through. Knowing this fact, don't feel the need to push yourself if you don't want to. Socialize but do not accept any more responsibilities. Tonight: Love knocks on many Goats' doors.)



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18))

★★★ Whether going to the gym or taking up some different project, your vivaciousness comes through. Complete your to-do list as quickly as possible. There are so many invitations heading in your direction. Tonight: Say "yes.")



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20))

★★★★ You might not be able to settle down, and maybe that's all right. In fact, doing what you love feeds your spirit, body and mind. Why not? Use your imagination to hurdle over any hassle that might knock on your door. Tonight: Go until you are too tired.



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1427 Third Street Promenade, Ste. #202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • www.smdp.com

PUBLISHER

Ross Furukawa ross@smdp.com

EDITOR

Carolyn Sackariason sack@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER

Ryan Hyatt ryanh@smdp.com

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER

Rübbie P. Piubeni rob@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Rob Schwenker ...schwenker@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Stewart O'Dell stewarto@smdp.com

TRAFFIC MANAGER

Connie Sommerville connie@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II alex@smdp.com

CLASSIFIED SALES MANAGER

Mirella Reyes mirella@smdp.com

NIGHT EDITOR

Lori Luechtefeld lori@smdp.com

NIGHT EDITOR

Michael Tittinger somechum@smdp.com

CIRCULATION

Keith Wyatt keith@smdp.com

CIRCULATION

Glenn Bolan glenn@smdp.com

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Dave Danforth dave@smdp.com

MASCOT

Maya Furukawa maya@smdp.com

LOCAL



Dough-re-me



Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II/Daily Press
Happy lunchgoers take advantage of a free all-you-can-eat pizza bar at Shakey's Pizza, 3033 Santa Monica Blvd., on Friday, or tax day, when most people could use some extra dough.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

The hills are alive

By Daily Press staff

A local church is alive with the sound of music. St. Monica High School and its performing arts association invite the community to an evening of theater with its spring musical, "The Sound of Music." One of the most popular musicals of all time, the play showcases the talents of the student performers at St. Monica High School.

"I know I say this every year, but it's true — St. Monica's student performers are just tremendous," said Monsignor Lloyd Torgerson. "The caliber of our students and our performing arts program is simply the best."

All performances will be at St. Monica's Cantwell Auditorium and begin promptly at 8 p.m. Performance dates are: Saturday, April 16, Friday, April 22, and Saturday, April 23, with a special 2:30 p.m. matinee on Sunday, April 17.

Tickets prices:

- Reserved seating: \$15
- Adults: \$10
- Students and seniors: \$5

Tickets can be purchased in advance at the high school during regular school hours or at the door a half hour before the performance. For additional information visit, www.stmonicahs.org/academics/performingarts.



Photo Courtesy

(Left to right): Marissa Laurance, Samira Soroory and Kristen Kelley perform in the 'Sound of Music' at St. Monica Church.



SURF REPORT

We have some increasing SW on tap this weekend. Wind swell and onshore flow increase during the first part of the week. On Saturday, the NW wind swell is expected to back down towards waist-high as the SW ground swell increases towards waist-to-chest. Sunday is when our next SW swell is due. Size on this one is expected to reach chest- to head-high at breaks with good SW'erly exposure.

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**Today the
water is:**

55°

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	11:37	0.5	11:42	3.1	3:05	4.1	7:25	3.7
SUNDAY	N/A	N/A	12:26	0.3	4:50	4.1	7:34	3.9
MONDAY	12:35	2.6	1:01	0.2	5:59	4.2	7:47	4.1
TUESDAY	1:12	2.0	1:30	1.0	6:49	4.4	8:01	4.1
WEDNESDAY	1:45	1.5	1:54	0.2	7:31	4.6	8:17	4.8
THURSDAY	2:11	0.9	2:17	0.4	8:10	4.6	8:35	5.2
FRIDAY	2:37	1.2	2:40	0.7	8:25	4.4	8:50	5.3

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THE Q-LINE RESPONSES ARE IN!

**WE HAVE THE QUESTIONS.
YOU HAVE THE ANSWERS.
CHECK OUT THIS WEEK'S Q-LINE
RESPONSES ON PAGE 4**

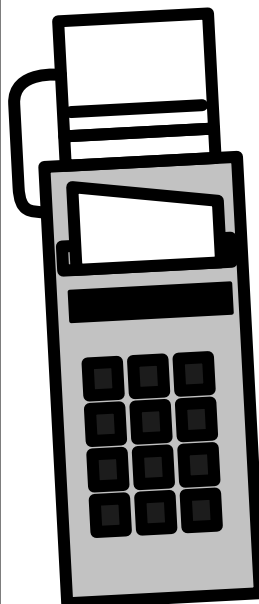


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The Q Line

GIVE THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT

This past week, Q-line asked:
"What's on your mind? What is the biggest issue facing Santa Monica and how should it be handled?"

Here are your responses:

© "The biggest issue facing Santa Monica is homelessness and the best way to address the issue in town is to use the area which was known as the Santa Monica Police Department building. Demolish it, and put all the regional programs that city staff recommends in their backyard, 10 stories tall. Take all the regional programs away from our schools, all of our senior buildings — which they put these regional programs next to — and out of the Pico neighborhood. And put it behind City Hall so all the wonderful city staff that recommend these programs can enjoy giving community services and community assistance directly to the homeless. As a matter of fact, on the first floor they could have Step Up on Second Street catering firm and cafeteria to help feed the city staff — I think it would be a marvelous solution to the problem of homelessness."

© "Is it all quiet around the city? I don't think so, ambulances and paramedics are roaring around all day long, early and late, picking up assorted bums with assorted problems. These vagrants and homeless and crazies still clutter our streets and parks and make life unbearable for the tax-paying citizens. Shoplifting in our local stores is at an all-time high, making it very difficult and dangerous for our shop and market people. The traffic and parking mess simmers along with its horrible daily toll on drivers and pedestrians. How should this issue be handled? Get rid of the mayor and current City Council."

© "As a daily reader of the Santa Monica Daily Press, I find this week's question to be redundant so I will not comment on the question directly. However, I will predict the comments that will be submitted by other readers as follows: Traffic congestion, pollution, overcrowding, homelessness, homelessness feeding in the park, Heal the Bay, fair working wages, pro-rent control, and anti-rent control, tenant harassment, automobile gas prices, airport noise, parking woes, Santa Monica school district, dirty sidewalks, Third Street Promenade problems, Santa Monica Place demolition, and no to high-rise buildings. I could go on and on and on, but I will not."

© "Yes, I think in this world-renowned town of Santa Monica we should have more pedestrian friendly restaurants and businesses on the sidewalk, like in Europe. All right? And less homeless people — more programs to get the homeless off of the street also."

© "What's on my mind is "The Simpsons" and how it relates to Santa Monica: The cops of Santa Monica are a lot more efficient and honest than Chief Wiggum in the Springfield police, but the bums are a lot worse than Barney, the town drunk in Springfield. It seems

like we've got Homer Simpson running the traffic in Santa Monica, because those idiots — whoever is doing it — are a bunch of incompetents like Homer Simpson. And as far as the City Council is concerned, well we've got a bunch of buffoons like Krusty the Clown. At least Krusty the clown is funny."

© "The quality of life, the dismal failure of the City Council to correct its own problems: Traffic, parking, bums, low-income housing — which is just another form of bum-hood, people who are lazy and refuse to work out their own problems, and the majority of who aren't even from Santa Monica, but it's a great voting block — the sprawl of condominiums, the excessive spending by City Hall, a police department building that's twice its original cost; \$70 million for a library that looks like a prison; \$120 million for a Rand property which is more low-income housing, and business and retail stores of dubious quality. Santa Monica Place — I went to a meeting, what a dog and pony show that was, the developers are salivating to build condos and low-income housing. The noise in this town from motorcycles, cars, stereos, helicopters — try sitting at the beach when they fly overhead. The jets at the airport — our leaders have managed to do something I never thought I would see in Santa Monica, and that is to take a beautiful and simple beach town and turn it into an ugly mini-East Coast metropolis with its intended socialistic value and liberal progressive ideas and people."

© "The towering issue, of course to me, is the homeless one. I think the government needs to pass less laws restricting the freedom of the non-homeless, and pass more laws restricting the freedom of the homeless who are such eyesores in this town and who walk up and down the streets and alleyways going through the trash and screaming and yelling at all hours of the night. Again, the word has to get out that this is not a homeless friendly place to be. A corner has to be turned and the overall message has to change. The government has to find other things to make themselves feel good other than helping the poor and bringing them all here."

© "The biggest issue is the city's lack of concern about what the residents want. We do not want to be medicated with the toxic fluoridation substance containing arsenic and led in our water supply. We do not want to be bombarded by microwaves from an antenna tower. We do not want the shopping center torn down — disrupting that area for years, and winding up with more congestion, traffic and tall towers. We want to see real solutions to the homeless and gang problems."

OPINION

It's a read-letter day for responsive readers



MODERN TIMES

BY LLOYD GARVER

I'm not the only one who's been spouting off on all kinds of topics lately. Now it's time for me to share some of the readers' responses I've gotten to recent columns.

In A POLITICAL DEAD DUCK, I wondered why the public seems to think it's important for a presidential candidate to be a hunter:

INDCA: "The recent campaign with Bush and Kerry looking like dopes in hunting attire really turned me off."

JIM: "For me, hunting is a combination of game management and restoration, physical and mental exercise, a method of putting high-quality meat on the table, and a way of keeping in practice for when the Ralph Reed robots decide to make liberal agnostics extinct."

In INTOLERANCE, A FAMILY VALUE? I wrote about the brouhaha regarding the alleged homosexuality of a cartoon character named Spongebob Squarepants. One of my points was that, as in that famous "South Pacific" song, children don't hate others automatically. "They have to be taught to hate."

MICHAEL: "A great op/ed piece. Your comment that children treat all sorts of different people the same can be proven by me. I am in a wheelchair and when I taught Sunday school, kids were just as likely to pull a prank on me as on my bipedal colleagues. Of course, Mr. Dobson may think I'm just part of the 'wheelchair mafia.'"

CAREY: "There is definitely an agenda here ... Sponges are hermaphrodites. Is that a strange coincidence? Meaningless? Paranoid? Again, don't be naïve. The creators of such things are among the most creative people in the world. And creative people have always worked subtle messages (usually cultural agendas) into their work."

SARA: "The world would be a horrible place indeed if we were all the same."

DAVE: "Whatever happened to the day that slimy news reporters had to bother to check their facts before publishing their garbage?"

TERESA: "You hit it right on the button! The very people who parade around as 'Christians' with 'Moral Values' seem to be the ones so far removed from anything Christ ever taught."

TOM: "It's a wonder I remained heterosexual after all those years of watching Batman and Robin, Red Rider and Little Beaver, Cisco Kid and Pancho, Wild Bill Hickock and Jingles, etc., etc."

In WHY MARRY SCOTT PETERSON? I discussed the phenomenon of

women marrying condemned murderers.

STUARTAND: "These women are out of their minds!"

OLEN: "He will wind up free, wealthy, and happily married if there is any justice in the world."

When JESSICA, a high school student, wrote: "Could someone off the street go in and visit him on his visiting days?" I suggested that she talk to her parents or teachers.

In RIP VAN GARVER, I speculated that someone who just woke up after 30 years would be shocked by what's going on, especially in terms of undoing so many things that were accomplished in the '60s and '70s.

KAREN: "You are so right on!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

BABE: "You are so blind and it is so sad ... Maybe liberalism is a mental disorder."

In IS GRANDMA UNAMERICAN? I wrote about the Bush administration deciding to take on the AARP because of their disagreements over Social Security.

JOANNA: "I think it's about time the Gray Panthers movement is resurrected! We're old and proud! We're strong and loud! We shall overcome!"

JOY: "Thank you for the excellent article. I am now going to re-join AARP!"

BRAGG: "Your article is coming at it from the mean ole Republican slant. I could also write an opinion and come down on the mean ole Geritol set ... Let's start with selfishness. Imagine the possibilities."

WILLIAM: Your article is just another example of an inflammatory media not covering the real issue and then summarizing with smears of the Republicans."

In NON-FOOD NONSENSE, I wrote about a fancy restaurant in Chicago that sells food made of paper.

DAVID: I thought that this food-flavored paper idea sounded good, so I printed out your article and tried to eat it. Yuck. However, I probably had more fiber in that mouthful of paper than I get in a week of normal food."

EDWARD: "Edible paper is probably a better option than what we have grown accustomed to from so many American eateries."

So, if you want to see your opinion here in print, just write in to me — the guy who's "slimy," "smearing" and "sad." Or you can write to me — the guy who's "right on," "excellent" and "hits it right on the button."

(Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from "Sesame Street" to "Family Ties" to "Frasier." He also has read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes the "Modern Times" column for CBSnews.com's opinion page and can be reached at smdp@lloydgarvermoderntimes.com.)

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff.

Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

COMMENTARY



GUEST COMMENTARY BY DIANA HULL, PH.D.

A lack of control by environmentalists is their own undoing

This weekend, Earth Day comes to the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica, but what's strikingly different about this Earth Day from the first one 35 years ago is the absence of discussion on the population connection to environmental sustainability.

At Earth Day in 1970, the Sierra Club vowed to support policy to "bring about the stabilization of the population first in the United States and then of the world." This followed the group's prior year call "to achieve a stable population no later than the year 1990."

It's staggering to see how far we've veered from that enlightened vision of the early conservation movement when "Zero Population Growth" bumper stickers were ubiquitous and when every environmental problem was seen as a population problem. Since then, the Earth's population has grown from 3.7 billion to 6.4 billion, while the U.S. population of 203 million in 1970 is now nearing the 300 million mark. And here in California, the population has nearly doubled in that time period to 37 million — and still climbing — from 20 million. California's growth rate now is higher than that of India's.

It's not just the sheer numbers of humanity, however, that cause alarm. As a country, we consume resources at a much greater rate than the rest of the world. And California, with its already horrendous traffic problem, is the worst place in the nation to increase population.

In recent years, the influential Sierra Club, 750,000 members strong, has struggled with the population issue to the point of ugly internecine war that has not helped move the discussion forward. Yet as Gaylord Nelson, the founder of Earth Day, said in 2001, "It's phony to say 'I'm for the environment but not for limiting immigration.' It's just a fact that we can't take all the people who want to come here."

Another example of the muzzling of intelligent discussion is the denial of booth space for Californians for Population Stabilization (CAPS) at the Earth Day event in Santa Monica. For

two consecutive years, CAPS was summarily rejected and given no chance to appeal by Earth Day LA organizer Jim Stewart, who said CAPS' "approach to the issue is not consistent with the people and environment-friendly theme of Earth Day." This is an attitude that negates much of the good work done by environmental groups, because the linkage to population growth is curiously absent.

The reality is that U.S. fertility rates have been at or below replacement rates since the early 1970s, so the population growth drivers in the country, and especially in California, are immigration and births to immigrants. But to some — erroneous as the stance may be — discussing immigration levels in terms of the overpopulation issue is tantamount to racism.

The consequences of unchecked population growth are many — from impacts on air quality, loss of open space and agricultural lands, increased traffic congestion, further advancing urban sprawl, and water and energy shortages. California has lost 99 percent of its native grasslands and more than 90 percent of coastal wetlands. At least 73 plants and animals have become extinct in the state, and more than 150 animals and 280 plants are listed as endangered, threatened or rare, while humans — the most invasive species of all — gain ground in California at the rate of an additional 600,000 people annually. It's undeniable: At the root of all environmental issues is overpopulation.

We will never prevent environmental degradation until we stabilize population, and we will never stabilize population until we have civil discourse on the issue of limits to growth. Key to that is having a major voice on population limitation with a seat at the table whenever environmental issues are under discussion.

(Diana Hull is the president of Californians for Population Stabilization (www.capsweb.org). The Santa Barbara-based nonprofit supports policies that encourage replacement-level population to protect natural resources.)



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Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II/Daily Press
A Santa Monica High School student is comforted following a series of lunchtime fights that broke out around campus on Friday, prompting officials to lock down the school.

Police secure campus after fights break out

SCHOOL FIGHTS, from page 1

of caution, to make sure the school was secured after the fights and to try to prevent anymore of them.”

There were no serious injuries reported and, so far, no arrests have been made, according to SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega. When police arrived at the scene, a second fight broke out, which police said they defused.

The Santa Monica Police called in back-up units from Beverly Hills and Culver City to help secure the area. When students were released at about 3 p.m., the police units were stationed on the perimeter of Samohi, and no further altercations were reported.

Fabrega said it was too early in the investigation to determine if the fight was gang or racially provoked.

Witnesses said the fight started when two students, a Latino and black, began shouting at each other near the basketball courts. A fight quickly ensued, and then several other Latino and black students began fighting around the campus.

Deasy said school staff will be working with the Santa Monica Police over the weekend to try and figure out how the fight began and make sure the campus is secured when school resumes on Monday.

Dozens of students watched the fights occurring throughout the campus, until the lockdown was announced.

Witnesses said no white students were involved in the fight.

One witness said the students who refused to return to class took over the technology building until police arrived and detained them.

Parents whose children were involved



Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II/Daily Press
Anxious parents await word on their children's welfare following Friday's lockdown at Samohi.

in the fight were called to pick up their students before school was released. Other parents, whose children were not involved, also expressed concern about campus security. Some said it was unfortunate the educational environment had to be interrupted by violence.

“It makes me wonder if my son is going to be safe at school,” said Andrea Waters, a Samohi parent.

Tara Kandemier, 23, a Samohi graduate, said the high school was known as a good academic institution when she attended several years ago. But since then it has deteriorated.

“This never happened when I went to school,” she said. “Samohi has been getting worse in the past few years.”

Lunchtime brawl leaves three injured

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Three students were slightly hurt in a lunchtime brawl that involved about 100 youngsters at Jefferson High School, police said.

No arrests were made but school district officials said students who began the disturbance could face suspension.

The melee erupted in and around the school cafeteria at about 1 p.m. Thursday when a boy threw something at two girls who were fighting, authorities said.

The brawl lasted about 15 minutes before police broke it up.

The school's 2,400 students were escorted to their classrooms and then went home an hour early.

LOCAL



CRIME WATCH

By Daily Press staff

At 2:48 a.m. on April 2, Santa Monica Police responded to the 1900 block of Wilshire Boulevard regarding a theft suspect in custody. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to an employee who said that the suspect entered the store and purchased a pair of sandals, left the store, and a short time later returned to the store. The suspect walked to the back of the store, selected another pair of sandals, and said that he wanted to exchange the sandals that he just bought. The employee asked for the receipt, the suspect said he did not have one, and the employee informed the suspect that it was the store's policy that no exchange could be made without the receipt. The suspect walked out of the store with the merchandise. Once outside the store, the suspect was apprehended. Ralph Booth Williams, 51, a black male transient, was booked for strong arm robbery. Bail was set at \$50,000.

At 11:35 a.m. on April 2, the Santa Monica Police responded to the 100 block of Strand Street regarding a vandalism suspect. When officers arrived, they spoke to the reporting party who said the suspect was pushing a cart in the middle of the street when he began ramming parked cars with his cart and kicking the vehicles. The suspect was positively identified by a witness. Anthony Carlos Vasquez, 32, a male Hispanic transient, was placed under arrest and transported to Santa Monica Jail.

At 7:35 p.m. on April 2, Santa Monica Police responded to the 100 block of Santa Monica Place, at the Robinson May store, regarding a theft suspect in custody. When officers arrived to the scene, they spoke to the employee who said the suspect entered the store and selected jewelry items from the counter and left the store failing to pay for the items. The jewelry taken is estimated to be \$450 in value. Salina Del Carmen Galindo, 48, a female Hispanic from Los Angeles, was placed under arrest and booked for grand theft. Bail was set at \$20,000.

At 8:14 a.m. on April 3, Santa Monica Police responded to the 200 block of Broadway regarding a bicycle theft that just occurred. When officers arrived, they contacted the victims, who said the suspect cut the lock and stole the bike. Responding officers stopped the suspect, who was riding a bike and pulling a second bike. The victim positively identified the bike and suspect. The stolen bike was valued at \$500. Emery Gene Lambus, 52, a male black transient, was arrested. He also had an outstanding warrant. Bail was set at \$20,366.

At 2:07 a.m. on April 4, a Santa Monica Police officer was in the area of the 1700 block of Cloverfield Boulevard when he stopped a bicyclist for a vehicle code violation. During the investigation, the officer recovered a burglary tool and garage opener on the man. Through his conversation with the officer, Melvin Gilbert Thomas, 39, a black male from Los Angeles, was later arrested and charged with possession of burglary tools and parole violation. No bail was set.

At 2 p.m. on April 5, Santa Monica Police responded to the 2700 block of Wilshire Boulevard, at the Washington Mutual bank, regarding a forgery suspect who was there. When officers arrived, they spoke to an employee who said the suspect was in a vehicle heading westbound on Wilshire Boulevard. An employee said the suspect attempted to deposit a forged check into his account. The check was retained by the bank employee and later booked into evidence. The officer stopped the suspect on the 200 block of Wilshire Boulevard. Andre Arthur Weisbarth, 19, a white male from Los Angeles and second suspect in the vehicle, Steven Amin Anavim, 20, a white male from Beverly Hills, were arrested and booked for commercial burglary. Bail was set at \$20,000.

At 6:51 p.m. on April 8, Santa Monica Police responded to the 1000 block of Broadway regarding an assault. When officers arrived to the scene, they located the victim, who was bleeding in the face and said he was assaulted by three suspects. The victim was treated by the Santa Monica Fire Department and paramedics. The victim said he was walking out of the liquor store and, for an unknown reason, three suspects attacked him and punched and kicked him in the upper body. The suspects were later stopped in the 1000 block of Santa Monica Boulevard and after a field show up, the victims identified two suspects. The third was not apprehended. Caesar Lopez Bermudez, 30, a male Hispanic male transient, and Rigoberto Mendoza, 18, a male Hispanic transient, were booked for assault with a deadly weapon. The other suspect was described as a male Hispanic between 20 to 30 years old, with medium build and complexion, wearing a bulky jacket and carrying a backpack.

At 3 a.m. on April 10, a Santa Monica Police officer was in the alley south of the 2100 block of Ocean Park Boulevard when he saw two subjects in the alley wearing dark clothing. During his investigation, the officer located three additional suspects inside a vehicle. All five were detained. Officers recovered car stereos, electronic equipment and other items which they believed were either taken in a residential or automobile burglary. The five suspects were arrested and transported to Santa Monica Jail. The suspects identified were Kevin Andrae Boland, 19, and Nigel Justin Boland, 19, both black males from Pacoima, Micheal Moguel, 18, a black male from Los Angeles, Dyllon Arthurs, 19, a black male from Los Angeles, and Godfrey Jenkins, 19, a black male from Los Angeles. They were booked for commercial burglary and bail was each set at \$20,000.

— Compiled by SMDP staff writer Ryan Hyatt

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All over for Friendship

FRIENDSHIP, from page 1

Friendship had continued to hold on until this month, preserving a history appreciated by patrons. A wood panel inside the bar has the names of Friendship’s most famous customers painted in red. As they die, Hammond said friends and relatives will often drop by to color the name in white.

Don Cranford bought Friendship in 1988 and hired Hammond. The bar was destroyed in the 1994 Northridge Earthquake and then rebuilt.

The Last Voyage Party on Sunday will be followed by another farewell event, the “Last Karaoke Night” with Steve Oles on Tuesday.

Hammond said the Golden Bull, a restaurant close to the Friendship, will remain open. There will be a special parking lot sale and party at the Golden Bull on Saturday, April 30, where memorabilia items from the Friendship will be put up for sale.

Hammond, who has spent most of his life bartending, said he has obtained another bartending job in Los Angeles.

“It’s a little sad to be closing,” Hammond said. “There have been so many people I have been in contact with over the years.”

more than 1,700 abused and neglected children in the Los Angeles area.

Previously, Soto worked for the Rudas Theatrical Organization from 1996 to 1999. She also served as corporate development manager for Special Olympics International from 1994 to 1995, and program officer for Latin America and Africa from 1988 to 1994.

The position does not require Senate confirmation. Soto is a Democrat.

Soto gets state position

SOTO, from page 1

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

Shaking up Shakespeare at Morgan-Wixson

By Daily Press staff

What would you do if you and your daughter were imprisoned on a remote island? Conjure magical illusions and seek revenge on your captors?

Shakespeare’s “The Tempest” is coming to the Morgan-Wixson Theatre.

Under the direction of Lewis Stout, four of the roles, traditionally played by men, will feature women: Alonso is now Alonsa; Gonzolo is Gonzala; Trinculo is Trincula and Sebastian is Sabatini.

Conceived and directed by Tara Redepinning, with musical direction by Darin Goulet, the fourth act masque, or pageant, rarely performed and usually slighted in most stagings of “The Tempest,” features local opera and dance talent. True to tradition, the masque celebrates the impending nuptials with singing, dancing, poetry and magic, and a storyline that parallels the themes and symbols of the play.

“The Tempest” is playing at the Morgan-Wixson Theatre on Friday, April 29 through Saturday, May 28.

Friday and Saturday performances will be at 8 p.m.

Matinee performances will be held on Sundays at 2 p.m., as well as one Saturday matinee on May 14 at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$12 for seniors and \$10 for students, with group discounts available, and may be purchased by calling the theatre box office at (310) 828-7519.

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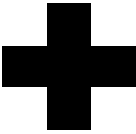
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STATE



You and what Army? Foreigners opting out

BY LAURA WIDES
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — The number of foreign nationals enlisting in the U.S. military is dropping, even though service now provides a fast track to American citizenship, an Associated Press review of military data shows.

The decrease in non-citizen enlistees, who hail from countries such as the Philippines, Mexico, Nigeria and Germany, has hit all branches of the armed services, which already are struggling with recruitment as the U.S. presence in Iraq enters year three.

While U.S. citizen enlistments also have fallen, the drop is more pronounced among non-citizens — legal immigrants the military has long let serve as everything from cooks to front line soldiers, though not generally as officers.

Although the Pentagon has placed a heavy emphasis on recruiting, officials say they're not concerned about the enlistment dip among non-citizens.

The decline surprises immigration and military experts, who expected that green-card holders who might otherwise wait years to become Americans would jump at the citizenship offer President Bush extended nearly three years ago.

Instead, the annual number of non-citizen enlistees has fallen nearly 20 percent from fiscal year 2001 — the last full year before the changes — to fiscal year 2004,

according to military data. Much of the decline, from 11,829 to 9,477 recruits, came last year alone.

By comparison, annual enlistments among citizens dropped 12 percent, from 264,832 to 232,957 recruits.

Although non-citizens represent a fraction of active-duty personnel, every recruit matters as casualties mount and more reserves are being called up than at any time since the Korean War. One recent study for the Defense Department, using statistics through 2002, found that non-citizens who enlist were less likely than citizens to leave within the first three years; nearly 20 percent of them left in that period, compared with 32 percent of citizens.

Some 142 non-citizen troops have died in Iraq and Afghanistan. Non-citizens' casualty rates represent 8 percent of the total despite being less than 3 percent of active duty military personnel.

Bush pitched citizenship not as a selling point but as a reward for service. Last year, more than 7,500 people already in uniform gained citizenship through the military, the highest numbers since the Vietnam War.

But potential recruits who are legal immigrants are less drawn to the offer, noting they can apply to be citizens without risking their lives.

Victor Raygosa and his friends are

See **ENLISTEES**, page 10

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Close-up of Darwin albino finch on the Galapagos Island of Genovesa.



Darwin albino finch searching for food on the Galapagos Islands.

SANT MONICA OPHTHALMOLOGIST MICHAEL REYNARD, M.D.

SIGHTS THE ELUSIVE DARWIN ALBINO FINCH

Santa Monica ophthalmologist Michael Reynard, M.D. hadn't the slightest clue that he would make a significant ornithological discovery in his recent visit to the Galapagos Islands. While visiting the Galapagos island of Genovesa on March 9, 2005, Dr. Michael Reynard and a group of visitors sighted the rare Darwin Albino Finch. This subtype of finch had not been sighted on the Galapagos Islands for over forty years and is not one of the thirteen species known to currently exist on the Galapagos Islands. Dr. Michael Reynard of Santa Monica, guide Enrique Silva of Galapagos, Ecuador, Mike Jenkins of Leicestershire, England, and Fred Girshick of Linden, New Jersey, became the first visitors to the Galapagos Islands to take still photographs of the elusive Darwin Albino Finch. Michael Reynard, M.D. is an ophthalmologist in Santa Monica specializing in laser, cataract, and eyelid surgery.



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STATE

Non-citizen soldiers fewer, farther between

ENLISTEES, from page 9

among the skeptics. After flirting with Navy enlistment — recruiters would leave their cards at high school football practice and stop by his home — Raygosa chose instead to work odd jobs and get an education.

“My mother told me if I went into the military, she would go crazy,” said Raygosa, 25, who came to Los Angeles from Mexico 10 years ago and now attends Santa Monica College.

A few months ago, he filled out his citizenship application.

“It was easy, a lot easier than joining the military,” he said. “I can wait.”

America’s roughly 30,000 foreign soldiers come from more than 100 countries, with the largest contingent living in California. More than a third are Hispanic.

Non-citizen soldiers are hardly a new phenomenon.

Irish immigrants fought in the Civil War. During World War II, more than 100,000 non-citizens enlisted, most from Europe.

In July 2002, Bush ordered automatic citizenship eligibility for foreign nationals on active duty who joined on or after Sept. 11, 2001 (citizenship also was granted to those who died in war and their families). In November 2003, Bush signed legislation that let all non-citizens

apply for citizenship after one year of service, rather than three.

Immigration officials have staged naturalization ceremonies in military zones and accepted applications online.

Conservative groups first warned that expediting citizenship would make the military rely too heavily on foreigners.

That hasn’t happened — the total number of non-citizen enlistees has fallen each of the past five fiscal years.

The dip was smallest between fiscal years 2002 and 2003, according to military data, when the Army and Marines experienced a small rise in non-citizen enlistments. By fiscal year 2004, however, Army and Marine non-citizen enlistments dropped to their lowest level in at least five years. Annual non-citizen enlistments in the Navy and Air Force have declined without exception.

It’s difficult to isolate one variable that affects recruiting, said Douglas Smith, a spokesman for the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. He suggested the most important factors are “the improving economy and the ongoing military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Other possible explanations: increased academic standards could shrink the non-citizen pool, as could subtle shifts to recruiting in rural areas, said Louis DiSipio, who teaches Chicano/Latino Studies at the University of California, Irvine.

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SPECIAL REPORT

ARE YOU READY FOR THE BIG ONE? APRIL IS EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS MONTH

BY FABIAN E. PADILLA
PRESIDENT, SAFE GAS SERVICES

CALIFORNIA— Fact: If you are reading this, you probably live in a Earthquake Hazard Zone.

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- There are over 200 Earthquake Faults in So. California that are capable of a 6.0 magnitude or greater? Most people in So. California live within 30 miles of these faults. Are you ready for the big one?

- That the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is now requiring communities in Southern California to prepare a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan? A Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is a new requirement from FEMA, which must be satisfied for jurisdiction to remain eligible for hazard mitigation funds and public assistance following disasters. Communities like Santa Monica have recently completed their mitigation plan and are requiring Earthquake Activated Gas Shut-off Valves as part of the plan.

- Los Angeles City Ordinance 174478 already mandates the installation of an activated gas shut-off valve on all new buildings built after 09-01-95. When pulling a building permit on work valued at \$10,000 or more. Prior to entering an agreement for sale of residential or commercial property and prior to the close of escrow. Any alteration of your gas service or system will also require that you install one. Yes, if you repair your roof, add on, remodel, upgrade or change title to or sell property you must have an earthquake valve installed.

- The City of West Hollywood has also adopted a similar mandate. More and more cities are implementing the Earthquake Activated Gas Shut-off valve mandate. It is expected that soon the ordinance will become a statewide mandate, like water heater strapping and the installation of smoke detectors

- The last major earthquake in Southern California was the Northridge Quake in 1994. Experts say we are due for another major Quake.

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NATIONAL

EPA likely to miss deadline for rules to improve parks

BY JOHN HEILPRIN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency seemed likely to miss a court-ordered deadline Friday for issuing new rules intended to improve the views and air quality in 156 national parks and wilderness areas.

EPA officials were considering on Thursday whether to ask a federal court to extend the deadline. They also were consulting with the advocacy group Environmental Defense, which sued the agency to meet cleanup goals that Congress put in place 28 years ago.

The group has sought to enforce the 1977 Clean Air Act amendments that set goals for improving the visibility in 35 national parks, 120 wilderness areas and Roosevelt Campobello International Park near Lubec, Maine, which is overseen by a U.S.-Canada commission.

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"My understanding is they're not done," EPA spokesman Rich Hood said of the rules.

"We are reviewing all our options," he said Thursday. "Going to court ... might be one of those."

The EPA agreed in August 2003 to establish by this April 15 new rules on haze that would require states to impose limits on air pollution that drifts over national parks.

Affected parks include the Grand Canyon in Arizona, the Great Smoky Mountains in Tennessee and North Carolina, Yellowstone in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, and Yosemite in California.

The rules would target 26 types of industrial facilities built between 1962 and 1977, including coal-burning power plants, industrial boilers, smelters, refineries, chemical and cement plants, and pulp and paper mills, Environmental Defense said. The haze is formed by the pollutants sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, which other EPA rules also aim to cut.



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NATIONAL



Pardon interruption: Man in legal limbo

BY GENE JOHNSON

Associated Press Writer

SEATTLE — Tony Ruiz-Heredia thought his immigration troubles were over when Gov. Gary Locke pardoned him last fall. He and his wife were so excited they bought a house in Tacoma where they could raise their son.

But five months later, Ruiz-Heredia is locked up and immigration officials — who say the pardon is irrelevant — are trying to send him back to Mexico after nearly 25 years in the United States.

"I just want my husband out of there," Isabel Ruiz sobbed in an interview this week. "He's a really good working man, not a troublemaker, doesn't do drugs. He's just a good father and a good husband. They put us in a really bad spot."

Ruiz-Heredia's legal troubles started after an argument with Isabel in 1999. He slapped her — the only time he has, she insisted. Drunk, she called the police and, to her lasting regret, said she wanted him arrested. The officers complied.

Lawyers say the case highlights an anomaly of immigration law. While a governor's pardon could keep an immigrant in this country after a murder conviction, immigration law says a pardon doesn't have the same effect in relatively minor domestic violence or drug cases.

"It's bizarre. You could get a pardon for assault with a deadly weapon and you

could stay in the country, but if you throw a wet noodle at your wife, a pardon wouldn't cure the grounds for removal," said Seattle immigration lawyer Robert Gibbs, who is not connected to Ruiz-Heredia's case. "This is just one of those cases where Congress writes a stupid law."

Ruiz-Heredia, 37, spent five days in jail before prosecutors offered a deal: If he pleaded guilty, they'd let him out so he could return to his job. Ruiz-Heredia agreed and was given a yearlong suspended sentence, meaning that as long as he behaved, he wouldn't do any more jail time.

But an immigration judge in Seattle ordered him deported, and the federal Board of Immigration Appeals upheld that decision.

The state Clemency and Pardons Board was more sympathetic. By a 4-1 vote, it recommended a pardon, and the governor granted one in November, shortly before his term expired.

But the pardon wasn't enough. According to the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, only four grounds for deportation can be cured by a pardon: crimes of moral turpitude, aggravated felonies, multiple criminal convictions and high-speed flight.

Domestic violence-related crimes aren't covered by any of those categories, the appeals board wrote in its March 25 decision.



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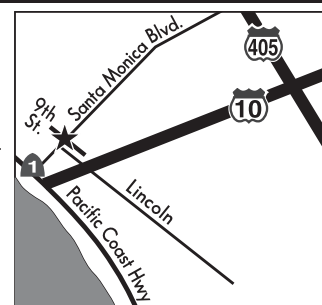
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NATIONAL

Nevada brothels want to love thy neighbors

BY KATHLEEN HENNESSEY
Associated Press Writer

MOUND HOUSE, Nev. — If visitors to the Moonlite BunnyRanch aren't too distracted by the half-naked woman in skyscraper heels likely to be lounging at the bar, they might notice a small glass box stuffed with dollar bills near the door.
This month, the brothel is collecting donations for the Silver Springs Spay and Neuter Clinic. Two months ago, it was the local children's museum.
"I give back to my community," said brothel owner Dennis Hof, who pimps for about 200 women at two

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brothels in the high desert five miles outside Carson City. Many others in the industry, which is legal by county option in Nevada, want to go further.
They're asking to be taxed.
Although county governments collect license fees, the state of Nevada has never taxed brothels. If an industry lobbying group and an anti-prostitution lawmaker have their way, that could change this year.
"I don't believe in legal prostitution, but I'm not a zealot about it, either," said Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, D-Reno.
Ten of 17 counties in Nevada allow brothels, and Leslie said there's no move to change state law to block counties from allowing prostitution.
"They're a legal business. They should contribute like every other legal business, and I'm willing to make that happen," Leslie said.
That's music to the ears of many in the always-skittish industry. For them, a state tax is a stamp of legitimacy, and something they've pursued for years.
Two years ago during a budget shortage, the brothels came close to getting their wish, but last-minute negotiations inadvertently exempted them from a tax on live entertainment.
Now they're renewing their offer, despite the state's surplus of more than \$300 million.
"I understand the state is no longer short of funds," said Geoff Arnold, president of the Nevada Brothel Association. "But our philosophy is that the brothels want to be good neighbors and want to help the community."
There's more than altruism in the offer. Unlike other legal businesses, the 28 bordellos in the state aren't allowed to advertise — a widely acknowledged but unchallenged First Amendment conflict.
Media-savvy owners like Hof find ways to get the word out, such as offering free sex to soldiers returning from Iraq.
Others say they ought to be able to advertise, and if they have to pay a tax to get closer to that goal, that's the cost of doing business.
"I think we should have the same rights as any other business, but I also am a realist," said Bobbi Davis, owner of the Shady Lady Ranch, a brothel about 120 miles outside Las Vegas. "And I think this tax thing is also a way to go. There's a price, sometimes, for legitimacy."
Leslie's bill wouldn't set the price very high — about \$2 per client. It would bring in about \$1 million a year.
The funds would come from the brothel, not the prostitutes themselves, who work as independent contractors

and generally give the house 50 percent of what they charge for each "party."
"The state is not going into the business of taking a direct percentage of parties," Arnold said.
Owners don't seem concerned the bill will affect business. Nevada brothels make from \$20 million to \$50 million annually, Arnold said.
"Precious," who arrived at the Shady Lady Ranch a week ago from St. Paul, Minn., said even if owners pass the tax on to prostitutes, it won't affect her budget.
"What's a couple extra dollars off? I can waste that on lip gloss or new eyeliner," she said. "That's chump change for what some of the girls make here."
Prostitutes at Shady Lady Ranch make up to \$1,000 daily during peak tourist season, she said.
But owners like Hof say they already pay their fair share to county governments and shouldn't have to "duck their heads under the sagebrush" or "pay for legitimacy."
Counties charge a quarterly business fee ranging from \$100 to \$20,000, and prostitutes pay \$50 for an annual work permit.
Some counties get as much as 25 percent of their business fees from brothels, a legislative analysis shows. Lyon County, home of the BunnyRanch, will collect \$316,000 in brothel business fees and \$25,000 in permit fees next year.
That contribution, and Nevada's libertarian leanings, lead many people to say the brothels don't need the goodwill a state tax might earn them.
"People in Nevada are still sort of interested in the law of the Old West: If someone doesn't bother you, leave them alone," Arnold said.
Hof said he wants to be left alone and prefers to contribute his way, without apologies or new state taxes.
"Audrey," one of Hof's employees, agreed.
"I'd rather see the gentlemen put their \$2 in the charity box," she said.

Bordello owners avoid imposition of state tax

BY KATHLEEN HENNESSEY
Associated Press Writer

CARSON CITY, Nev. — Nevada's legal brothel owners won't get a much-coveted, first-ever state tax on their industry this year. Assembly Commerce Chairwoman Barbara Buckley, D-Las Vegas said this week that she won't bring up one of the two proposals to impose a tax on legal prostitution for a vote.
"It's becoming a distraction to the important work we're doing," she said. "We really don't have time to examine the state of the brothel industry."
The bill would have put a 10 percent tax on food and drink served in the state's 28 bordellos, and a tax of \$2 per "party."
The brothel lobby asked for the tax, hoping it would bring legalized prostitution added acceptability and create some goodwill for the industry.
"Look, if we contribute and do nice things for the state, maybe the state will like us better," brothel lobbyist George Flint said.
Also Thursday, a Senate committee gutted a separate proposal to tax brothels. The bill would have put a live entertainment tax on brothels, and repealed the tax in all other circumstances — except on adult entertainment. The Senate Finance Committee passed the bill — after removing all references to prostitution.
Sen. John Lee, D-North Las Vegas, said the solution was intended "to allow (brothels) to continue to do what they do, and not encourage us to put into statute more things that legitimize them within our state."
Had the tax offers made it out of committee and through the Legislature, they would have died on Gov. Kenny Guinn's desk, a spokesman said.
"The governor just thinks it's a local government issue and not part of his agenda," spokesman Greg Bortolin said. "He thinks, as well, that he would be affirming the industry if he came out in support of the bill."
"It's not something the governor is going to waste time on."
Flint said the brothel tax offer stands, should future legislatures want to take him up on it. In the meantime, he said, "I bow to the wisdom of the Legislature."

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INTERNATIONAL



Coming U.N. done: Officials cited in complaint

BY EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press Writer

UNITED NATIONS — Two high-ranking U.N. officials have been cited in a U.S. criminal complaint against a South Korean businessman who was at the center of a 1970s congressional corruption scandal and is now accused of accepting millions of dollars from Iraq related to the U.N. oil-for-food program.

The reported involvement of the two unidentified U.N. officials was likely to cast a new shadow on the world body, which has spent more than a year trying to get to the bottom of allegations of massive corruption in the \$64 billion humanitarian program that was aimed at helping Iraqis cope with U.N. sanctions.

The complaint calling for an arrest warrant against Tonsun Park was made public at the same time as an indictment charging a Texas oil company owner and two oil traders from Britain and Bulgaria with paying millions of dollars in secret kickbacks to Saddam Hussein's Iraqi regime to secure oil deals.

The legal action was taken by U.S. attorneys in the Southern District of New York as congressional investigators and a panel led by former U.S. Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker continue their probes into the oil-for-food program and oil smuggling by Saddam.

Volcker and the leaders of his inquiry say their final report — expected in mid-summer — will likely lead to dozens of criminal prosecutions by legal authorities

in various countries for bribery, sanctions busting, money laundering and fraud.

The U.S. Attorney's office in New York has already gotten one guilty plea. On Jan. 18, Samir A. Vincent, 64, an Iraqi-born American businessman accused of skimming money from the program, admitted to being an illegal agent of Saddam's government.

The allegations regarding the unidentified U.N. officials were contained in a complaint accusing Park of accepting millions of dollars from the Iraqi government while he operated in the United States as an unregistered agent for Saddam — during negotiations with the United Nations on establishing the oil-for-food program and after it started operating.

The program, which ran from 1996 to 2003, was created to help Iraqis cope with U.N. sanctions imposed after Saddam's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. It let the Iraqi government sell limited — and eventually unlimited — amounts of oil primarily to buy humanitarian goods.

But Saddam chose the buyers of Iraqi oil and the sellers of humanitarian goods. In a bid to curry favor and end sanctions, Saddam allegedly gave former government officials, activists, journalists and U.N. officials vouchers for oil to be resold at a profit.

U.S. Attorney David Kelley said Thursday's charges were "two more pieces in the oil-for-food puzzle," which is still being unraveled. "We're going to wring the towel dry," he said.

Park, described as residing in Seoul "among other places," was in the United

States in December, according to the complaint, but his current whereabouts were not disclosed. In the 1970s, Park was at the center of what became known as the "Koreagate" scandals in which he was accused of trying to buy influence in Congress.

The indictment in Manhattan federal court named David B. Chalmers Jr., sole shareholder of Houston-based Bayoil (USA) Inc., and oil traders Ludmil Dionissiev, a Bulgarian citizen and permanent U.S. resident, and John Irving, a British citizen.

It accused them of paying millions of dollars in secret kickbacks to Saddam's regime between mid-2000 and March 2003, thus cheating the oil-for-food program of at least \$100 million in funds that should have gone for humanitarian aid. It calls for the company and three men to pay back at least that amount of money.

Chalmers and Dionissiev were arrested Thursday at their homes in Houston. Kelley said he will seek Irving's extradition from England.

Catherine M. Recker, a lawyer for Chalmers and for Bayoil, said: "We will vigorously dispute the allegations of criminal conduct." David Howard, a lawyer for Dionissiev, accused the government of over-reaching and said his client "intends to plead not guilty because he is not guilty, and he will be found not guilty at trial."

The reference in the complaint against Park to two mystery high-ranking U.N. officials sparked widespread speculation in U.N. corridors of possible names.

Kelley, pressed repeatedly by reporters at a news conference to say whether U.N. officials had actually received money tied to Park, would say only that that issue was not part of the indictment.

Park was accused of telling a cooperating government witness in 1995 that he needed \$10 million from Iraq to "take care" of his expenses and his people, which the witness believed meant a person identified in court papers only as "U.N. Official 1."

In 1996, another high-ranking U.N. official attended a restaurant meeting with Park, an Iraqi official and the government witness. After "U.N. Official 2" left, Park claimed that he had used a \$5 million guarantee from the Iraqi government to fund business dealings with the "U.N. Official 2," court papers said.

Park told the government witness in 1997 or 1998 that he had invested about \$1 million that he had gotten from Iraq in a Canadian company established by the son of "U.N. Official 2," though the company failed and the money was lost.

The agent also said the cooperating witness wrote a letter to Iraqi government officials in July 1997 to say that he and Park were splitting funds the Iraqi government was forwarding, but that both groups were supposed to "take care" of "U.N. Official No. 1."

Asked about the allegations Thursday, U.N. associate spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations had not been contacted by the U.S. attorneys office.

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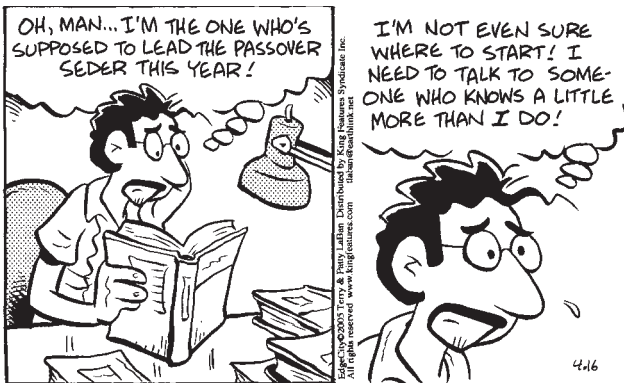


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