

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

2 19 21 23 43
Meganumber: 2
Jackpot: \$21 Million

FANTASY 5

6 27 30 32 38

DAILY 3

Daytime: 0 1 9
Evening: 6 9 3

DAILY DERBY

1st: 12 Lucky Charms
2nd: 08 Gorgeous George
3rd: 03 Hot Shot

RACE TIME: 1:43.82

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

The county coroner in Olympia, Wash., won a federal Homeland Security contract to buy a large shrink-wrapping machine in case of mass casualties, thinking that traditional body-bagged corpses are harder to transport and store (February). And police in Fontana, Calif., said passenger Michael Spearman, 31, caused his girlfriend to crash her SUV when he angrily grabbed the steering wheel (and threatened to kill the woman) because she would not turn around and go back home so he could retrieve his Bible (January). And police in Chicago arrested two boys, ages 16 and 17, for assault after a 12-year-old required medical attention from several wedgies the boys gave him (February).

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today the 109th day of 2005.
There are 256 days left in the year.

On April 19, 1775, the American Revolutionary War began with the battles of Lexington and Concord.

In 1933, the United States went off the gold standard.

In 1945, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "Carousel" opened on Broadway.

In 1975, India announced it had launched its first satellite, from the Soviet Union atop a Soviet rocket.

In 1989, 47 sailors were killed when a gun turret exploded aboard the USS Iowa.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing.

INDEX

Horoscopes

Those that know don't talk, Libra 2

Surf Report

Water temperature: 58° 3

Opinion

Don't be a doodie 4

State

Gold Line not glittering 7

Parenting

Hold your horses 8

Comics

Laugh it up 12

Classifieds

Ad space odyssey 13-15

People in the News

Puffy goes poof 16

Death on bluff likely the result of altered state

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

PCH — A Santa Monica man who fell from the Palisades Bluff on Sunday was likely not in the right state of mind before the plunge which caused his death.

Witness Cheryl Francis Harrington said she had just finished exercising when Jesse Capers, 20, exited the condominium building at 201 Ocean Ave. shortly before 8 a.m. He was running barefoot toward the bluffs. Harrington said Capers hopped onto a fence, where he remained briefly before he continued running, falling at least 150 feet.

According to Harrington, a young woman, also barefoot, emerged from the building and pursued Capers, yelling his name. As she passed Harrington, she told her 'he's going to be OK' as Capers remained on the fence. When Capers continued past the fence, Harrington said the young woman ran to the bluffs' edge and began screaming. That's when Harrington ran for her cell phone to call the police.

The Santa Monica police and



Photo courtesy of Deborah Starr
Jesse Capers, who is pictured with his little sister, Sarah, and his mother, Deborah Starr, died on Sunday.

fire departments responded to Barrington's call. Eighteen rescuers used an aerial ladder from a parked truck on the Pacific Coast Highway to reach Capers, who was lying face first in the dirt, his leg wrapped around a tree. Breathing and conscious, he reportedly complained of abdominal pain. It appeared Capers had a fractured arm and was suffering from internal bleeding, said SMFD Battalion Chief Carl

See **BLUFF**, page 6



John Conkle/Special to the Daily Press

Santa Monica rescue workers retrieve Jesse Capers, 20, from the Palisades Bluff on Sunday morning. Capers fell almost 200 feet before being stopped by a tree. He died at a local hospital.

Case against Vargas begins in May

Prosecutors to make case against teen murder suspect in preliminary hearing at Airport Courthouse

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

LAX COURTHOUSE — Prosecutors will be present evidence on May 11 against a Santa Monica teenager accused of killing Jalonnice Carter, another local youth who was fatally shot in 2003.

The Los Angeles District Attorney's Office on April 7 charged Matthew Felix Vargas, 17, with first-degree murder and special allegations that include one count of personal use of a

firearm causing bodily injury, two counts of the intentional discharge of a firearm and one count of gang enhancement that contributed to the furtherance of gang activity.

Vargas, who authorities say is also known as "Lil Rooster," was arrested April 7 by Santa Monica Police detectives at a juvenile detention facility in Sylmar, where he is serving time for an unknown crime. Because he's a minor, authorities couldn't discuss for what crime Vargas was being detained.

Vargas' mother, Belinda

Ramos, also declined to say what her son was convicted of, except to say he is innocent. He has been at the juvenile detention center since December.

Vargas pleaded not guilty last week. He was represented by a private attorney who Ramos said has been working with Vargas for four years on various crimes he's been charged with.

According to the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office, Vargas is being tried as an adult because of the evidence prosecutors have to support their case, making his identity available to the public. He

See **MURDER**, page 5

Visit by Dean reveals good, bad and ugly

BY BETH FOUHY

AP Political Writer

LOS ANGELES — How to explain the paradox that is Howard Dean?

One part bulldog, one part philosopher king, the former presidential candidate and new Democratic Party chairman demonstrated in a speech to California Democrats Saturday that he still

See **DEAN**, page 5

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Santa Monica Daily Press

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS The stars show the kind of day you'll have:
★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★-Average ★-So-so ★-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★ Solutions pop up for the practical Ram. You also discover that being gentle and caring draws a positive response. Friends line up to help you. The more open you can be, the better the end results will be. Loosen up. Tonight: Take it easy

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ You might be taken aback by a caring gesture from someone you would not expect that level of feeling from. Brainstorm with others and come up with solutions. Your personality melts others' barriers. Tonight: Romp in your favorite pasture

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★ Know that you can kick back and gain a perspective. Not everything is as you think it is. Laugh and relax with the company of someone you care about. Learn more by being quiet and listening. Be sensitive to others. Tonight: Get some extra R and R

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ Aim for what you want in the next few days. You find that many people will go to bat for you, making your desires realities. Gather people together and express your enthusiasm for a project. Emphasize what you care about. Tonight: Where the gang is

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Others often seek you out for advice and leadership. You find that many people do not grasp what you are saying or thinking. Help walk them through your mental processing. Listen more than you talk. Tonight: A must appearance

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ The Moon dashes into your sign, allowing greater creative self-expression and caring. You have a way of gaining a perspective that often surprises others. Realize more of what you want. Detach and think. Tonight: Make a dream a reality

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★ Know when to say you have had enough. A close associate will be more than ready to pick up where you left off. You'll find some solace if you don't push too hard and allow someone else to take charge. Get used to being taken care of — OK? Don't reveal everything you know. Tonight: Vanish

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ You have no control over others — it's just as well right now. Everything will fall into place if you assume a hands-off approach. You will learn a lot about others as a result. Lighten up about another's need to control. Empathize; you have been there. Tonight: Happy as a clam

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★ Step up to the plate. Others need you to assume control and handle what they cannot. You have a special style that allows many to put in their two cents while you remain in command. Follow through. Tonight: All eyes turn to you

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Sometimes you need to rethink a decision or take a broader point of view. Once you detach, your instinctive reaction will point you in the right direction. You are creative and full of insight. Tonight: Read between the lines

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Work with individuals rather than groups. You come from a solid place right now, surprising even you. Know what kind of backing you need in order to be comfortable. Stick with the basics. Don't try any wild leaps of fantasy. Tonight: Togetherness

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Others make the first move. You need only say "yes" or "no." Allow greater caring to flow with the moment. Listen more to others. Express your caring in a way that others can hear. Return calls. Communication stars. Tonight: Sort through invitations.

AUDIT PENDING

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LOCAL



Amanda Reyne and a friend pose with children in Southeast Asia last month.

Photo courtesy

Local artist puts on show to benefit relief efforts

By Daily Press staff

A local woman is transforming her experience with tsunami victims into art.

Santa Monica artist Amanda H. Reyne is hosting an art exhibit in May to raise money for the Scientology Disaster Response (SDR).

For two weeks last month she and her three friends, and other SDR teams in Indonesia helped more than 5,000 people.

Her memories of the Indonesian people and an urgent need to continue her link with them prompted the exhibit.

"Each and every person had lost their families and homes," Reyne said. "The stories were heart breaking. This culture was one of the most beautiful cultures that I had ever seen. They were so honest and were so open to being helped."

Reyne and her friends were flown by military helicopter to Banda Ache, which was one of the worst hit. Heru —dubbed "Hero" by Reyne and her team, because he was a survivor of the Tsunami — showed where his house used to be and described how he had escaped, running away from the Tsunami. It was their first

view of nothing but brown for miles the length of the coast, still waterlogged a month after the hit.

"Our only thought was how could we help the people confront and overcome the impact of the tsunami using the 'assist' procedures we were trained in," Reyne said.

Assists, one of the earliest developments of L. Ron Hubbard, are non-medical techniques taught to all SDR teams. For the past 25 years, they have been used to dispel severe physical and emotional trauma and stress in incidents such as the Oklahoma bombing, the Sept. 11 attacks, the California fire storm of 2003 and dozens of floods, earthquakes and volcano eruptions worldwide, including the Northridge Earthquake in 1994.

"He was completely dead in his eyes," Reyne said of Heru. "His parents did not know what to do with him. He was not confronting anyone or anything. My friend, Alexis, took him outside into an overgrown field behind the tents. She got his hand and steered his attention out-

See ASSIST, page 7



Hope Collins correctly identified that this photo was taken on the Third Street Promenade. Collins has won a gift certificate to Izzy's Deli. Check out the Monday edition for the next mystery photo contest.



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SURF REPORT

On Tuesday, we'll still see some SW energy, but as the shorter lagging periods finally arrive, size will diminish. Size estimates call for waist- to chest-high surf for south-facing breaks. As for west-facing breaks, the NW wind swell should kick into full gear with more consistency, and size averaging chest high.

Today the
water is:

58°

Write us at alex@smdp.com
and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.

	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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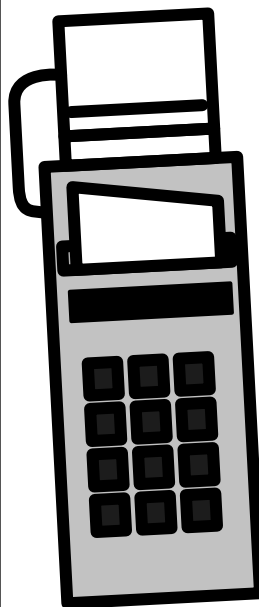
The Q Line

Stories of shootings and violence in schools nationwide have increased over the past few years, and last week's lockdown at Santa Monica High School due to dozens of students fighting brings the issue even closer to home

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you think adequate security mea-

sures are in place in our schools? What changes, if any, would you suggest?"

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition. Please try to limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Deasy, we have a problem

(Editor's note: This letter was originally written to John Deasy, superintendent of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.)

Editor:

As parents of two students attending Santa Monica High School, we found your news statement (on 1070 AM radio) Friday, April 15, 2005 to be dangerously irresponsible. Your statement that "some fights broke out and that no one was hurt" was not truthful. Since the fighting broke out at lunchtime, most of the students at Samohi were in the location of a fight area. Children were hurt. What would possess you to say something so untrue?

Additionally, your statement that the school day resumed as normal was also not true. Normal school days do not end with a lockdown, police helicopters, handcuffs and police officers all over the campus. My children's normal school day is not interrupted by fear, resulting in them running home as fast as they could.

Your deliberate attempt to cover up and downplay the situation that occurred Friday, April 15 is not only outrageous, it tells us and other parents that you do not put our children's safety at the top of your list. When can you guarantee that my children will be safe to return to the Samohi campus?

Please advise.

Lori Emerson
Santa Monica

Taxpayers shouldn't bear brunt of housing homeless

Editor:

I agree with Peter Shopay that the site of the former Fisher Lumber should not be dedicated to housing for the homeless (SMDP, April 15, page 4). There may well be a need for additional homeless shelters but neither these nor housing needs should be located on prime real estate. As Shopay points out, this misguided altruism thumbs a nose at all the resident taxpayers working hard to support themselves and live within their income level. One obstacle we suffer from in terms of alleviating the homeless problem is a City Council that says one thing during election time, but is in reality, indifferent to this problem. Pre-election, I spoke to one of the representatives for a council nominee and asked about his stance on the homeless. She stated, "Well, the homeless have always been here," adding "they have to go somewhere." Really look around this city at the homeless. You will see many who appear perfectly hale, hearty and youthful enough to hold down some kind of job. It's time to acknowledge the real victims of this problem are the decent Santa Monica citizens.

Sunny Kreis
Santa Monica

Give it to the dogs

Editor:

Regarding Don Johnson's letter (SMDP, April 15, page 4), please correct me if I'm wrong, but aren't we talking about Dockweiler State Beach? Not Santa Monica, Venice, or any of the local city beaches? The beach that sits in front of no homes and is in the flight path of all planes from LAX, keeping it 90-percent empty all year round? Why has it become such a big deal to put a dog beach here? This is the most under used beach in Southern California.

Opponents of the dog beach claim the animals will make a mess out of the beach, turn it into "chaos." Where are the facts behind these claims? It's not as if this is the first experimental "dog area" in a city. Dog parks and dog beaches don't create problems. Just look at the very clean and successful Huntington dog beach. For all naysayers, please take a drive and see for yourself. How about all the local dog parks? They are cleaner, more pleasant places than many of our non dog friendly parks. The truth is, most dog owners are overly responsible and clean up after their animal, and for those few owners who don't, the city does their part. After all, the city is used to cleaning up after certain "people," because none of them have owners to pick up after them.

Peter Shopay
Santa Monica

Get a heart

Editor:

While I understand Mr. Shopay's anger and frustration (SMDP, April 15, page 4), I think there are other situations to consider. If we are to have a society where the wealthy pay little or no taxes, where corporations avoid tax and receive huge subsidies for screwing up (GM) etc., where an education and basic health care are unaffordable for huge segments of society, than we will all pay the price of those who cannot, for one reason or another, thrive in a cold and hardened society of competition and greed. The wealthy I know get many things for free, while those who need it go without. Countries that have sponsored health care, housing and education have far fewer problems than we do with the homeless and crime.

It's easy to kick someone who is down and out. It's much harder to put anger where it belongs — the power structure that doesn't care about your needs or anger.

Let's not all be so greedy, scared and cowardly. What happened to heart?

Danielle Charney
Santa Monica

Don't be a doodie, even if it isn't illegal



WHAT'S THE POINT?

BY DAVID PISARRA

As a lawyer, I frequently have clients come to me with a situation where they have been wronged in some manner. Often, there is no good solution to the problem. The law does not provide a right for every wrong. This is an unfortunate fact, but a fact nonetheless. And as an attorney, it is my job to try and explain to people why they are being abused and the reasons why the courts or the police can do little if anything to stop it.

In this world there are two types of people — the law-abiding, honest, hard working, dedicated types, whom I'll call "winners." Then there are the deceitful, scared, bullying, dishonest, unhappy, evil types. These I'll call "doodieheads," "doodies" for short.

The winners frequently are taken advantage of by the doodies. The basic reason for this is that the doodies have no morality. They are the kind of people who, for some unknown reason, are able to sleep at night, knowing that they have lied, cheated, stolen, bankrupted, embezzled from and betrayed those people who are honest and value driven. Usually they are male, cowardly, with an outer shell of toughness that covers an inner weakness and self-hate for being such worthless losers in life.

The doodies come in many different forms, but their primary characteristic is their ability to read a situation, and change themselves to fit in with the crowd or avoid prosecution. If they are with a bunch of winners, they will change their language, their clothing, their attitude in such a way that the winners will believe the doodie is one of them. The doodie is doing this primarily to gain the trust of the winners so that they will give up something for the doodie, usually money.

But not always. Last week, I was at the Joslyn dog park. There was a crowd of maybe half a dozen people there with their dogs enjoying the glorious weather while the dogs played and romped. Of course, there was a pair of doodies. This particular model took their enjoyment from throwing tennis balls into the trees at squirrels with the intended purpose of knocking them to the ground so that the tough looking rottweilers owned by the doodies could maul and then ostensibly eat the fallen squirrels.

This of course resulted in there being a verbal row over the propriety of such behavior. There was a man who is of the winner set, that was pointing out to the doodies how wrong it was to kill a squirrel in such a manner. He was in a shouting match with the two doodies, and was joined by a woman who also felt it was wrong of the men to throw tennis balls at much smaller creatures.

Realizing that a shouting match was going to go nowhere, I went looking for one of those able bodied animal control officers who are always around when your dog has lost his license, but never around when you need help. I couldn't find one, but I did find a uniformed officer and I asked him if it was illegal or not

to engage in the childish behavior these two doodies were. He said that he wasn't sure, that he would call an animal control officer and that he thought it would be animal cruelty.

With that, he then proceeded to walk over to the dog area, and surprisingly, the two doodies stopped throwing their balls at the squirrels, which they have been calling vermin and "rats with tails," and they sheepishly sat their coward butts down on the bench. This had the intended effect of rendering the police officer powerless to do anything. Because he didn't witness the animal cruelty, he couldn't write the doodies up for a crime, or even an infraction, which is equivalent to a traffic ticket.

This, by the way, is the primary way in which the doodies evade prosecution. They run, they hide, they lurk in the shadows of life, like the slimy, stinky disgusting thing one finds under a piece of wood that has been left out in the rain for too long. Doodies are chameleons who are practiced at knowing precisely what they can do before a police officer has to take action.

They do the same thing with lawyers and the law. The experienced doodie knows how to get money from an investor by looking like a winner, talking like a winner, acting like a winner just long enough to cash the check. Then, when the winner starts asking for information, or updates on their investment, they start by going on the offensive. The doodie will start by telling the winner that he betrayed the doodie in some inconsequential way, but it will be grain of rice upon which a mountain of condemnation will be built. This is when the winner knows that he has been had. The louder the doodie screams the worse the winner has been had.

We see it all the time. I've got a case right now where a man inherited 64 percent of a company, and the 36 percent shareholder is an elderly retired woman but her doodie son is trying to embezzle all the money and take control of the company. The first thing he did was to accuse my client of taking money.

The problem with this type of case is that the winner has to spend money to prove that the doodie is stealing. The doodie is the one who must produce the documents and most of the time, he won't, which means that you have to subpoena bank records, accountant records, vendor records — all of which take time and money. The doodies know this. They use it to their advantage.

Doodies are experts at pushing the limits, but not crossing them. This is the gray area, where they are most effective, and the law is the least effective. This is the point where a lawyer says, you have a remedy, but it is costly, or you don't have a remedy, and you were had. It sucks.

The question though that I put to my clients is "would you want to live the life of the doodie?" Invariably, when I look at a doodie, I have no desire to be them. They are scared, fractured, hurt little men, usually with major emotional problems and appendages smaller than the squirrels.

(David Pissarra is a business development lawyer in the Santa Monica firm of Pissarra & Grist. He welcomes your questions and comments. He can be reached at dpissarra@pissarra.com or (310) 664-9969.)



Cops recover weapon used in teen's murder

MURDER, from page 1

will be 18 years old on April 28.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Paula A. Mabrey will determine at the May 11 preliminary hearing at Airport Courthouse whether or not there is sufficient evidence to proceed with a trial. It's too early in the proceedings for a deputy district attorney to be assigned to the case, said DA spokeswoman Jane Robison.

Santa Monica Police Chief James Butts, Jr. told the Daily Press earlier this month that detectives have recovered the murder weapon, but declined to provide further information on what other evidence will be brought against Vargas.

Vargas, who lives in the Pico neighborhood, is allegedly a member of the Santa Monica 17th Street Gang, Butts said. The 17th Street Gang, comprised primarily of Latinos, is frequently at odds with another city gang, the Graveyard

Crips, which is predominantly black. The Pico neighborhood is located on the east-side of Santa Monica.

Vargas is described by family and friends as respectful and mild-mannered.

Carter, 19, was shot in the back with a .22-caliber gun in the 1800 block of 20th Street while he was walking through an alley on Sept. 2, 2003. The bullet pierced his heart and he died a few hours later at a local hospital.

Shortly after, police arrested a neighbor in connection with the murder, but the DA's office dropped the charges due to a lack of evidence.

Carter, who authorities said was known by friends and family as "Little Bear" and "Pooh Bear," was described as a hard-working young man who was studying for a career in computers while working two jobs.

Carter's parents were unavailable for comment on Vargas' arrest.

Dean rips Republicans, calls on Dems to open up

DEAN, from page 1

has the power to mesmerize party activists.

But his trip was also marked by the kind of intemperate and controversial moments that remind people why he remains such a political lightning rod.

At a sold out dinner speech at the state Democratic Party convention, Dean brought the audience to its feet with his full-throated denunciation of the Republican party. He also issued a heartfelt call for Democrats to be more open and inclusive of "red state" voters, and their economic and moral concerns.

"We need to talk to those folks," Dean said. "We need not react to the differences of opinion about gay rights and things like that — it's a symptom. What is real is the fear, and we don't address it."

Long a hotbed of Dean activism, California is showing signs of being more so under his leadership at the DNC.

Thousands of volunteers signed onto the Dean juggernaut after the state party's 2003 convention in Sacramento, where the former Vermont governor — then considered a long shot to win the party's presidential nomination — brought the house down with his fiery denunciation of the Iraq war. Records show that fully 22 percent of Dean's nearly \$53 million war chest came from California.

Today, many so-called "Deaniacs" have filled the ranks of state party, and Chairman Art Toreros recently named Rick Jacobs, who headed Dean's California presidential campaign, to be deputy party chairman. Meanwhile, a Dean-backed group, California for Democracy, has been fighting Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed special election and the controversial reform measures Schwarzenegger hopes to place on the ballot.

But Dean also showcased some of his signature shoot-from-the-hip bluntness that was widely blamed for steering his presidential campaign off the rails.

He began his convention speech by mocking Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's accent, declaring, in thick, fake Austrian,

"I am running for governor of Cah-LEE-fornia." While it provided a decent laugh line for an audience already full of Arnold bashers, it didn't necessarily reflect well on a Democratic chairman who'd be unlikely to poke similar fun at a Hispanic accent or urban black street slang.

The day before, at a gay rights breakfast in Los Angeles, Dean raised eyebrows when he vowed to "use Terri Schiavo" to attack Republicans. The case of the severely brain-damaged Florida woman made national headlines and provoked a national "right to die" dispute after Republican lawmakers intervened to try and prevent Schiavo's husband from removing her feeding tube.

Dean, a physician, went on to say, "The issue is: Are we going to live in a theocracy where the highest powers tell us what to do? Or are we going to be allowed to consult our own high powers when we make very difficult decisions?"

While polls showed most voters believed Republicans overreached in the Schiavo's case, Dean's language seemed a tad inartful. A Republican party spokeswoman said the comments showed "a troubling lack of sensitivity," even though a widely publicized memo written by a GOP congressional staffer suggested Republicans saw political possibilities in the Schiavo case as well.

Dean has also raised concern among some left-leaning delegates who question why he is so intent on opening the party to voters who oppose gay rights and abortion rights. Dean, like Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and a handful of other prominent Democrats, has called for a shift in tone on the abortion issue.

"I think we need to talk about abortion differently," Dean said Saturday. "Republicans have forced us into a corner to defend abortion. I don't know anyone who's pro-abortion."

That provoked at least one delegate to walk the convention hall, publicly questioning whether Dean wanted to invite anti-civil rights and anti-environment voters into the party as well.

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LOCAL

Coroner: Autopsy could take up to six days



two friends returned to Santa Monica late on Saturday night for a small party held at the high-rise building located just yards from where he fell.

Starr said her son was not known to be a regular drug user, but that he and some of his friends had probably taken an unknown substance, possibly psychedelic in nature, between their ride back to Santa Monica and the party. Starr said she talked to those who had been with Capers at the party and he seemed to have reacted negatively to the substance.

Capers reportedly had been sleeping in the living room of the condominium when he awoke and caused a disturbance. The host of the party tried to calm Capers down and offered him a glass of milk, which he knocked out of her hands, according to Starr. Capers was escorted out of the condominium and began running into the park and onto the fence.

Lt. Fred Corral with the Los Angeles County Department of the Coroner said they were expecting to receive Capers' body late on Monday from the hospital. The autopsy is expected to take four to six days. A toxicology report — which will indicate what substances might have been in Capers' body at the time of death — will be available in 10 weeks, Corral said. The police investigation is ongoing.

Starr said her son was a bright, happy young man who was taking business courses at Santa Monica College and working part-time at a retail store on Wilshire Boulevard. He attended Franklin Elementary, Lincoln Middle School and Saint Monica Catholic High School before graduating from a high school in northern California. He subsequently returned to Santa Monica, where he lived near 18th Street and Montana Avenue with his mother and stepfather.

Capers' sister, Sarah, attended Santa Monica High School until her sophomore year. She now attends college on the East Coast.

No funeral or memorial service has been set, but Starr said she hopes to have services at Brentwood Presbyterian Church, where Capers used to attend.

Starr said her son enjoyed playing video games and looked forward to going into business for himself.

"He was one of those people that could have done whatever he set his mind to," Starr said. "He was happy, just getting into the best part of his life. It's one of those unexplainable tragedies as a parent you never think will happen to you. As a mother, you imagine what your son will become. I will never know."

John Conkle/Special to the Daily Press

(Top) Jesse Capers is loaded from a stokes basket to a stretcher before being transported to the Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center on Sunday.

(Left) The Santa Monica Fire Department used an aerial ladder to reach Capers, whose body came to a stop at a large tree in the middle of the Palisades Bluff.

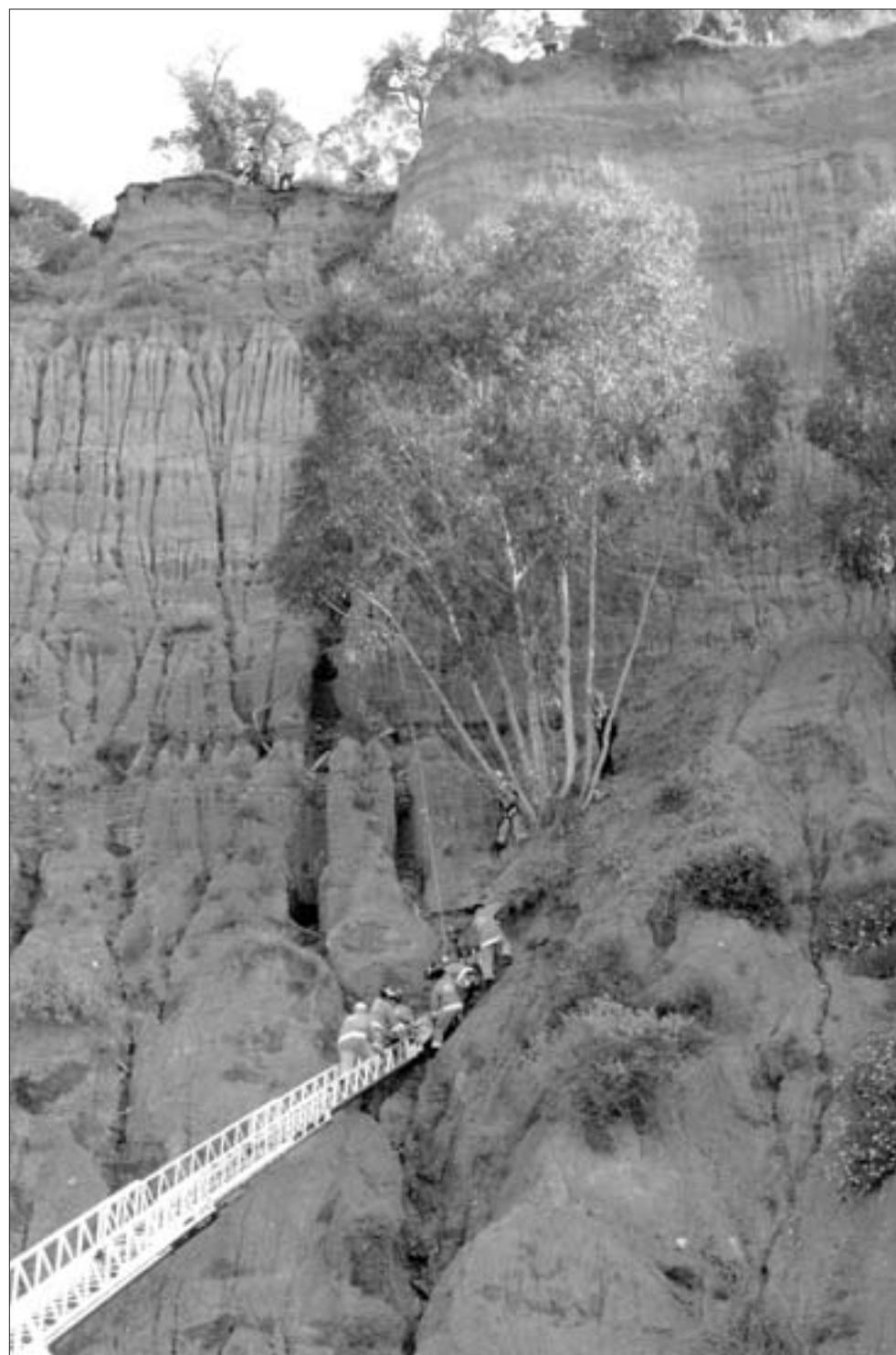
BLUFF, from page 1

Bjerke. Capers lost consciousness during the hour-long rescue and died at 9:36 a.m. from severe trauma at the Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center.

Deborah Starr, Capers' mother, said she returned from a weekend trip when her husband notified her of her son's death face-to-face on Sunday evening.

"I couldn't believe it," Starr said. "I was in shock, denial."

Starr said she believes her son's death wasn't a suicide — because he had no reason to kill himself — but a freak accident caused by drugs he might have taken before his fall. Starr said her son was spending the weekend at his father's home in La Jolla, Calif., when Capers and



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STATE BRIEFS

Gold Line shows signs of tarnish

By The Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. — Ridership on the struggling Gold Line rail system linking Pasadena and downtown Los Angeles has failed to meet expectations, drawing only about half the predicted riders.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority estimated up to 32,000 people would be taking the train each day by July 2004. Average weekday boardings in March, however, was 15,226 — only the third time since its 2003 opening that ridership cracked 15,000. Still, the MTA is optimistic about its least-used rail line. March ridership was 1,500 higher than February.

“I see this March figure as being significant. We had hoped for higher ridership, but it takes a while for a line to mature,” MTA spokesman Ed Scannell said.

The Green Line, from Norwalk to El Segundo, averaged 33,227 riders last month; the Blue Line, from Long Beach to Los Angeles averaged 75,122; and the Red Line, from Union Station to North Hollywood, averaged 117,507.

It takes 34 minutes for the train to get from the Sierra Madre Villa station, the easternmost station, to Union Station in downtown Los Angeles.

Costs of retirement taking a toll on county

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Another hike in retirement bills will balloon the county’s annual pension costs to nearly \$1.2 billion.

The county is facing a \$115 million increase in retirement costs for the fiscal year starting July 1, Chief Administrative Officer David Janssen said.

“It’s a huge jump,” Janssen said, explaining the county is still paying for huge stock market losses that hit pension fund investments when the dot-coms withered in 2000.

The county is also paying back \$2 billion in bond borrowing a decade ago. The way the bonds were structured, the annual payments on the debt will peak over the next three years. Next year’s retirement bill includes \$836 million in pension contributions. The bill also includes \$357 million to pay off bond debts. In all, the county will have spent \$2.9 billion in interest payments by the time it pays off the money it borrowed in 1994.

New nurses aren’t answering their pages

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Nearly a quarter of all students studying to be nurses in Los Angeles community colleges dropped out in 2003 and 2004.

The dropout rate is more than 35 percent higher than the statewide average.

Six of the Los Angeles Community College District’s nine colleges offering nursing programs had a student dropout rate of 23.2 percent, compared with 17.1 percent at community colleges statewide.

College officials say the dropout rate is so high that it is becoming one of the most significant bottlenecks in a severely strained system providing two-thirds of the state’s nurses. The system already has waiting lists of as long as three years and students are admitted through a lottery system.

Many college officials have begun pushing for tighter admissions standards to keep unprepared applicants out of the system.

An artful touch in the name of relief

ASSIST, from page 3

wards to touch a wall, a tree and eventually he was touching stuff on his own and was laughing.”

Another woman helped by the team had suffered a mild stroke and could barely walk into the tent where they were working.

A “touch assist” brought the woman’s attention to the affected areas by repetitively touching her body and putting her into communication with the injury. Reyne explained that assists help restore communication with the affected area.

“When trauma occurs, we naturally shut down,” she said. “And when attention is withdrawn from injured or ill body areas, so are circulation, nerve flows and energy.”

Throughout their stay, the team was escorted to various hospitals, schools used as temporary shelters and refugee camps of Indonesia.

“I helped mothers who had just given birth, a child who had inhaled the tsunami water and could not breathe and the midwives who had grieved so much for lives not even yet born,” Reyne said. “I taught

many Indonesians the ‘nerve assist.’ It was the big favorite, because it meant reprieve from endless sleepless nights.”

Barbara Dakin, SDR coordinator in Los Angeles — which is part of a worldwide network — said funding for the SDR teams has come from many sources, including from many businessmen who have donated thousands of dollars to enable volunteers like Reyne to equip and travel to Southeast Asia.

“SDR has maintained a steady presence in all the affected areas of Southeast Asia from the onset, particularly in Islamic Indonesia,” Dakin said. “It is an attest that real help is an international acknowledgment of faith. We are proud of every one of our volunteers and welcome the additional monetary support that Amanda hopes to generate with her exhibit.”

For more information on Scientology Disaster Response efforts, or to book a slide show presentation of the work being done for your organization, contact SDR Los Angeles at (213) 413-4221. For more information about the Amanda H. Reyne Art Exhibit, contact amandahreyne@earthlink.net.)

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DEAR DORIE

Signs, signs, everywhere are signs

Dear Dorie,

I was in the grocery store the other day and I'm sure I saw a mother using sign language with her baby. The baby was cooing and giggling just fine and answering back with her hands. Should I be doing it with my baby?
— Sign Spotter

Dear Spotter:

You probably witnessed a mother "signing" with her baby — whether she was using American Sign Language (ASL) or her own gestures I couldn't know — but either way it is a growing area of interest for early childhood professionals (as well as parents) as we attempt to communicate with our infants before they can speak.

According to Joseph Garcia's "Sign With Your Baby," infants have control over their hands long before they develop speech. Yet, as any parent will attest, babies regularly try to tell us things like "my diaper is dirty" or "I'm hungry." Baby signing allows any baby to express needs and wants well before we thought possible, thereby eliminating some of the guessing of parenting. If this piques your interest, check your local library or bookstore for books and videos on the topic.

ASL, on the other hand, is an entire language spoken with your hands used primarily within the deaf community. As with baby sign, infants and toddlers communicate in this fashion much earlier than oral languages.

— Dorie

(Submit your questions at meek@smmusd.org, or call (310) 452-6132; fax (310) 452-6392).

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The battle over bells, whistles pits parents against each other



How Much Is Enough?

Jean Illsley Clarke Ph.D.

I want the purple bike now!

Elena wants the purple bike, and she wants it right now! To wait, to delay gratification, is not in the nature of young children. It is a behavior that has to be carefully taught, over and over and over.

- Wait while I fix your bottle.
- Wait until it's your turn.
- Wait until I'm off the phone.
- Wait until after dinner is over.
- Wait until the adults are through talking.
- Wait until school is out.
- Wait until you turn 16.
- Wait until you have earned enough money.
- Wait, wait, wait.

The ability to delay gratification gracefully is a crucial ingredient of success in adult life. It is one of the most important lessons children need to learn. It is a powerful factor in adult success.

Some of the "wait" lessons are built into the schools, but the foundation for this behavior is laid out at home during the preschool years and continues throughout the growing years. Is it important to teach? Yes. Easy to teach? Not necessarily. Easy to turn around for parents who have been overindulging? That takes courage and persistence.

Parents in recovery

Witness dad and mom, a couple who are struggling to cut back on overindulging. They have given so much on demand that their girls have only the first part of "wait" down pat. "Wait for me!" Yes. "Wait for what I want?" No way! "Wait for someone else?" Not without nagging them to hurry.

A visit to the bike shop

Seven-year-old Bonita's bike needs repair and 4-year-old Elena has outgrown hers. On the way to the bike shop, Bonita's demands to bring her bike home today mix with Syndey's chant, "I'm getting a new bike today, I'm getting a new bike today." Dad explains for the seventh time that Bonita's bike may not be ready today, and that Elena's bike will be turned in against a new bike for her birthday. The girls hear only their own voices.

Inside the bike shop, Bonita jumps up and down by the repair shop window, and Elena gravitates to a purple bike. You know the scenario. Elena tries the purple beauty, just her size. Dad says birthday. Elena begs. Mom says birthday. Elena smiles and wheedles. Dad says birthday. Elena tantrums. Mom wavers, "Couldn't we get it today?" Dad reminds mom that they have agreed to put some delayed gratification into the girls' lives. Mom is still hooked. "Can't we negotiate with Elena? She wants it so much!" Mom, like many parents hooked by a child's distress, suffers temporary brain dysfunction as her good intent crowds out her rational thinking.

Dad proposes a way for Elena to earn the bike. Next week, on vacation, they can rent a standard bike for dad without a child seat on the back. They rent a small bike for Elena. If she pedals her own bike, which she is big enough to do, she gets the passionate purple bike on her birthday.

Elena sulks. Bonita's bike is not ready. The drive home is petulance plus. Four times that evening Elena demands to know why she can't have "her" bike now. Four times that evening dad repeats the plan.

How will this story end? Will mom and dad get to the place where they can simply say, "This is not your decision," and make it stick? For now, will dad prevail? Will Elena have the double lesson of waiting and of putting forth effort other than begging? Will mom's desire to avoid dealing with discomfort prevail? Will she slip up and buy the bike now? What will they do if Elena doesn't pedal her bike on vacation? Will these intelligent, well-meaning parents find a way to help their girls play catch-up on the lessons of delayed gratification? How would this play out if the girls were teenagers? What would you do?

Adult research study participants who were overindulged as children reported that difficulty in delaying gratification has many adverse effects on their adult lives: Maxed credit cards, obesity, difficulty in keeping a job, etc. Read more about it on the Web site: www.overindulgence.info or in the How Much Is Enough? book.

To participate in a new study on overindulgence and relationships log onto our Web site at www.overindulgence.info.

(Jean Illsley Clarke Ph.D., Connie Dawson Ph.D., and David J. Bredehoft Ph.D. are co-authors of "How Much is Enough? Everything You Need to Know to Steer Clear of Overindulgence and Raise Likeable, Responsible, and Respectful Children." Illsley Clarke can be reached at jiconsults@aol.com.)

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TUESDAYS – ongoing – ATTACHMENT PARENTING CLASS

2:00 – 3:30 p.m. YMCA, 1332 Sixth St., 393-2721 (ask for Shelana Philip-Guide or Audrey Meyer). This new class for mothers/dads and babies up to 12 months is presented by Karol Darsa, PsyD, a licensed psychologist with extensive experience working with children and families. Fees: Members – 1 class – \$40, 5 class pass – \$180; Non-members – \$50, 5 class pass – \$200.

WEDNESDAYS through JUNE 8 – ENCHANT-ED LUNCHTIME THEATRE

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. This lively and creative Parent and Me performing adventure features story time, theatre games, craft-making and play building with members of Actor's Repertory Theatre as everyone enacts the week's fairytale, legend or folk story together. Also includes a magical lunchtime meal. New theme every week so come once, twice or as often as you like. For ages 3 – 5 and their parents. \$15 per child, parents are free; \$5 for parent lunch; reservations required at least 24 hours in advance.

Santa Monica Playhouse, 1211 4th St., 310-394-9779, ext. 2. This program is also available for birthday parties and pre-school field trips.

FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY, APRIL 22 – 24 and APRIL 29 – MAY 1

DAY OUT with THOMAS at the Fillmore and Western Railway Museum. The Celebration Tour pulls into the station with a real train that has been converted into Thomas. 2005 marks the 60th anniversary of the classic storybooks of Thomas and Friends, so don't miss out on your chance to take a 25 minute ride on Thomas, have a picture with Sir Topham Hatt, play with and purchase train sets, and enjoy numerous other activities. Train rides depart approximately every 50 minutes from 9:20 a.m. until 2:40 p.m., \$14 for ages 2 and up. Tickets are available by calling toll-free 866-468-7630, at www.fwry.com or www.ticketweb.com/thomas. For more info and directions call 805-524-2546 or visit www.fwry.com. 250 Central Park in Fillmore.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

DINO FAIR at THE GROWING PLACE – 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. This family festival features pony rides, dino games, a petting zoo, face painting and volcano arts. Proceeds benefit low-income families who need scholarships. 401 Ashland Ave., 399-7769.

EMERGING FAMILY WORKSHOP – 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Create a sculptural project with artist Blue McRight. Ages 6 and up, \$12. Santa Monica Museum of Art, 2525 Michigan Ave., 586-6488.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, APRIL 23 & 24

LA TIMES FESTIVAL of BOOKS – 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., UCLA Campus. The 10th Annual Festival celebrates the written word with author talks, book reviews and writing workshops. The children's area features storytelling and performance on two stages, along with well-known characters strolling through the crowds. There also booths and demos offering something for all ages. Call 800-LA-TIMES, ext. 7BOOK or visit www.latimes.com/events for more info. FREE!

SUNDAY, APRIL 24 – FIESTA and SILENT AUCTION – 10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m.

This annual fiesta at Canyon Charter School features amusement park rides, carnival game, face painting, arts and crafts, a petting zoo, live music and food. Proceeds benefit the school. 421 Entrada Dr., 454-7510.

COMING UP – THURSDAYS, APRIL 21 – MAY 26 – 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

PARENTING EDUCATION & FAMILY ENRICHMENT – Final session this year! This class is based on principles of child development with a focus on active listening, problem solving, developmentally appropriate expectations and discipline techniques. Instructor: Marilyn McGrath, M.S., Director of the Early Childhood Institute at SMC. Presented by SMMUSD'S Infant and Family Support Program in partnership with St. John's Health Center. Class location: Child Development Services, Auditorium, 2802 Fourth St., Santa Monica. Call 452-6132 for more info. Class is free, but a refundable \$20 registration fee is required.

LOW-COST BIRTH DOULA SERVICES – DONA (Doulas of North America) Trained doulas seeking to attend births to fulfill certification requirements are available to you in exchange for completion of required paperwork and a minimal fee (\$50 – \$100) to cover expenses. Please call Nina at 310-395-7321 for more information. What is a doula? "A woman experienced in childbirth who provides continuous physical, emotional and informational support before,

during and just after childbirth." (Klaus, Kennell and Klaus in Mothering the Mother)

TUESDAY

Movies for Moms! April 19 – The Pacifier starring Vin Diesel, Lauren Graham and Faith Ford. Comedy/Action, Rated "PG." 11:00 a.m., Loews Broadway, 1441 3rd St. Promenade – for Moms and babies newborn – 1 year old. Doors open early for socializing and getting comfortable. Visit www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms for details.

Storytelling

Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.

Toddler Storytime; 10:00 a.m. For 2 year olds with adult.

Preschool Story Time; 10:30 a.m.; for ages 3-5.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

Cuentos Para Pequenos – 10:00 a.m., six-week series in Spanish for 24 – 36 month olds with adult. Next session April 26 – May 31.

Lap Time – 11:00 a.m., six-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by the SMMUSD Infant & Family Support Program. Next session April 26 – May 31.

Twilight Story Time – 7pm – an ongoing program for 3-5 year olds.

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Family Story Time – 7:00 p.m., all ages.

TERRIFIC TUESDAYS – 3:30 p.m., stories and crafts for ages 5 – 9.

(Every other Tuesday, April 26, May 10 & 24). *Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.*

Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 2 to 3 year olds.

Register now for next session – April 19 – May 24.

Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis

For ages infant to 3. 11:00 a.m. 116 North Robertson, Plaza A, LA. 310-358-2500, www.storyopolis.com

Barnes and Noble at the Grove Storytime for ages 2 – 6. 10:00 a.m. 189 Grove Drive, LA, 323-525-0270

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Infant/Toddler & Me Classes –

9:15 – 10:15 a.m. – Walkers to 3 years; 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. & 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. – ages 0 to 1 year; classes in partnership with the Infant and Family Support Program. 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881 for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA

10:00 – 11:00 a.m and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members \$90 for 10 classes. (also Thursday nights 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info.

Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Itsy Bitsy Yoga – Tots (crawling to 24 months) – 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Baby (6 weeks to pre-crawling) – 11:00 – noon. With Khefri Riley at Ocean Oasis, 1333 Ocean Ave. Register at www.khefri.net or call 323-549-5383.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Yoga for ages 4 – 7, 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. (Students may be dropped off at 3:30 for indoor play, song and snacks). \$18 drop-in, discounted multiple week passes available, reservations required. 1814 14th St., #208, 260-2736

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774 – no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Storytelling

The Talking Stick Coffee Lounge – 1630 Ocean Park Blvd., 450-6052

10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4 at this neighborhood coffee shop.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

Toddler Story Time – 9:30 a.m., for two year olds.

Preschool Story Time – 10:30 a.m.; six-week series for 3-5 year olds with adult.

Next session April 27 – June 1 for both.. *Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.*

Lap Time – 10:15 & 11:15 a.m., ages 0-2.

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 392-3804.

Preschool Twilight Story Time – 7:00 – 7:30

p.m. Parents/children ages 3-5. **Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion** – 2 pm – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144 **Border's, Westwood** – 11am – 310-475-3444.

Classes

Rhythm Child Parent & Me Rhythms, Santa Monica Studios, 3025 Olympic Blvd., 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. Children explore rhythms through drum play. Ages 6 mos. – 3.5 years; \$100 for 8 weeks. Call 204-5466 or visit www.rhythm-child.net for more info and session dates.

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Infant /Toddler and Me (0-12 mos.) – 10:30 – 11:00 a.m.; 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881 for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, \$15 **Fitness for Moms** – Babies Welcome! Step Aerobics, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay \$90 for 10 classes.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Mommy and Me Yoga (ages 4-6), 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. and 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Includes 15 minutes of indoor play and song. \$165 for an 8 week session, \$75 for additional sibling.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774, no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Other

Puppetolio – 1:00 p.m., 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

THURSDAY

Babystyle, 1324 Montana Avenue, 434-9590 10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4.

Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.

Toddler Storytime; 10:00 a.m.; for 2 year olds with adult.

Preschool Story Time; 10:30 a.m.; for ages 3-5.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

La Hora Del Cuento – 7:00 p.m. Spanish stories, songs and rhymes for all ages.

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Toddler Story Time – 10:15 a.m., for 2 year olds. Current session thru May 19.

Preschool Story Time – 11:15 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds.

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents – Toddler & Me Classes, Walkers to 3 years – 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. and 10:45 – 11:45 a.m.; classes in partnership with the Infant and Family Support Program. Parent Support (3 – 5 years) – 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881 for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA

7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members \$90 for 10 classes. (also Tuesdays at 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info.

Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Kids' Yoga Circle – Yoga for ages 6 – 10, 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. (students may be dropped off at 3:30 for indoor play, song and snacks). \$18 drop-in, discounted multiple week passes available, reservations required.

Family Yoga, 5:15 – 6:30 p.m., includes 15 minutes of indoor play and song. 8-week series for parents and 1 child, \$250, \$100 each additional child.

1814 14th St., #208, 260-2736

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774 – no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 4-8 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

Parent's Night Out at Child's Play, 2299 Westwood Blvd., 6:00 – 11:00 p.m.

Kids get a night of supervised fun with pizza, games and more while parents go out. Ages 3-10, \$9 per hour, \$7 siblings, 3 hour minimum. Reservations required, 470-4997. www.child-splayonline.net

La Leche League of LA/Mar Vista – meets the 2nd Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Call 310-390-2529 for info.

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STATE □ NATIONAL



Marijuana smugglers seize chance to off-road into U.S.

BY ELLIOT SPAGAT

Associated Press Writer

IMPERIAL SAND DUNES, Calif. — The man at the wheel of a roaring dune buggy rips a swirling trail over the desolate landscape on a morning ride. He veers to the south, and then whips back.

That prompts U.S. Border Patrol agent Danielle Suarez to pull him over and give him a warning. The dune rider doesn't know it, but he just crossed into Mexico and back.

Here, along a five-mile stretch of constantly shifting sands, the border is invisible. It's an opportunity for drug smugglers to slip over the line and mix in with the off-roading crowd — and a challenge for the agents trying to spot them.

At one point, the international line sits just a half-mile south of Interstate 8, the main link between San Diego and Phoenix.

The Imperial Sand Dunes, a desolate desert expanse, is a giant playground for all-terrain vehicle enthusiasts. On busy weekends between fall and spring, when the temperatures are tolerable, ATV riders, dune buggy fans and campers in motor homes swarm over the sands. A holiday weekend can draw close to 200,000.

"It's so easy for them (smugglers) to blend in, looking for a way to get onto I-8," Suarez says as she meanders the hills in a Ford F-250 truck. "There's really nothing separating the two countries."

The southern edge of the dunes, the Buttercup dunes, is remote enough to have served as a film location for parts of "Star Wars: Return of the Jedi."

Church's tea party not yet a lost cause, high court to review hallucinogenic case

BY HOPE YEN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court agreed Monday to consider whether a church in New Mexico can continue using hallucinogenic tea in its religious services.

At issue is whether use of the tea, which contains a drug banned under the federal Controlled Substances Act, is protected under constitutional guarantees of freedom of religion. The Bush administration contends the tea is illegal and use of it potentially dangerous for church members.

Justices will review a lower court ruling that allowed the Brazil-based church — O Centro Espirita Beneficiente Uniao do Vegetal — to import and use the hoasca tea while the case was appealed. Arguments will be heard in the court's next term beginning in October.

The church, which has about 140 members in the United States and 8,000 worldwide, says the herbal brew is a central sacrament in its religious practice, which is a blend of Christian beliefs and traditions rooted in the Amazon basin.

The Denver-based 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, ruled 8-5 that the church had shown a "substantial likelihood of success" in winning religious exemption, rejected the government's request to temporarily ban use of the drug at the church, whose U.S. operations are based in Santa Fe, N.M.

In its Supreme Court appeal of that order, the Bush administration argued it has a "compelling interest" in

The only marking for the international border: a couple of concrete obelisks about 15 feet high.

Since late February, there have been seven drug busts along the dunes, and a string of others before that. Federal agents have yet to uncover any elaborate criminal enterprise, but the arrests show how the dunes are being used to funnel dope into the United States.

Marijuana smugglers appear to have used Buttercup since around 1999, and they send the drugs to points east, said Ricardo Sandoval, special agent in charge of Homeland Security Department's Immigration and Customs Enforcement bureau in El Centro, about 35 miles west of the dunes. He declined to elaborate, saying he couldn't comment on an open investigation.

In one typical bust last month, a Border Patrol agent spotted seven all-terrain vehicles streaking across the border at sunset — five of them with large duffel bags strapped to the seats. At the main campground, two men loaded the bags on a trailer.

Agents stopped the trailer on Interstate 8 and found 558 pounds of marijuana in a secret compartment, according to charges filed in federal court. The driver said a woman in nearby Mexicali, Mexico, promised him \$500 for each duffel bag. He admitted delivering four bags to a truck stop in El Centro a few days earlier.

If they don't mix with large crowds in daylight, smugglers sneak in under the cover of darkness.

Some agents cruise in dune buggies, while others survey the landscape from perches that are up to 300 feet high. They look for dune buggies that carry duffel bags or appear to be holding lots of weight.

preventing an illegal market for the drug. The government also said the 1971 U.N. Convention on Psychotropic Substances bars importation of the drug in the tea — dimethyltryptamine — except for research. The United States is among more than 160 signatories to that treaty.

Allowing the tea use "directly impairs the effectiveness of international narcotics law-enforcement efforts, frustrates intergovernmental cooperation, and weakens the government's ability to insist that other countries adhere to their treaty obligations," the government filing states.

Lawyers for the church countered that tea use by law-abiding citizens practicing their religious beliefs does not constitute drug abuse or put worshippers' health in danger.

"The record does not support the government's alarmist arguments that denial of the petition will result in physical or psychological harm" to church members or illegal drug trafficking outside the church, the filings state.

In 1990, the Supreme Court ruled 5-3 that states have a right to criminalize the use of peyote, which contains the hallucinogen mescaline, rejecting a challenge by American Indians seeking a religious exemption under the First Amendment's free exercise clause.

"We have never held that an individual's religious beliefs excuse him from compliance with an otherwise valid law prohibiting conduct that the state is free to regulate," Justice Antonin Scalia wrote for the majority. "The record of more than a century of our free exercise jurisprudence contradicts that proposition."

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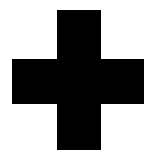
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NATIONAL



Tangled up in blue: TV execs to talk broadcast indecency

BY GARY GENTILE
AP Business Writer

LAS VEGAS — Wardrobe malfunctions, radio shock jocks and “Saving Private Ryan” will be hot topics among TV and radio executives gathered for the annual National Association of Broadcasters convention in Las Vegas.

Earlier this month, Rep. James Sensenbrenner Jr., who heads the powerful House Judiciary Committee, told cable executives that criminal prosecutions would be an efficient way to enforce indecency regulations.

That kind of tough talk didn’t sit well with cable programmers and won’t go over with commercial broadcasters either at the convention that begins Monday.

Station owners strongly support the notion that they should regulate themselves rather than be subjected to arbitrary rulings by federal authorities that can carry hefty fines.

“The industry needs to be able to come together” and agree on indecency standards, said Gary Chapman, chairman and president of Rhode Island-based LIN TV Corp., which owns 25 stations in 14 markets across the country.

"The last thing we want is for the government to do it," he said.

Concerns about inconsistent enforcement of indecency standards caused many ABC affiliates to balk at airing an unedited version of the Stephen Spielberg film “Saving Private Ryan” last Veterans Day. The stations feared the film’s profanity and violence could spark complaints to the Federal Communications Commission and result in fines.

The FCC eventually ruled the film was not indecent.

“There has to be a white line,” Chapman said, noting that his ABC affiliates broadcast the film.

Former FCC Chairman Michael Powell warned broadcasters that if they did not act to curb indecency, regulators would step in.

Spurred by the infamous Janet Jackson “wardrobe malfunction” at the 2004 Super Bowl, broadcasters

rushed to act, with networks imposing delays at awards shows and Clear Channel Communications pulling radio personality Howard Stern from its stations.

Many broadcasters complain that FCC indecency rules do not apply to cable and satellite stations.

“The vast majority of people recognize broadcast programming is far less explicit than what you find on cable and satellite,” NAB spokesman Dennis Wharton said. “But if you are going to regulate broadcasters, the same rules ought to apply to cable and satellite.”

At the convention, a panel of station owners, including Chapman, will tackle the topic. The issue is also expected to be pressed by FCC Chairman Kevin Martin, who was named the nation’s top media regulator last month.

Powerful congressional leaders, including Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., will discuss indecency as part of another panel.

Also dominating this year’s gathering will be the transition from analog to digital broadcasting in television and radio.

Reflecting the importance of the issue, the convention’s keynote speaker isn’t a broadcaster at all. It’s Ivan Seidenberg, chairman and CEO of telecommunications firm Verizon Communications Inc. The phone company delivers high-speed Internet access, which will one day carry TV signals into homes.

High-definition radio has already started to appear across the country and stations will make an even bigger push in the months ahead as the industry faces competition from satellite radio and downloadable music.

“It will help us maintain our competitive edge over iPods, over Internet radio and satellite radio,” Wharton said. “This is our calling card into the future.”

About 300 stations offer the format, which broadcasts AM signals at FM quality and FM signals at CD quality. That number is expected to grow to 1,300 stations by next year and more than 3,000 in the next few years, Wharton said.

Sharks may sense something fishy going on

BY TARA GODVIN
Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU — Thanks to the movie monsters, every swimmer is keenly aware that the ocean is filled with more than harmless little fish.

And Leeward Oahu residents say they have seen more sharks since a fish farm took up residence about two miles offshore at Ewa Beach almost six years ago, said William Aila, a resident and fisherman.

Since companies have approached the Waianae community during the last year with plans for new aquaculture farms off their coast, residents want to find out if they should be concerned, he said.

“We know that any structure attracts predators. ... I want to know, where do the predators go once they are attracted to this area?” Aila said.

On Friday, state lawmakers approved a state-funded study of sharks off Oahu’s Leeward Coast to learn if the fish farm is bringing them closer to shore.

Similar farms are being considered for other parts of the islands, bringing the potential of more jobs and investment in Hawaii, Aila said. Another deep-sea fish farm just opened last month a half mile off Keahole Point on the Big Island’s Kona Coast.

And more could be in store for the rest of the nation and beyond.

Offshore fish farming, in which submerged pens containing thousands of fish are tended by scuba divers, is limited commercially to waters within state jurisdiction, where permits have been easier to get. But in December, President Bush proposed making it easier to put fish farms off the nation’s coasts.

Sharks have been spotted around the Ewa Beach farm’s four pens, which are each about the size of a small house and anchored in 150 feet of water.

But the sharks have never caused trouble for workers at the facility, are seen only occasionally, and are exclu-

sively of a species not known to be aggressive to humans — the sandbar shark, said Randy Cates, owner of the company that runs the cages, Cates International Inc.

There are about 40 varieties of sharks swimming about the islands, ranging from the inches-long pygmy shark to the resident bad guy — the tiger shark — held responsible for most attacks on humans.

Cates said the presence of sharks around his fish cages shouldn’t be surprising. The cages function as an artificial reef and create a reef ecosystem, which naturally includes the predators.

“Will they attract sharks? Yes, they will. But so will everything else that you put in the ocean that’s an artificial reef,” said Cates, who said he would assist the state on any study.

The managers of the nation’s two other longtime deep-sea fish farms, one in New Hampshire and another in Puerto Rico, also have reported sharks are attracted to their cages, said Kate Naughten of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s aquaculture program. Neither have reported any problems.

A modest study of the sort proposed by the Legislature could address some small questions, such as whether the sharks stay in the area of the cages, said Kim Holland, a shark researcher at Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, which would conduct the study with the state Department of Land and Natural Resources.

It also could help residents feel more comfortable with offshore farms, said Clyde Tamaru, aquaculture specialist with the University of Hawaii Seagrant College Program. However, there’s also the concern that the results could be misunderstood and create a backlash against the industry, which carries significant potential for Hawaii, he said.

“For us the challenge is to maintain an economy that’s not going to be solely dependent on tourism,” Tamaru said. “And the one resource that we have — and we can compete with the rest of the world — is the ocean.”



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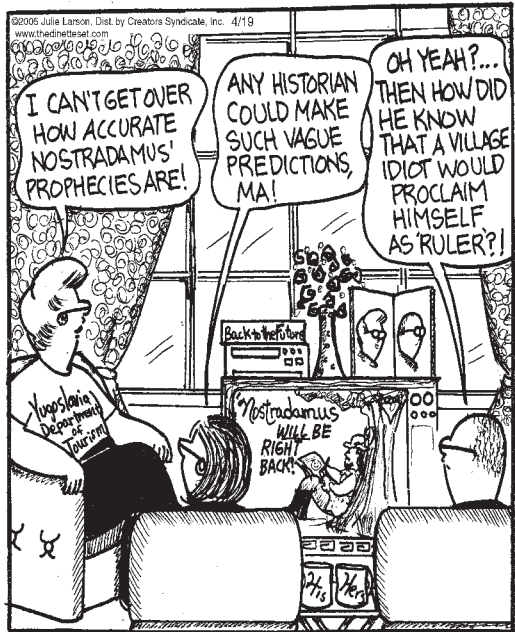
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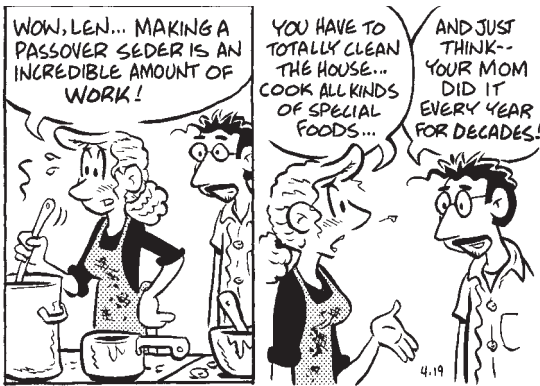
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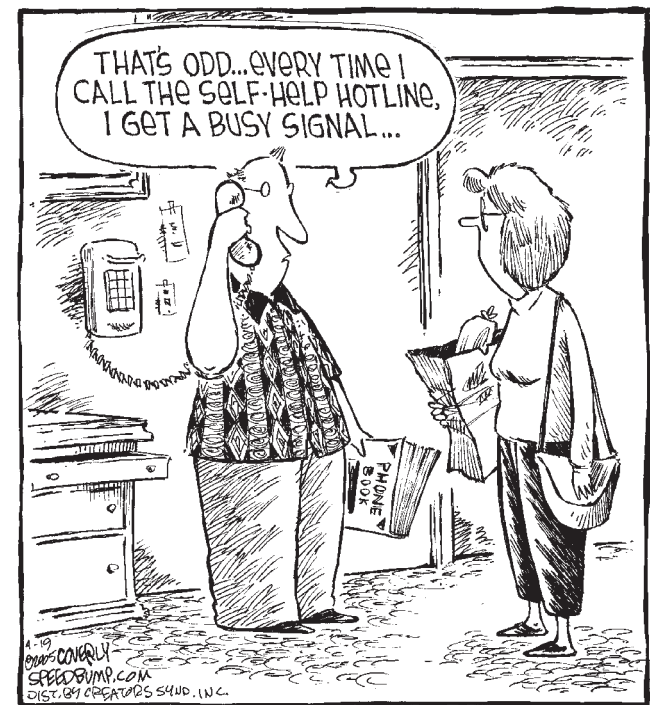
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- 13 Case for the courts
- 15 Buck
- 16 Reporter Potter
- 17 Chauvinist, usually
- 18 Mecca residents
- 20 Wise one
- 21 Bridges
- 22 Copied
- 23 Drink to
- 25 Be bold
- 28 Horn sounds
- 31 March date
- 32 Marked down
- 34 Cry of discovery
- 35 Astronaut Grissom
- 36 MBA or Ph.D.
- 37 Money
- 40 Wipe clean

41 Figure

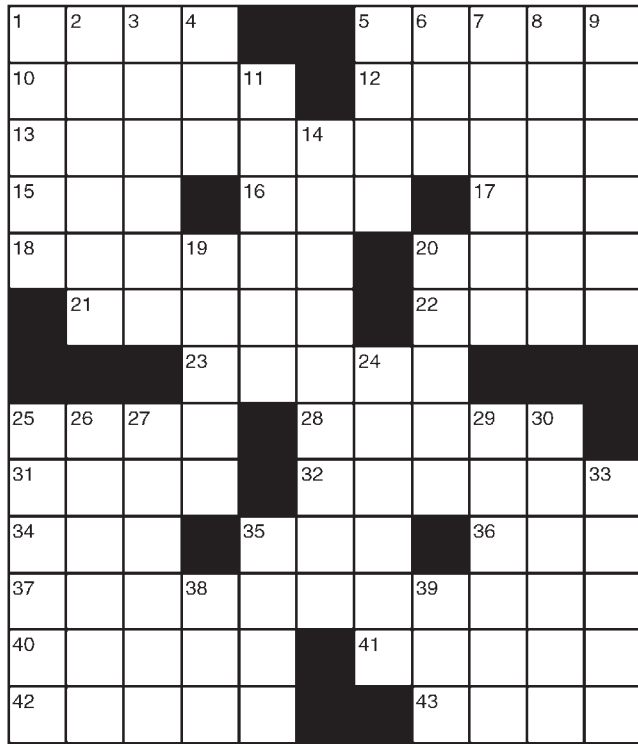
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DOWN

- 1 Director Forman
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- 3 Confine in a zoo
- 4 Greek vowel
- 5 Peruse
- 6 Paintings, e.g.
- 7 Computer picture
- 8 Time of glaciers

- 9 Blasted
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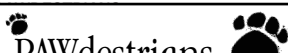
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Puffy goes poof: Combs disses day in his honor

By The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — “Diddy Day” was a dud.

Sean “P. Diddy” Combs was a no-show at an event scheduled Friday at the Aladdin hotel-casino. Mayor Oscar Goodman had been set to proclaim it “Diddy Day,” but plans were scrapped at the last minute when word came that the hip-hop mogul wouldn’t attend.

“Due to an unfortunate miscommunication, I will not be able to make the anticipated trip to Las Vegas on April 15,” Combs said in a statement. “I am flattered the mayor saw fit to honor me with a day and hope to join him soon.”

The event at the V Theatre inside the Desert Passage mall at the Aladdin had been billed as part-ceremony and part-announcement, hinting that Combs would reveal a business venture.

“I am looking forward to speaking with P. Diddy and seeing what the future may hold for him as far as Las Vegas ventures go and hope to host him in Las Vegas soon,” the mayor said in a statement.

Las Vegas businessman and producer David Saxe told the Las Vegas Review-Journal that he had been in talks with Combs to develop a nightclub and “other P. Diddy-related ventures,” including a restaurant in the V Theatre, but those plans were now on hold.

NEW YORK — Tom Snyder, a late-night talk show fixture for years, has been diagnosed with leukemia.

Snyder announced on his Web site Friday that doctors have told him that he has chronic lymphocytic leukemia.

“When I was a kid leukemia was a death sentence. Now, my doctors say it’s treatable! With pills or chemotherapy or a combination of both,” he said.

Snyder, 68, says he had been low on stamina, felt bloated and gained about 50 pounds.

“Suffice to say that 2005 has not been a bell ringer for the Snyder boys,” he wrote in an earlier posting.

Snyder hosted NBC’s “The Tomorrow Show” from 1973-82. He also had a four-year run on CBS’ “The Late Late Show With Tom Snyder,” which he left in 1999. The show was reformatted for Craig Kilborn.

Despite the news, Snyder was as upbeat and opinionated as ever. He brushed on topics such as Social Security, morning network television, the Yankees-Red Sox rivalry and celebrity memoirs.

He finished with the signoff: “Back soon, same time. Same station. ‘Night all!’”

MALIBU — DreamWorks co-founder David Geffen, who fought unsuccessfully for three years to block public access to the beach next to his Malibu home, has agreed to reimburse California and a nonprofit group \$300,000 in legal fees.

The payment was announced Friday by the California Coastal Commission. The day before, the commission reported that Geffen was dropping the fight to keep a pathway across his property to the beach closed. Geffen has declined to comment.

“With all of the lobbying power and legal power he could afford to buy, in the end, the public’s rights prevailed,” said Peter Douglas, the commission’s executive director. “This should send a signal to other holdouts.”

The walkway is one of 10 the commission wants opened in some of Malibu’s most exclusive beachfront communities. Across the state, the closed pathways number more than 100.

Geffen agreed in 1983 to build the pathway across his property in exchange for permission to remodel his mansion on Malibu’s Carbon Beach.

He built the path, but then refused to unlock its gates, arguing that the beach lacked the needed parking, life-guards and restrooms to accommodate the public.

Geffen and Malibu sued the Coastal Commission in 2002, charging the panel failed to conduct a proper environmental analysis and that the nonprofit group Access for All, which was to oversee the path, had limited resources and no experience in managing such a project.

On Wednesday, Geffen turned the keys to the pathway’s gates over to Steve Hoyer, co-founder of Access for All.

Hoyer estimated that his group’s share of the legal fees would be about \$25,000. Most of the rest was expected to go to the state attorney general’s office, which defended the commission against Geffen’s lawsuit.

NEW YORK — It was quite a week for “The Apprentice” candidate Chris Shelton.

On April 10, the 22-year-old real estate developer was taken into custody for lashing out at employees of the Seminole Hard Rock Casino & Hotel in Tampa, Fla., over a \$20 cover charge for the hotel bar. Shelton was released after posting \$250 bail.

Then on Thursday’s episode of the NBC reality show, Shelton was fired by Donald Trump.

“Basically, what happened (in Tampa) was I had paid about \$2,000 for the most expensive suite they have,” Shelton, who lives in Las Vegas, told The Associated Press in a phone interview. “In Vegas, I wouldn’t have been bothered with a cover charge. It was a misunderstanding.”

During his “Apprentice” boardroom feuds, Trump frequently called Shelton out on his tobacco chewing habit and claimed he had an “anger management” problem. Shelton agrees. He quit chewing tobacco and says his temper is something he’s “working on.”

After his team lost a vehicle brochure task, Shelton’s firing led to tears.

“When I was fired, I had such an emotional release because of everything you go through in that experience.”



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