

FREE

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Santa Monica Daily Press

Picked fresh daily. 100% organic news.

History repeating itself in Santa Monica

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

In Bea Nemlaha's Ocean Park neighborhood, homeowners are on a first name basis. They waive across their fences and chat with each other along sidewalks on weekday afternoons as young kids tumble around in small postage stamp-sized front yards.

Their suburban enclave may be a dying breed in Santa Monica, where many older single-family homes are rapidly being torn down and replaced with mansions, condominiums and apartment complexes.

When developers 12 years ago bought six properties on the block dating back to the early 1900s to build condominiums and apartments, Nemlaha and her neighbors feared their cozy neighborhood was going to be lost forever.

Instead of passively letting it happen, the group did something nobody in Santa Monica had done before — they had their neighborhood designated as a historic district.

The process wasn't easy. It took more than seven months of research by residents on the block, three hearings before the city's Landmarks Commission and two more in front of the city council.

In 1990, the Third Street Historic District — which stretches west between

Third and Second Streets and from Hill Street to Ocean Park Boulevard — became the first ever created in the city.

"What this does for us is that it protects us," said Nemlaha, a family law attorney who has lived in the neighborhood since 1981. "It protects us from developers and speculators coming in and buying everyone's home, building and then leaving. It protects us from our own neighbors doing crazy things with their homes."

The historic debate

Some homeowners have recently organized to fight possible historic district designations. They fear the city will take the results of a recently completed survey of homes north of Montana Avenue — one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in the city — and create six districts recommended in the report.

Calling themselves "Homeowners for Voluntary Preservation," the newly-formed committee has begun circulating a petition in an effort to allow homeowners a choice as to whether their homes should be classified as landmarks, or "structures of merit." The group needs 6,000 signa-

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Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

Bea Nemlaha talks to Scott Campbell Friday about the addition to his home.

Customer service nightmare puts Wells Fargo in court

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

One way to guarantee customer service at Wells Fargo may be to sue it.

That's what Larry Nagler did after Wells Fargo cashed his check destined for World Savings and Loan as a mortgage payment for his West Los Angeles home.

A division of Wells Fargo conceded last week that the bank cashed the check with no explanation. Bank officials didn't know who did it because it wasn't endorsed.

But the bank refused to do anything about it so Nagler sued.

Nagler's plight after Wells Fargo lost his \$2,500 mortgage payment illustrates what may be a growing trend among customers of large companies with unfavorable customer service records. The customer may get better service by suing a bank than waiting for the company to find the time or inclination to help.

Nagler mailed the payment, drawn on his Bank of America account, to World Savings and Loan last November. Somehow, the check landed in a Wells Fargo branch in Denver, where it was

cashed. Nagler doesn't have an account with Wells Fargo.

Nagler then claimed he found an impenetrable wall around Wells Fargo customer service representatives. After months during which there was no movement on his request for reimbursement, Nagler sued in Santa Monica small claims court.

What Nagler said about Wells Fargo you'll likely never see in the bank's ads.

"They will not talk to you, period," Nagler said. "The absolute arrogance of dealing with this bank is unbelievable."

This past March, Wells Fargo asked that he send photocopies of the check, but declined to pay for the courier, Nagler said.

It wasn't until Nagler sued Wells Fargo that the bank reimbursed him. But it took four months to extract the money from the bank's jaws. Nagler still pushed the suit in order to win interest during the period the money was lost.

"It cost me \$5,000 to pay \$2,500," Nagler estimated. "It's impossible to talk to anyone at Wells Fargo. They danced me around for months."

See WELLS FARGO, page 3

Calling on you to call us

Dear readers:

Today, the Daily Press is starting a couple of telephone experiments with our readers.

We've set up a pair of phone lines. On one, you'll be able to express yourself about an issue while remaining anonymous. On the other, you can pass to us — even whisper — news tips, which we'll then check out.

Our "Q-line" will let you record an opinion in response to a question that we'll ask in print. We will then run a sampling of opinions in the paper. We'll edit some for length and libel (raw allegations can't be published without authentication). The Q-line isn't

designed to be scientific, and it won't approximate a poll. But we hope it will show the wide range of opinions which readers have about subjects, from parking tickets to national economic policy.

We'll ask you a question every Monday. To reply, call (310) 285-8106 throughout the week, and leave your response in a voice mail box. We'll print the results on Friday.

Our "Tipline" will allow you to leave us tips — anonymously if you wish — on everything from questionable activities and general weirdness to events and photo opportunities. The Tipline is (310) 285-TIPS (8477).

We want to hear from you! We hope you'll use these lines and enjoy the results.

The Q-Line

Last week, the city won its bid to close the 50-year-old Boathouse restaurant on the Santa Monica Pier to make way for Bubba Gump Shrimp, a movie-themed chain restaurant. Some suggest that the Boathouse needed to be replaced with something that would liven up the pier. However, others think the move is another example of Santa Monica selling out to the highest bidder, drawing it clos-

er to a "chain gang" town.

This week, Q-line wants to know, **"If you had to choose from any merchant in the land to occupy the pier, whom would it be and why?"**

Call (310) 285-8106 with your response. We'll print them in Friday's paper. Please limit your comments to a minute or less; it might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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Santa Monica's Daily Calendar

GET OUT!

Shiatsu Massage School of California is hosting Kung Fu classes for beginning students from 4:15 to 5:15 every Monday. Suggested Donation per class is \$4.00. Free class for first-time visitors. 2309 Main St., (310) 396-4877.

**Want to be on the A-List?
Send your calendar items to**
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angela@smdp.com
Fax: 310.576.9913

Today at the Movies!

**LANDMARK'S
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THE CAT'S MEOW [PG-13] Dolby SR
Friday - Thursday: 11:00 - 1:30 - 4:15
- 7:00 - 9:30
Sorry, No Passes Accepted

KISSING JESSICA STEIN [R] Ultra Stereo
Friday - Thursday: 12:00 - 2:15 - 4:45
- 7:15 - 9:45

**LAEMMLE'S
MONICA 4 PLEX**
1332 Second St, Santa Monica

Y TU MAMA TAM BIEN
2:00 - 4:45 - 7:30 - 10:15

AMADEUS: DIRECTOR'S CUT (R)
12:15 - 4:15 - 8:15

MONSTERS BALL (R)
1:45 - 4:30 - 7:15 - 10:00

QUO VADIS
12:00 - 3:45 - 7:30

HOROSCOPE

Be where the crowds are, Scorpio



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)
★★★ You could be sidetracked early on. Don't let this take you from your plans. View this event as a detour and nothing more. Your diligence and efficiency help clear out an inordinate amount of clutter. Use care with your hot temper. Tonight: Postpone an expenditure.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ A higher-up or an associate might indirectly let you know how much you are needed. You might prefer a more diplomatic style, but as you have learned, you're not changing this person. Creativity needs to emerge. Don't push someone. Tonight: Budget before spending.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ News might toss you into chaos for the moment. Unexpected developments arise from a basic difference or point of view. Hot energy takes you in a new direction. Listen to and consider new alternatives regarding a domestic matter. Tonight: Put your feet up.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Pressure builds with another when dealing with finances. One-on-one relating takes you in a new direction. Deal with another directly, rather than postponing a discussion. A friend pushes you in a new direction. You might want to resist or argue. Tonight: Where the gang is.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Take your time when consenting to an expenditure. Listen to another carefully. Understand his or her grievance, but you don't need to play into it. Another's temper tantrum has an impact on you. Think in terms of gain and change. Tonight: Pay bills first.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Your happiness takes you in a new direction. Be sensitive to another and his or her alternatives. Make the best of a changing situation. Think in terms of change and gain. News or a call could be quite disruptive. Be careful. Tonight: Whatever makes you happy.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ Slow down, especially in the face of a jolt. Your ability to think through situations takes you in a new direction. Understand what is happening with a child. You could feel like you're walking on eggshells with someone. Another gives you feedback. Tonight: Take some downtime.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Aim for what you want. Your sense of direction helps you deal with an associate financially. You know what you want. Unexpected developments take you in a new direction with a relationship. Your high energy helps you gain. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Take charge when others flake out. Work with an element of unpredictability, and you succeed beyond your wildest dreams. Push hard and get past a problem efficiently. Others will appreciate your efforts and work with you. Tonight: Don't push beyond your limits.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ You have more understanding than most about what is going on. Don't kid yourself about a present matter. Trust your vision of what is workable. A co-worker might test your limits. In some way, you trigger this person. Tonight: Speak your mind.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ You might be OK with a partner but have some problems with a personal matter. How you handle someone could make or break a project. Your creativity could be tested by another's natural ideas. Tonight: Let someone throw a tantrum. You're not changing this person!

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ You might want to let your creativity flow when dealing with others. You could have an insight about a domestic matter or your own behavior. Loosen up when judging yourself and others. You'll find life to be a lot easier. Tonight: Accept an invitation.

QUOTE of the DAY

**"Bisexuality immediately doubles your
chances for a date on Saturday night."**
— Woody Allen

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LOCAL



SM city council has final say on historic designation

DISTRICT, from page 1

tures to place the measure on the November ballot.

Committee members believe the current ordinance imposes restrictions on private property and constitutes an unwarranted intrusion of personal freedom. They claim homeowners won't be able to alter their homes without government approval if they are designated as historically significant.

But Nemlaha said the report documents how quickly older homes are being replaced with newer ones. The report points out that of about 350 homes north of Montana worthy of designation, less than 1 percent have been preserved.

"The urgency for preserving our neighborhood at the time was very real," Nemlaha said, "but citywide, it was no where near as critical as it is today."

The city's landmarks ordinance allows the city council to designate homes historically significant and carve out entire neighborhoods to create historic districts. While the city council is the only body that can make those designations, an all-volunteer Landmarks Commission is charged with approving exterior changes made to already designated homes and finding other homes worthy of preservation.

The criteria for being considered a historic home isn't strict. The home has to have been built more than 40 years ago, it has to have distinct architectural features characteristic of the neighborhood or it has to have served an important role in the city's past.

And while the city council doesn't need a homeowner's approval to bestow landmark status on a home, officials have said they typically want the support of at least 60 percent of residents living within a possible historic district before creating one.

"If the neighbors had been significantly opposed to designation then it's highly unlikely the Landmarks Commission would have recommended our district or the city council would have created it," Nemlaha said.

History can be changed

Areas are typically designated as historic districts to maintain the character of the neighborhood in relation to the history of that part of town, Nemlaha said. The Third Street Historic District showcases two-story, 1920-era homes in Ocean Park, while the Bay Street District showcases earlier beach bungalow style homes.

That's not to say Nemlaha's neighborhood hasn't changed. The house next to hers has had two dormers added in the past few years. Nearly all the homes along the block have skylights, some visible from the street. Currently there are at least three homes under construction — one homeowner has nearly completed an addition that will double the size of his house.

"Sure there was paper work and permits needed," said Scott Campbell, a Third Street resident, of the renovation which will double the size of his home. "But it wasn't very bad. In many ways it was the normal bureaucracy you expect with a project of this size."

Nemlaha has extensively remod-



Andrew H Fixmer/Daily Press

Bea Nemlaha (left) points to a home where a subterranean garage is being proposed. A landmark building (right) used to be a church on Montana Avenue before it was moved to Second Street over 80 years ago. It is now a private residence.

eled the interior of her home. In the dining room, a yellowish Beachwood floor has been installed on top of the dark reddish-brown oak hardwood floors common throughout the rest of her home.

Upstairs she has removed part of the ceiling to expose rough wooden beams and added skylights. She has installed an eight-foot long bay window in her bedroom, through which a patch of the Pacific Ocean can be seen shining brightly under an afternoon sun.

Homeowners and tenants of the street regularly get together to look over changes a neighbor might want to make. After studying the plans and reading reports from senior city staff, the group votes on their own recommendation.

Many times those recommendations have little effect on the city's decision. In the 12 years since designation, there have been 10 major changes made to homes along the two blocks. The group has opposed only three of those, but

the city allowed two of them to go forward despite neighbors' objection.

Recently, the group has opposed one neighbor's request to knock down his front porch and build a subterranean parking garage directly under the front of the home. The Landmarks Commission agreed with homeowners that the placement of the garage would significantly alter the character of the neighborhood. The homeowner has appealed the decision to the city council.

When asked if neighbors should be making decisions about others' property, Nemlaha responds that home buyers knew they were moving into a historic district ahead of time.

In the case of the subterranean garage, she said neighbors aren't making that decision — the city council will have the final say.

"We live in a representational government for a reason," she said. "We ask our elected leaders to take a broader view and make difficult decisions."

Customers find satisfaction through the court system

WELLS FARGO, from page 1

Even though Nagler eventually won satisfaction, the story is a cautionary one for jilted customers because it's difficult for them to recover funds for the time and inconvenience of taking a stalled company to court.

In his suit, Nagler asked for the value of the time he had to take away from work while sorting out the quagmire. He also sought lost interest and a sum for general inconvenience. But all he got was an award of interest and court costs.

An award of general damages against the bank would require proof of such damages, small claims pro tem judge Scott Houtz ruled last week. He noted he couldn't

award damages to Nagler just because he got the run-around. However, he did award Nagler four months worth of interest on \$2,500 at 5 percent.

"Although it may be very unsatisfactory, all the court can award you is the \$40 and court costs," Houtz said.

Cindy Chavez, a paralegal who works in the Wells Fargo law department, said it was difficult to track down Nagler's money because it was lost between Nagler's bank and Wells Fargo.

"I couldn't see how Wells Fargo was involved," she said. "It's an internal process between the banks and it was (Bank of America, on which the check was drawn) and Wells Fargo working behind the scenes."

Wells Fargo never offered to pay the interest on

Nagler's \$2,500 and it appears the bank didn't utilize any of its customer satisfaction policies as a goodwill gesture to Nagler.

Chavez — or anyone at Wells Fargo — didn't have a clue where the money was stashed during the four months it wasn't accounted for.

If there is one reason suing a large institution works, it is adverse publicity. Banks and airlines spend millions of dollars on image-related advertising bent on building the public's trust, and a suit such as Nagler's represents a public relations gaffe. Because it costs corporations more to "buy" new customers than to keep their existing ones, they feel motivated to keep their customers happy.



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OPINION

LETTERS

Doubletree gathering was a protest, not a celebration

Editor:

Oscar de la Torre made some erroneous statements in his opinion piece "Samohi rally celebrated Caesar Chavez, nothing more" (Santa Monica Daily Press, Thursday, April 18, 2002.)

Mr. de la Torre claims that the event was to "celebrate the vision and values of Cesar E. Chavez." On the contrary, why did the organizers and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE), Local 814 send out a press release inviting all the press to join them and students of Samohi in a labor rally against the Doubletree Hotel? And, why were printed "Doubletree is Non-Union" HERE, Local 814 picket signs handed out to rally participants on campus to march with?

As someone who was there with my own picket sign protesting the school district selling out to HERE Local 814, I observed the rally was led by Kurt Peterson, head of HERE, Local 814. Everyone was chanting "se se puede" and yelling about the union and "rights for Doubletree workers" as they marched. Not one word was uttered about Cesar E. Chavez.

Mr. de La Torre says, Ms. Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers an invited speaker, told the students about "the values of nonviolence, compassion, unity, etc." Yet, it was Ms. Huerta who said to the assembly in front of the hotel that "she had been arrested 21 or 22 times and one more arrest wouldn't make a difference." Is this advocating nonviolent protest and compassion?

Mr. de la Torre says the rally provided the opportunity for participants to "practice their first amendment rights in a peaceful demonstration" yet he fails to disclose that there were three "confrontations" with the police who were on scene. The first was when the

marchers were met on the hotel driveway in front of the hotel on Fourth Street. Peterson, stopped the march and led chants against the Double Tree hotel and at the police who were protecting the front of hotel.

The marchers then proceeded around to the Olympic Boulevard side of the hotel. There, some of the marchers spotted more police in the hotel parking lot and stopped to taunt, and hurl threats and vulgarities at the officers assembled.

As the march continued down Olympic toward the campus, Peterson, still leading the procession, decided to deviate from the planned (and approved) route and proceeded down the service alley behind the apartment buildings adjacent to the back side of the hotel — trespassing on leased school property. There, they again were met by the SMPD officers assigned to protect hotel property. Once again, they began shouting phrases relating to organizing the hotel employees. No mention here, either, of Cesar Chavez.

Mr. de La Torre says that the safety of the participants "was guaranteed," however, apparently Mr. de la Torre, school district superintendent, John Deasy, or anyone else participating in this rally considered what might have happened if a group of counter demonstrators, had showed up and challenged the marchers or if some hotheaded participant decided to follow Delores Huerte's suggestion to "get arrested."

Mr. de La Torre takes issue with letter to the editor by Richard Firth, who commented correctly when he wrote "there was a potential for violent conflict." This is why the police are deployed in a "worst case scenario" mode for all labor rallies — including previous HERE, Local 814 Loew's Hotel demonstrations in the past.

I would hate to think what would have happened if

the police were not present to keep order and Mr. Peterson either seized the opportunity to enter the hotel or otherwise lost control of the situation due to immature and emotional teenagers taking it upon themselves to do the same after already being fired up.

Mr. de la Torre says that somehow police protection of private property — which is standard procedure for all rallies of this type — is "sending a message we don't trust our youth."

Mr. de la Torre should go back and retake high school Civics 101. When he helped organize a rally supporting unionization of the Doubletree hotel, did he consider the rights and dignity of the workers who don't want a union?

Does he respect the rights of the hotel management, owners or the thousands of mom and pop stockholders who have invested in Hilton, the owner of the Doubletree? Obviously not. This is all really designed to deflect the controversy concerning the use of school property and our kids for propaganda purposes by an off-campus organization by tossing it back to blaming the police. Sorry, Oscar, we're too smart for that.

If this were a rally sponsored by hotel owners, would de la Torre speak so compassionately about "dignity, respect, and threat to justice?" I think not. With the union sympathizers, there is only one way and it's "my way." That is the real lesson our students were taught.

There was no open debate on the issue. In fact, Mr. de la Torre and HERE representatives don't want you or our students to know the whole story. They rather propagandize and manipulate the facts. Bringing in the race card and the social class element into the mix is unfair, exploitive and the cheapest of shots.

Chuck Allord
Santa Monica

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 530 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 200, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

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LOCAL



The FunHog

By Dan Dunn

Dispatches from the Some Young Moon Saloon

The producers at Warner Bros called to let me know that despite their best efforts, AND despite the REAL LOVE & AFFECTION everyone at the studio has for the FunHog, they have thus far been unable to secure any actual cash from the WB Accounting Division, and that for the foreseeable future I shall continue to be paid for this gig with unwatchable DVDs and stuffed Looney Tunes dolls.

That's a real pisser, I thought, as I sat stroking my brand new, nearly-life-sized Tweety Bird at the Some Young Moon Saloon.

"I'M OFFICIALLY FREAKED OUT!!!!" I told Wes The Bartender. "I have no money, no high-paying make-work assignments in the pipeline ... and my only viable assets are a fully stocked liquor cabinet and 17 copies of Summer Catch."

Thank goodness Wes is a Freddie Prinze Jr. fan, or I couldn't even cover the nut for my whisky at the Moon.

I should "set the scene," as they say: It was 9:30 a.m. on a sunny Tuesday and I was 12 steps into what may have been the most unhealthy breakfast eaten by a human since Hannibal Lecter interned at the L.A. Coroner's office. My Cranial-mobile was running way too hot and hurtling head-on toward a BAD PLACE at the end of a LOST HIGHWAY. And I remind you ... it was 9:30 a.m.

"Christ, man, I can't even afford a decent meal," I cried, knocking back yet another stiff shot of Johnnie Walker.

"Well," Wes corrected me in a voice reserved for disturbed teens who have somehow found the family handgun, "you can't buy any breakfast you've been familiar with up until this time." Wes very carefully topped off my shot glass before continuing. "See, down on 'The Nickel' (as they call 5th Avenue, AKA Skid Row, in L.A.) you can get a hot coffee for 50 cents ... and the line outside the mission is a great place to meet fellow writers who have been at it longer than you. And you could trade some of that Top Shelf Whiskey you've got for somebody's place in line ... or even dole out swigs from the bottle for a dollar each."

For reasons I cannot comprehend, Wes' idea struck me as somewhat palatable, and that — as you can well imagine — disturbed me to no end. And just when I thought the sky couldn't fall any harder, Wes hit me between the eyes with this zinger: "Have you tried borrowing money from Bottomfeeder?"

Regular readers know how I feel about my couch-dwelling roomie. Hell, I'd sooner smash my nuts with a hammer than ask him for a red nickel.

"Or you could get a part-time job waiting tables."

I'd sooner hand Bottomfeeder a hammer, and have HIM smash my nuts.

Don't get me wrong, waiting tables is an honorable profession comprised of some of the finest people on the planet ... it's just that, well, I don't have the PEO-

PLE SKILLS the job demands. And the only place I'm comfortable uttering the words "Would you like that well-done, miss?" is in my bedroom. Preferably when speaking to a supermodel. One with an unusual name like Uniti or Gioa. Or both.

"Boy that Freddie Prinze Jr. is a fine actor," Wes suddenly gushed, ogling the DVD cover and letting his eyes roam to my freshly poured hootch. "Can you get me some more of his movies?"

"What? Um, yeah, I might be able to get my hands on a bootleg copy of Wing Commander ... say Wes, did you ever have to resort to desperate measures to get by when you were down on your luck?"

A broad smile crept across Wes' face as he rolled back to the lean years of his youth. Either that, or he was still thinking about the amazing screen presence of Freddie Prinze Jr.

"When we lived in Ventura just after college, our thing was to go buy a \$1 Bud at happy hour and then eat at the buffet for, like, an hour."

It was then I began wondering why in the hell the Some Young Moon Saloon didn't have \$1 Buds or a buffet I could plunder. And it struck me that Wes always spoke of a "we" in his anecdotes ... who in the hell were these people? And how did THEY escape all this INCESSANT POVERTY? Were they, perhaps, the source of all this semi-credible "on the Nickel" knowledge?

"No kidding," Wes continued. "In some places they got so they wouldn't serve us. Finally I slimed my way into writing a feature story on the 'happy hour buffet wars' for the Ventura County Star — though it was the Star-Free Press in those days — and made many friends. What you need is a good restaurant review column on that new web site. That ought to help matters."

I made a mental note to run the restaurant review idea by my producer, then I worked out a contingency plan — stock up on Instant Oatmeal. I figured even if they cut off the juice and gas, in a large complex such as mine, they can't cut off hot water to only one apartment very easily. There's also hot-water taps in the back of most 7-11 stores these days, but you have to bring your own cup or they'll charge you an "inventory" fee.

Or I could find a sponsor for the site. Perhaps the good people at Johnnie Walker, makers of fine whiskies of the Black and Red and Blue varieties. Tie in a little e-commerce with those red-hot Summer Catch discs on eBay ...

Or, even though it is not my modifier of choice in the following three-word phrase, I could participate in that great Hollywood ritual: The DAY Job.

NEXT TIME: The FunHog visits an employment agency...

(Dan Dunn, a Santa Monica resident, writes for Warner Bros. online. For more FunHog fun, check out thefunhog.com).

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STATE

Girl dies, boy badly mauled in three days of dog attacks

BY RON HARRIS
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — An 11-year-old boy was severely mauled by a neighbor's pit bull, an attack that came just a day after a 5-year-old Monterey girl died after being attacked by her family dog.

The boy was taken to Marshall Hospital in Placerville for surgery and was listed serious condition Sunday. The boy's family requested that the his identity not be published.

In all, three children in Northern California were viciously attacked by dogs since Thursday.

While the spotlight case of the fatal dog attack on San Francisco's Diane Whipple recently drew to a close with a jury's guilty verdict, the vicious dog attacks continue.

The Placerville attack occurred late Saturday as the boy went to a neighbor's home to seek advice on caring for his own dog, according to Lt. Kevin House of the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department.

After no one answered the door, the dog came around from the side of the house and attacked him.

"The dog chased him down and pulled him down by the leg and started chewing on him," House said.

"When the dog attacked him he screamed for his mother. She was able to get the dog off of him by kicking it," House said. "As the mother was carrying him into the house the dog jumped on him again."

The mother began kicking the dog again until it finally released. The boy suffered serious bite wounds to the head,

face, back and torso.

Animal control officers later found the dog, which became aggressive toward them. Authorities then shot and killed the dog at the scene.

The keeper of the pit bull works at a veterinarian hospital, House said. Authorities were not able to locate her Saturday night or Sunday morning to interview her about the attack.

House said he expects to forward a recommendation for criminal prosecution to the county district attorney's office on Monday or Tuesday. He said neighbors have reported the same dog chasing them into their homes in that unincorporated area of Placerville, called Pollock Pines.

Saturday's attack was the third vicious dog attack on a child in Northern California in as many days.

The 5-year-old Monterey girl had been walking with her grandmother and brother in a field when a lizard startled them Friday afternoon. In the commotion, at least one of the family's two large Rottweilers pounced, biting her head and body, police spokesman Randy Taylor said.

She was immediately taken to the hospital, but died later Friday night.

That mauling came less than 24 hours after a 5-year-old Salinas girl was attacked by her family's Doberman pinscher. That girl was mauled so severely Thursday that part of her scalp was pulled from her skull, which the dog also fractured.

She was admitted to the intensive care unit at Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital Thursday in critical condition, but by Sunday was stable and in good condition, according to a hospital nursing supervisor.

Report: population growth, sprawl threaten coastal health

BY COLLEEN VALLES
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — It's got spectacular views, temperate weather and recreational opportunities galore — why wouldn't everyone want to live on the California coast.

And that's the problem.

Population growth and sprawl are threatening the coastal ecosystems across the country, according to a report completed for the independent Pew Oceans Commission, a problem that could only get worse if not addressed soon.

"The bad news is you can't really stop growth," said Chris Mann, coastal policy director for the Pew Oceans Commission. "The good news is minimizing the impact, at least from development, the solutions are pretty low-tech."

More than half of the nation's people live in coastal areas, although coastal counties account for only 17 percent of the total acreage of the contiguous United States, the report said.

Population pressures will only mount. But the number of people doesn't have the greatest impact — it's what they do.

Driving and development have increased disproportionately.

Nationwide, between 1992 and 1997, land was developed at 2.5 times the rate of population increase. And the distance of average commuter trips has increased along with traffic congestion.

The report encouraged use of existing

infrastructure, as well as continued controls on development, such as buffers along rivers.

"There should be a regional process where you decide where you want growth and where you don't," Mann said.

Mann said most states have coastal programs, but that they vary in effectiveness.

"California has one of the most active and authoritative programs out there," Mann said.

California's coastal act was set up in 1976. In some areas it protects a swath that stretches from the shore to about 1,000 feet inland — in other areas, from the shore to more than 10 miles inland.

"We think it's done an admirable job, certainly not a perfect job, of reducing sprawl and preserving natural resources and concentrating development in areas with adequate infrastructure," said Sarah Christie, legislative director for the California Coastal Commission.

Christie said one way to reinforce coastal ecosystem protection is to extend the coastal zone to all the watersheds that lead to the ocean. Those watersheds can transport pollution from inland areas to the ocean.

For that reason, the report's findings about the importance of planning apply everywhere, Mann said.

"The ideas here are just as good and just as important in Iowa," he said. "It's wherever development is affecting water quality and breaking up habitat, and that means everywhere."

STATE CALIFORNIA BRIEFS

Gunman kills one, wounds three at Lancaster restaurant

By The Associated Press

LANCASTER — A man fired a rifle at a crowd outside a popular restaurant and night spot early Sunday, killing one man and wounding three others, the sheriff's department reported.

The victims were all outside the front entrance of Schooners at 12:38 a.m. Sunday morning when the suspect opened fire, witnesses said.

Schooners is a family restaurant by day but becomes a nightspot, featuring a disc jockey, on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights.

"A number of employees and patrons were standing just outside the front door. Three employees and one customer — all male adults — were struck by the gunfire," said Deputy Sonia Parra.

One man was pronounced dead at an area hospital. The other victims remained in the hospital and are expected to survive, Parra said.

No other details were released Sunday morning.

State will lag in recovery, but positioned for big gains

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Californians should expect a slower economic recovery than the rest of the nation, but once the cycle turns they can expect to outpace the country in job creation, population growth and personal income increases, an economic report released Monday said.

The implosion of the technology sector and the decline in foreign trade has wounded California more deeply than most states, and there's still no clear sign of how rapid or strong a recovery will be, according to the annual forecast of the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy.

But California has a strong base in key industries like software, biotech and entertainment that will power the state to new heights in the decade ahead, the report said.

"Even though job and income gains have stalled during the past year, the state's fundamental economic strengths have not been hurt," said Stephen Levy, director of the independent research organization.

The center forecast that by 2010, the state will have increased the number of jobs by 3.5 million, or 22.1 percent, compared with a 15.2 percent rise nationally.

Personal income in California will climb 49.4 percent, compared to 34.2 percent in the rest of the country, according to the report.

But the state will also experience much faster population growth than the country as a whole (14.2 percent versus 8.7 percent), putting additional pressure on infrastructure and resources that are already strained.

Californians' quality of life will be hurt if the state fails to develop a coordinated plan for building more housing, roads and schools, the report said.

"Companies demand this and residents require it so that growth does not diminish either our quality of life or economic competitiveness," Levy said.

LA sheriff hospitalized after running in desert relay

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Sheriff Lee Baca was under observation in a Las Vegas hospital after showing signs of exhaustion and dehydration during a desert relay race Sunday.

Baca, 59, complained of feeling ill after completing his 6.4-mile leg in the Baker to Vegas Relay Race, said Deputy Steve Jauch.

Baca was reported to be "alert and lucid" but was being kept overnight in the hospital as a precaution, Jauch said.

Many teams of law-enforcement officers compete in the 120-mile race.

Baca won re-election to a second term in March. He is the county's first Hispanic sheriff in more than 100 years.

The Sheriff's Department, which is bigger than the Los Angeles Police Department, runs the nation's largest urban jail system and serves 41 cities and unincorporated areas.

100-acre fire in Yorba Linda threatens homes

By The Associated Press

YORBA LINDA — A 100-acre fire burned dangerously close to homes on the eastern edge of Yorba Linda on Sunday evening, officials said.

The fire, which broke out just after 5 p.m., was burning in brush on a hill above a residential area on the edge of the Chino Hills State Park.

Easterly wind gusts of 5- to 10-miles-per-hour were pushing the flames away from the houses, said Capt. Stephen Miller of the Orange County Fire Authority.

"It's pretty close, but it's burning in the opposite way of the homes," Miller said.

About 100 firefighters were battling the blaze, with dozens more dispatched to the scene. The cause was under investigation.

Meanwhile, in Riverside County, flames scorched 75 acres in heavy brush in San Timoteo Canyon, north of Moreno Valley.

There were some scattered homes in the area, but they did not appear to be in danger, said Riverside County Fire spokeswoman Joanne Evans.

The fire was reported at 4:23 p.m. and the cause was under investigation.

About 125 firefighters and 13 engines were on the scene. Two air tankers were sent to attack the blaze, but were soon diverted to the Yorba Linda fire, Evans said.

As nightfall approached the wind picked up, causing problems for firefighters, Evans said.

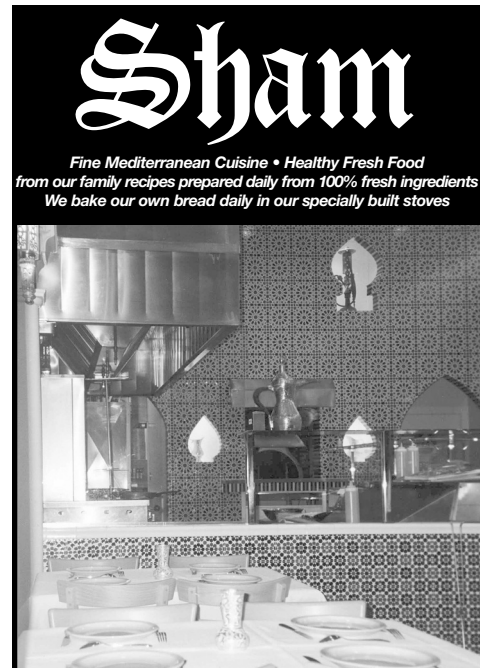


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NATIONAL

Tracks cleared at scene of deadly Amtrak crash

BY RON WORD
Associated Press Writer

CRESCENT CITY, Fla. — The track where an Amtrak Auto Train derailed in a deadly mess of mangled cars and rails was cleared Sunday, allowing the first trains to pass through this northern Florida town since the accident.

The original tracks were torn out by Thursday's derailment, which killed four people and injured more than 150. The first coal train that moved through Sunday morning was on temporary rails, said Gary Sease, spokesman for CSX, the freight railroad that owns the track.

The 39-foot-long sections of temporary track can hold slow-moving trains at 10 mph. The company plans to make improvements this week to allow the temporary tracks to withstand faster trains. He said an average of 28 trains a day are normally scheduled there.

As the coal train passed, workers continued clearing downed trees and debris from the area with bulldozers and cranes.

The Auto Train had been headed for Washington with 418 passengers and 34

crew members, as well as 200 automobiles stacked in 23 cars, when it derailed Thursday.

Its two engines and first two cars stayed on the tracks, but more than half its 40 cars went off, throwing passengers to the cars' floors and against walls.

The NTSB hasn't said if its investigators have been able to verify if the track was misaligned. The lead engineer said the tracks were misaligned by about 10 inches, NTSB investigator Russ Quimby said.

CSX spokeswoman Jane Covington said she could not comment on the engineer's account of the track being misaligned or on whether CSX maintenance crews had reported problems on the stretch of track, citing the NTSB's ongoing investigation.

Amtrak officials hoped to have the Auto Train running again by Monday or Tuesday, Amtrak spokeswoman Kathleen Cantillon said. She said the NTSB was holding eight cars for further inspection.

It was Amtrak's deadliest accident since March 15, 1999, when a train collided with a truck and derailed near



Kelly Jordan/Associated Press

Investigators examine the wreckage Friday from Thursday's Amtrak train derailment near Crescent City, Fla. George Black of the National Transportation Safety Board said investigators have not yet determined what caused the train to hurtle off the tracks. Four people were killed and more than 150 injured.

Bourbonnais, Ill., killing 13 people and injuring more than 100.

Twenty-five people involved in Thursday's derailment remained hospital-

ized Sunday, including one in critical condition, Cantillon said. She said more than 75 percent of the passengers had left for home.

Cardinals pledge to work tirelessly to address crisis

BY JENNIFER PETER
Associated Press Writer

BOSTON — The Vatican needs to understand that the clergy sexual abuse scandal in America is "a very serious issue undermining the mission of the church," Cardinal Bernard Law told

parishioners Sunday as he and the nation's other cardinals prepared for a rare meeting next week at the Vatican.

"Some have likened the situation ... to last year's Sept. 11 tragedy, a crisis which shocks the heart and soul and which must spark

immediate and decisive changes in order to prevent possible recurrence in the future," Law said.

The Roman Catholic cardinals of New York, Baltimore and Miami had messages of encouragement and explanation read or played to their congregations Sunday.

Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of Washington, D.C., spoke on television about his hopes for the meeting in Rome, saying it should give Pope John Paul II the chance to convey his concern for the victims, his disappointment in

letting down faithful Catholics, and his pain over the tarnishing of the church's image and its good works.

The pope also discussed the church's troubles on Sunday. Speaking during an ordination ceremony in Rome, he said bishops are obliged to investigate and take action against churchmen engaged in scandalous behavior.

"Behavior which might give scandal must be carefully avoided, and you yourselves must diligently investigate accusations of any such behavior, taking

firm steps to correct it where it is found to exist," he said.

When they meet with the pope and other Vatican officials Tuesday and Wednesday, the cardinals will be looking for guidance and backing on a wide range of issues, including whether the church should ever consider reassigning sex offenders and creating a policy for reporting abuse claims to police.

McCarrick said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press" that he supports creating a uniform policy for handling sex abuse allegations in all

U.S. Catholic dioceses.

Boston became the epicenter of the sexual abuse controversy in January, when published reports disclosed that Law and other church leaders had reassigned a priest accused of pedophilia. The now-defrocked priest, John Geoghan, was convicted this year of fondling a 10-year-old boy and has been accused of molesting dozens of others.

Law, in his first public appearance since Easter, on Sunday acknowledged criticism of his dealing with priests accused of sexual abuse, at least two of whom were moved from parish to parish despite the allegations.

"Despite the anger and broken trust that many feel toward me, and despite perceptions that next week is simply a gathering of aged conservative cardinals and Vatican officials, please know that as long as I am in position to do so, I will work tirelessly to address this crisis and to underscore its severity," Law said.

"This is a wake-up call for the church," he said.

Law's remarks were met with applause inside the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, but outside, about three dozen protesters continued a call for his resignation. Sunday afternoon, he stepped onto a plane bound for Rome.

Twelve of the 13 U.S. cardinals are expected to meet with the pope this week.

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INTERNATIONAL



Russian resolution



David Karp/Associated Press

Russian Ambassador to United Nations Sergey Lavrov reads a proposal for a resolution, which was approved by the Security Council unanimously, supporting fact-finding mission to look into Israeli military action in Jenin Friday at U.N. headquarters.

Racially motivated violence closes Moscow markets

By Associated Press

MOSCOW — Outdoor markets and kiosks across Russia's capital run by ethnic minorities were closed and thousands of police ringed a Moscow soccer stadium Sunday to thwart possible racially motivated violence.

Police nationwide have been on alert all weekend amid fears of skinhead attacks around Hitler's birthday Saturday, and amid heightened activity by Russia's small ultranationalist minority. The police alert was to last through Monday.

An Afghan interpreter was beaten to death by skinheads last week, and several embassies in Moscow — including that

of the United States — have received threats of violence recently. The U.N. refugee agency has reported increased numbers of racist attacks in Russia in recent months, and appealed for police action.

No neo-Nazi violence was reported Saturday or by Sunday evening, though three attackers beat a British diplomat on Moscow's central Arbat street overnight.

Police said it was unclear whether David Arkley, a third secretary at the British Embassy, was targeted because he was a foreigner. The British Embassy, which was not among those to receive threats, would not comment on the attack.

Opposition conservatives triumph in German state

BY TONY CZUCZKA
Associated Press Writer

BERLIN — The conservative opposition soundly defeated German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's Social Democrats Sunday in an economically depressed eastern state, just five months before a national election focusing on the country's struggling economy.

The Christian Democrats regained control of the eastern state of Saxony-Anhalt with more than 37.3 percent of the vote, 15 percentage points more than in the last ballot four years ago. Schroeder's Social Democrats had 20 percent, down from 36 percent in the last election there.

The result was a boost for Edmund Stoiber, the conservative who is running to unseat Schroeder in national elections this fall.

Even more jubilant were the pro-business Free Democrats, who re-entered the state legislature with 13.3 percent. Their nine-point gain positioned them to ally with the Christian Democrats and strengthened their claim to swing-party status in Sept. 22 national parliamentary elections.

Sunday's ballot in the formerly communist east was nationally significant because the region's voters are less predictable than those in the west. Politicians aim their campaigns at these swing voters, making them potentially decisive in federal elections since German reunification in 1990.

Polls had predicted a defeat for the Social Democrats, who ran Saxony-Anhalt for the last eight years with a minority government backed by the former East German communists. But the crushing result was worse than expected. The ex-communists were level at about 20 percent.

Like Stoiber at the national level, conservative gubernatorial candidate Wolfgang Boehmer campaigned heavily on pledges to improve the economy. Saxony-Anhalt offered a good testing

ground: It has the lowest per capita income of any German state and the highest jobless rate, twice the national average at more than 20 percent.

Stoiber declared the results a referendum on Schroeder's economic policies in the last test of voter sentiment before the national election.

"This is clearly a signal to Berlin," a smiling Stoiber said on ZDF television.

Franz Muentefering, the Social Democrats' secretary-general, questioned the vote's national significance. While acknowledging a "dramatic defeat," he said he expects the result to mobilize his party for the September election.

"For the Social Democrats, it's clear that we will buckle down. We know this will be an election battle, not a walkover," he said in Berlin.

Election analysts said the Social Democrats dramatically lost voter share among working-class people and the unemployed. Schroeder's party was also hurt by voter apathy — only about 56 percent of the 2.1 million voters went to the polls.

But many voters simply appeared to be fed up with two-term Social Democratic governor Reinhard Hoeppner, a pastor's son who ran an unexciting campaign to secure continued federal aid for east Germany but failed to radiate much optimism about the area's future.

Boehmer, a gynecology professor and former state finance minister, said he wants to offer economic opportunities so fewer people will leave the state in search of jobs.

More remarkable was the revival of the Free Democrats, a party that typically draws its support from well-earning professionals in the richer west.

"What has happened here in the last few years is catastrophic," said Cornelia Pieper, the party's secretary-general. "Many people have left this state because they couldn't find work."

At least 14 killed in bombings in southern Philippines

BY PAUL ALEXANDER
Associated Press Writer

MANILA, Philippines — Three explosions ripped through a major city in the southern Philippines on Sunday, killing at least 14 people and injuring 45 others after a radio-station caller warned of a wave of bombings.

The caller claimed to be from the Muslim extremist group Abu Sayyaf, which has been holding an American missionary couple for nearly 11 months and is the target of a U.S.-backed military campaign as part of Washington's war on terrorism.

One bomb exploded outside a busy department store in downtown General Santos, killing at least 14 people — four of them children — in a hail of shrapnel and flying glass. Within 40 minutes, bombs went off near a radio station and a bus terminal in the largely Christian city of 800,000 in the Mindanao region, where Islamic militants have been fighting for an independent homeland.

The scene of blood, wreckage and shattered glass was reminiscent of five nearly simultaneous bombings in Manila 16 months ago that killed 22 people. An Indonesian man who has claimed he planned those blasts pleaded guilty Thursday in General Santos to explosives possession after leading police to a buried cache of more than a ton of TNT, detonating cords and M-16 rifles.

Police said it was too early to accuse any specific

group of carrying out Sunday's bombings, blaming only "terrorists."

But a Radio Mindanao Network office in nearby Koronadal said it received a call an hour before the first blast from a man who earlier called to complain about police boasts that the city was safe from terrorists. The man asked whether the station wanted to cover bombings later in the day.

A separate warning circulated via cellphone text message — a chief method of communications in the Philippines — said 18 bombs had been planted around the city and would start exploding after lunch.

Police said they received an anonymous call with the same claim, but did not say what measures they took. Bomb threats are common in the Philippines.

Radio station manager Elmer Ubaldo said he decided not to air the warning because he did not want to cause panic. The caller identified himself as Abu Muslim al-Ghazie and said he represented al Harakatul al-Islamiyah, the formal name used by Abu Sayyaf. Other spokesmen for the group said they had no knowledge of Abu Sayyaf involvement.

The Abu Sayyaf, believed to have ties to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, and the fundamentalist Moro Islamic Liberation Front have been blamed for setting off bombs in General Santos in the past.

The city is about 130 miles from Basilan island, where the Abu Sayyaf has been holding Martin and

Gracia Burnham of Wichita, Kan., and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap for nearly 11 months. About 160 U.S. Special Forces troops are on the island on a six-month counterterrorism training mission aimed at helping the Philippine military crush the guerrillas, who have beheaded an American and other hostages.

The first bomb exploded in a three-wheel motorcycle taxi parked in front of the two-story Gensan Fitmart department store in the business district of General Santos, about 620 miles southeast of Manila. Most of the casualties appeared to be taxi drivers, shoppers and bystanders.

The second went off 34 minutes later near a radio station, apparently causing no injuries, followed several minutes later by the bus terminal blast, which wounded several people, the city's disaster operations center said.

Bartolome Baluyot, police chief for central Mindanao, said two unexploded bombs were discovered under a truck parked in front of the store. Most businesses closed and checkpoints were set up on major roads as part of a security clampdown amid fears of further explosions.

The blasts came three days after the State Department renewed a warning urging Americans to exercise caution in the Philippines. In March, several bombs without triggering devices were discovered in Manila, and the rebel group that claimed responsibility has threatened to plant more bombs.



COMICS

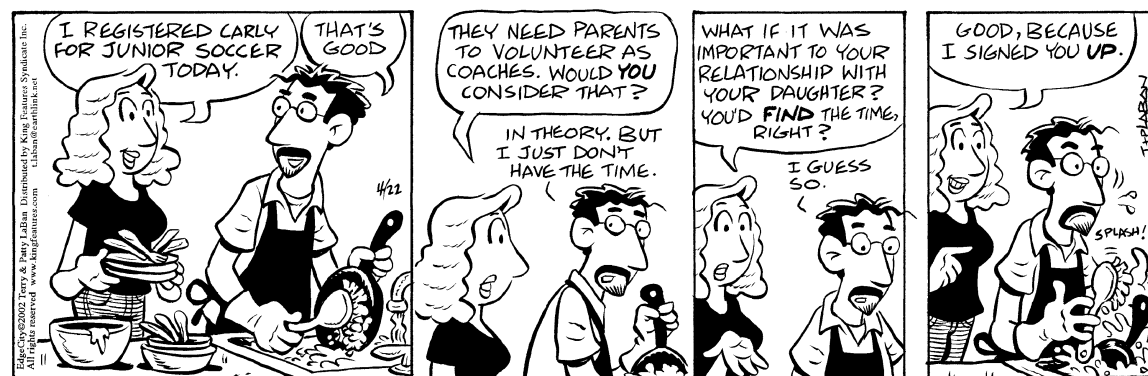
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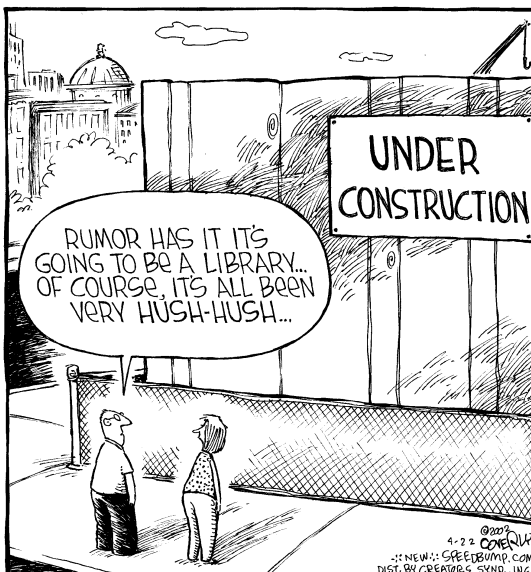
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E	L	I	E	E	D	U	C	E	R
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Saturday's answer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Bottle part books
5 Slalom curves
10 Golf club
11 Scary
13 Soft drink choice
14 Catlike
15 Took as one's own
17 Auto with a meter
18 Mass per volume
19 Train stop: Abbr.
20 Top card
21 Foot features
22 Treat's counter-part
25 Smell or sight
26 Put in order
27 Have debts
28 "— not for me to say"
29 Frilly borders
33 Flying mammal
34 Navy bigwig
35 Immediately
37 Computer fodder
38 Poet Sidney
39 Kitchen appliance
- DOWN**
- 40 School books
41 Spring period
1 Battery type
2 Wear away
3 List-preceding punctuation
4 Bag on the back
5 Decadent
6 Run-down
7 Actor Mineo
8 Explorer Leif
9 Legislative groups
12 Lower in esteem
16 Clock sound
21 Britney Spears, for one
22 Of the clan
23 Jack-hammer sound
24 Permanently set
25 Use the pool
27 Chooses from the menu
29 Diamond side
30 Sombre
31 Consumed
32 Incline
36 Veto

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
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38						39			
	40					41			

4-22

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-3168! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Case e-mails, letters will cost \$1M plus

In March, Jefferson County, Colo., sheriff John Stone informed the Denver Rocky Mountain News (with which he has been feuding over allegedly covered-up evidence regarding the mass shootings at Columbine High School) that his e-mails and letters about the case might be released under the state's public-records law, but that he could not be sure unless the newspaper first paid the cost for gathering up his correspondence files so that his lawyers could inspect them. The sheriff's office calculated that the retrieval cost would be, at a minimum, \$1,072,200.

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NATIONAL NEWS

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Robert Duvall fractures ribs in horse-riding accident

By The Associated Press

■ **LOS ANGELES** — Actor Robert Duvall fractured several ribs in a horse-riding accident while preparing for a new Western, a film publicist said Thursday.

The 71-year-old actor, best known for his roles in "The Godfather" and "Tender Mercies," fell off the horse on Monday while rehearsing for the film "Open Range."

He was treated for his injuries and is now recovering at his home in Virginia, said publicist Kristin Borella, who is working with him on another upcoming film, "A Shot at Glory."

Duvall is expected to recover by the time the film, "Open Range," begins production on June 3, Borella said. The film co-stars Kevin Costner.

Duvall, who won an Oscar for "Tender Mercies," has had a lot of experience around horses in other films.

He will next appear as Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee in the Civil War drama "Gods and Generals," and previously starred in the Westerns "True Grit," "Joe Kidd" and the TV miniseries "Lonesome Dove."

■ **BATTLE GROUND, Wash.** — Former figure skater Tonya Harding crashed her pickup into a ditch early Saturday and was cited for drunken driving after failing a sobriety and breath test, police said.

Neither Harding nor her passenger was hurt in the 1:30 a.m. accident, in Battle Ground, northwest of Portland, Ore.

Authorities did not release Harding's blood-alcohol content.

Harding's life has taken several bizarre turns since she was implicated in the 1994 knee-whacking of rival skater Nancy Kerrigan. Two years ago, she was sentenced to three days in jail for hitting her boyfriend with a hubcap during a drunken argument.

In January, a judge ordered her to vacate her home near Camas, Wash., for failing to pay rent and late fees totaling \$4,530.

Last month, Harding achieved a triumph of sorts when she pummeled Paula Jones in the ring during Fox's "Celebrity Boxing" special. The spectacle drew more than 15 million viewers.

■ **SHREVEPORT, La.** — Fifteen-year-old rapper Bow Wow will headline a celebration for honor students Monday at Southern University-Shreveport, but many of the invited students will not be allowed to hear his rap about staying in school and off drugs.

Three local school districts were invited to bus students to the university but two refused to allow students to attend.

Robert Schiller, Caddo Parish schools superintendent, said Saturday that "to endorse commercially sponsored activities during the school days" is inconsistent with discipline policies and would set a precedent.

An official for another parish said the students would not be excused for the show because they had too little notice.

KMJJ program director Michael Tee

said principals and the parish school board approving the event and award, knowing that KMJJ was the sponsor.

Bow Wow, born Shad Moss, will give a brief talk about staying in school and saying no to drugs. His mother has said she makes sure he does his homework, even while on tour.

Bow Wow, who recently dropped the Lil' from his name, is known for his hit single "Bounce With Me" from his 2000 debut album "Beware of Dog."

■ **LOS ANGELES** — May May Ali, the daughter of boxing great Muhammad Ali, has joined the fight against Parkinson's disease, the debilitating illness that has struck her father.

She is now a part of Team Parkinson, an organization that gathers pledge money for medical research against Parkinson's disease.

Ali began noticing the effects on her father at the early stages of his disease.

"I said, 'Daddy, are you sad?' Because he was looking so expressionless after a while," Ali said. "But that was the Parkinson's mask, his wife told me."

Through her volunteer work, she has befriended Moses Remedios, a medical school professor diagnosed with Parkinson's disease two years ago.

"I'm sort of a loner, and suspicious of people who meet me as my father's daughter, but I'm also a good judge of character, and you can just tell Moses is a nice man," Ali said in Sunday's Los Angeles Times.

The two met March 3 at the Los Angeles Marathon, which they finished in six hours, 33 minutes. When her father was in town, Ali invited Remedios to meet him at the Kinko's in Beverly Hills, where the old boxer was copying passages from the Koran and the Bible.

■ **CHAMPAIGN, Ill.** — Most were box office flops. Others didn't make it that far. That none found much of an audience made them perfect for Roger Ebert and his Overlooked Film Festival.

The annual festival begins April 24 in the college town of Urbana-Champaign. This is the fourth year that Ebert, a graduate of the University of Illinois and an Urbana native, has hosted the festival for films he feels deserve a second look.

Ebert, co-host of the TV show "Ebert & Roeper and the Movies," will introduce and screen 14 films, including some never distributed in the United States.

Ebert says major Hollywood studios aren't taking enough chances on independent and foreign films and are choosing safe pictures that aren't challenging moviegoers.

The festival opens with a screening of "Patton," the 1970 film starring George C. Scott as the World War II general. The movie will be shown in 70mm — a format rarely used by current filmmakers.

Other films include "Metropolis" — both the 1927 classic silent film and last year's Japanese animated movie — and "Say Amen Somebody," a 1982 documentary about gospel music.

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