

Santa Monica Daily Press

GOING 'ROUND AND 'ROUND
SEE PAGE 3

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE BIG COUNCIL MEETING ISSUE

Father's Office expands to L.A.

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

MONTANA AVENUE Attaining the best burger often depends on whomever can win the waiting game at one local landmark.

But those seemingly endless lines at Father's Office on Montana Avenue, a painful yet strangely pleasurable wait for the delectable caramelized onion-topped burgers and

beer connoisseur's selection of brews, could soon be much more bearable as Santa Monica's neighbor to the south welcomes Father's Office 2.0.

Chef/owner Sang Yoon, who purchased the 55-year-old neighborhood fixture in 2000, celebrated the grand opening of the second iteration of his successful Santa Monica eatery, called Father's Office 2.0, with a launch party at the Los Angeles bar last week.

Part deux is located in the Helm's Bakery Building on Helms Avenue near the Culver City border and is in a considerably larger space than its predecessor, estimated at three-times the size with an added benefit that is absent from the flagship — a patio dining area.

The proximity of a second location with virtually an identical menu, including the world-famous burger and fries that are served in a miniature shopping cart, could mean that

the lines in Santa Monica will begin to slowly disappear, and that's good news for many locals who have grown tired of the wait.

Lesley Balla, the editor and writer of Eater LA, an online gossip blog that follows restaurants and nightlife in Los Angeles, predicts the opening of 2.0 will alleviate the lines in Santa Monica.

SEE FATHER'S OFFICE PAGE 9



ARTISTS IN THE MAKING

Santa Monica Police Chief Timothy Jackman on Monday shares a laugh with students from Lincoln Middle School, who along with students from John Adams Middle School, created works of art (in the background) that will hang in the halls and conference rooms of the Public Safety Facility. The SMPD and Lincoln held lunch for the artists, who were joined by proud parents.

Kevin Herrera kevinh@smdp.com

Elderly L.A. woman found guilty of killing homeless

BY GREG RISLING
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES An elderly woman was convicted Monday of two more counts in a scheme to kill homeless men to cash in on insurance payouts.

Olga Rutterschmidt, 75, was convicted of first-degree murder and conspiracy to murder for financial gain in the death of Paul Vados, 73. Last week, she was convicted of murder and conspiracy in the death of Kenneth McDavid, 50.

The jury returned to deliberations Monday after bringing in an alternate to replace a juror who had to leave on a trip. Co-defendant Helen Golay, 77, of Santa Monica, was convicted of both murders and conspiracy last week.

Deputy District Attorney Bobby Grace said afterward that the prosecution was able to show that the women were fueled by greed.

"It's clear that money was a driving force behind these women," Grace said. "We were able to use that motive as a big foundation for our case."

Added Deputy District Attorney Truc Do: "They didn't need it, but they wanted it."

Jurors had said that they were deadlocked on

SEE VERDICT PAGE 10

Half a million hangs in the balance for schools

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL The future home of a half million dollars lying in limbo, and more importantly, whether a school district has fulfilled on promises made to a displeased City Council last year regarding transparency, could be determined tonight as educational and municipal officials meet face to face once again.

The council plans to discuss whether the

public school district successfully followed through on a series of stipulations in order to receive a \$530,000 increase in city aid, among them an independent assessment of special education and a halt on new unsolicited confidentiality agreements, the source of the controversy.

The conversation between city and school officials will take place more than three weeks after Lou Barber and Associates released its findings of a nearly four-month-long evaluation of the policies, practices and

finances with special education in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, which has come under fire for an alleged culture of fear and secrecy surrounding settlement agreements.

Settlement agreements and confidentiality clauses are made after an impasse is reached in the negotiations for an Individualized Education Plan, which outlines the services a student receives during the year. The agree-

SEE FUNDING PAGE 9

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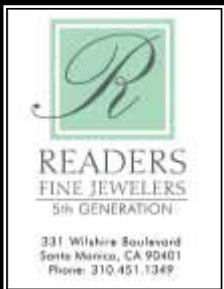
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Calendar

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TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2008

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues



Hours: 6:30 a.m. – 10 p.m. Daily

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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Partner for your health

1332 Sixth St., 11:30 a.m.

The California Partnership for Long-Term care is an innovative program of the state of California, Department of Health services. The partnership's mission is to provide Californians with affordable, quality on-going care insurance protection, so patients will not be forced to spend everything they have worked for on medical care.

Rolling with Ray

Westside, 1 p.m.

Novelist Raymond Chandler gravitated to sin and debauchery, so Santa Monica in the 1930s was a frequent stop for Phillip Marlowe, one of his most popular characters. From shady doctors to second wives with pasts to crooked cops with a loathing for a mouthy PI, this tour has it all. Chandler's canonization of sin, wealth, and sunshine on L.A.'s Westside fed the abiding myths of the American hard-boiled genre and play into the popular conception of the region.

For more information, call (323) 223-2776.

Getting wild on the Westside

Noon-5p.m.

For the first time, the true crime archeologists of the 147 project have set their sights on points west of Robertson Boulevard, and the results are truly astonishing. In this new tour spotlighting some of the weirdest, most horrific and downright unbelievable crimes of historic West Los Angeles. Seats are \$55 per person. For more information, call (323) 223-2776.

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Punching the clock

601 Pico Blvd., 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Summer is rapidly approaching at that means one thing for many Santa Monica teens — it's time to get to work. The summer is often the only time when teens have a chance to earn their own money while learning the responsibilities that come with being an adult with taxes to pay. To make sure kids get that opportunity, the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce has partnered with the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District and City Hall to put on the annual Santa Monica High School Job Fair. The event allows over 350 local high school students to learn about job opportunities in the city. For more information call the chamber at (310) 393-9825 x 11.

Hungry?

1332 Sixth Street, Noon -1:30 p.m.

The Santa Monica Kiwanis Club's weekly luncheon with guest speakers. For more information, call (310) 613-1249.

Never eat alone again

1250 Capri Dr., Pacific Palisades, Noon-1:30 p.m.

The Rotary Club of Santa Monica has long enjoyed a reputation as being the hub for Westside men and women dedicated to improving their local and worldwide communities. It is a melting pot for cultural ideas from the diverse ethnic makeup of members. Those interested in attending their regular lunch should contact June M. Doy at (310) 917-3313.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.



Going 'round for generations

BY JAMES HARRIS

Special to the Daily Press

Editors note: This article appeared in the Santa Monica Pier Restoration Corporation's newsletter.

SM PIER Joyce Lensch first rode the Santa Monica Pier Carousel at age 7. Unbeknownst to her, the circling menagerie of horses was as new to the pier as she was.

The year was 1947, and Walter Newcomb had just moved his merry-go-round from the defunct Venice Pier to its new location in Santa Monica. That same merry-go-round still graces the pier today, and Joyce still comes to visit. So does her son Dan.

Dan Lensch last rode the carousel about a month ago. While it may not seem to be such a stretch of time, consider the fact that he visits it two days every week. Dan works at the carousel on the weekends supervising children's birthday parties. You could call it fate, or destiny, or kismet. You could even call it love — a love that began with Joyce's mother.

Marguerite Winklmeier brought her family on vacation from St. Louis, Mo. often. Joyce remembers each visit well, noting the consistent destination for family vacations.

"My mother loved Santa Monica," Joyce remembers. "She visited here in 1922. She was twenty-two years old and she loved it, so she brought us out here in 1947. Then we

came again in 1948."

Two years later the family made Santa Monica their permanent home. Marguerite was thrilled.

"Santa Monica and the pier and the carousel were like the end of the rainbow," Joyce remembers her mom saying.

Joyce spent the rest of her youth in Santa Monica. She remembers visiting the pier often, riding the carousel on occasion and spending a lot of time on the beach. When she entered the work force she stayed local as well, taking a job at Rand Corp. The company's tall office building just south of the pier's entrance ramp offered extraordinary



photo courtesy of Santa Monica Pier Restoration Corp.
FAMILY TIES: Joyce Lensch and her son Dan Lensch on the Santa Monica Pier Carousel.

SEE GENERATIONS PAGE 8

County calls '08-'09 a 'challenging year' financially

By Daily Press Staff

Acknowledging the county is facing a challenging financial year, Chief Executive Officer William T. Fujioka on Monday unveiled a \$21.9 billion budget that calls for a slight decrease in spending and positions, but no layoffs or major program cuts.

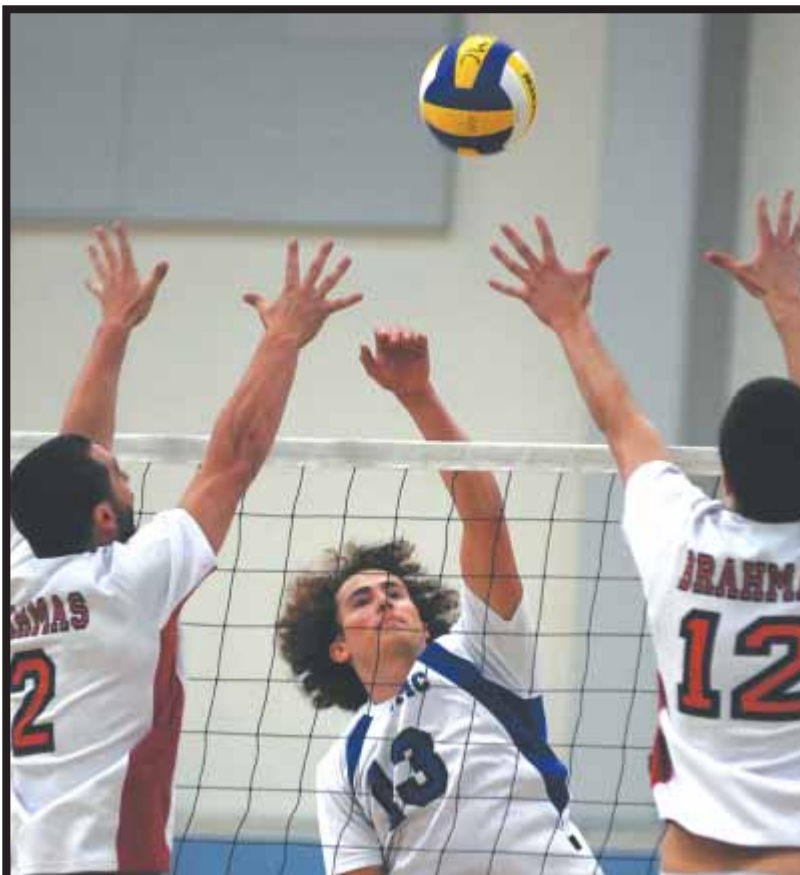
The county's current fiscal condition is the result of the Board of Supervisors' strong fiscal policies and conservative approach to the budget in past years. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the extent and duration of the current economic downturn the county should continue to exercise this same conservative approach in the management of the budget, Fujioka said.

The spending plan, 2.61 percent lower than the present \$22.5 billion budget, reflects the current state of the economy and lower tax revenues. Fujioka cautioned that it does not reflect potential impacts of threatened state and federal cuts, so those issues must still be addressed once the respective budgets are finalized.

Despite the weakened economy, the budget funds a number of critical programs and continued development of high-priority capital projects, including \$1.5 billion for new jails, fire stations, health facilities, animal shelters, libraries and infrastructure.

Funding was provided for high priority

SEE BUDGET PAGE 7



MOVING ON

Morgan Genser news@smdp.com

Center RJ-Strom Larson of the Santa Monica College mens volleyball team jumps into the air and spikes the ball past (left) Alex Cottier and Joesph Finnerty of Pierce College last Wednesday at SMC. SMC won three games 36-34, 30-22, and 30-20. This was the final regular season game of the year as SMC travels to Irvine Valley College for the state final on Friday.

Council to consider \$4.1M in expenditures

BY MELODY HANATANI

Daily Press Staff Writer

This story is part of an ongoing series that tracks the city's expenditures appearing on upcoming Santa Monica City Council consent agendas. Consent agenda items are routinely passed by the City Council with little or no discussion from elected officials or the public. However, many of the items have been part of public discussion in the past

CITY HALL Santa Monica Police officers could soon be patrolling in a fleet of new Fords.

As part of its Vehicle Replacement Program, the Santa Monica Police Department is seeking three new compressed-natural-gas sedans for administrators and nine gasoline-powered sedans for routine policing duties, including emergency response.

The two sedans will be supplied by different vendors — Downtown Ford Sales will provide the gasoline vehicles for approximately \$202,000 and Galpin Ford will sell the CNG interceptors for \$114,000.

The new vehicles are part of a \$4.1 million spending package that will go before the City Council at tonight's meeting, with items ranging from a new computer maintenance management system to a contract with a summer surf camp.

City Hall intends to continue its long relationship with the Surf Academy, which has operated the summer surf camps through the community classes program since 2002. Among the spending items is a contract with both the Surf Academy and Socceropolis, which similarly has ran the soccer school in the city for years.

While the two contracts combined are valued at

SEE CONSENT PAGE 10

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Support for those on the dais

Dear Santa Monica City Council:

I would like to thank you for having the courage and the leadership to withhold city monies until the Board of Education of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District had an independent audit of it's special education department's policies and procedures. I am a 14 year resident of Santa Monica, with a daughter currently in 10th grade at Samohi and a son in seventh grade at JAMS. I have been involved in their education at the classroom level, at the site level and at the district level. For the most part, they have had more than adequate experiences, are receiving good educations, and I personally have almost always been dealt with respectfully.

However, I have several friends who have children with special needs who have not had the same experience or benefits that my family has had. So, it was with great anticipation that I read the Barber Report and attended the BOE meeting of April 3 and saw most of last evening's (April 17) meeting on TV. I was stunned by what the report uncovered and by the Board of Education's initial lackluster response to it. I am somewhat heartened by comments made last evening by Rebecca Kennerly of the PTA Council and by Board Members Pye and Escarce – they seem to be finally "getting it."

But, I do not trust the BOE or the administrative leadership of SMMUSD and urge you to continue to hold the purse strings until concrete changes have been made as recommended in the Barber report. Specifically:

- That the terms of these "secret deals" be put into the student's IEP

- That the district create a supportive environment – the e-mail that one parent read last night from a teacher was inexcusable and should not be tolerated

- That all staff and parents be treated with civility and respect

- That the authority to address special ed issues be decentralized (translation for a lay person = get rid of the boss or bosses who are abusing their power).

Let's get real here. If the so called mastermind of these secret deals went ahead and kept doing them even after the BOE ordered a moratorium on them, what else is happening that no one knows about?

I wouldn't normally ask my city government to oversee what my school district does, but this is an extremely abnormal circumstance that deserves your continued attention. I do not believe that some of the school board members or SMMUSD administrators will be swayed into action without you continuing to withhold monies until they do something about this tragic situation.

Lynn Sturgis
Santa Monica



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ODDS OF A CHILD BEING DIAGNOSED WITH AUTISM: 1 in 166

Ad Council To learn the signs of autism, visit autismspeaks.org **AUTISM SPEAKS** It's time to listen.



What's the Point?

David Pizarra

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

High gas prices may work for us

FUN IN THE SUN IS HERE, AND THAT means people are starting to plan their vacations for this coming summer. I just took my first vacation of the season to my usual Rendezvous with the Redneck Riviera, where I go jet skiing with friends for a "boys weekend of chicken wings, cheeseburgers and fossil fuel burning fun."

If what I saw there is any indication, and I believe it is, of what we can expect this coming summer to be like, we are in for a world of good news for our local economy. I was paying over \$4 a gallon for gasoline.

Playtime is not cheap, and more so when you like to enjoy the types of sports and recreation that involve being outdoors and an internal combustion engine — it's going to cost money. This year, however, what I saw at the river was a canary in the coal mine for our local economy.

I'm speaking of the middle class that have kids and need to get away from their homes. These are the people who we see on the river in their boats, towing a couple of kids and then stopping for a burger at the bar and grill.

The middle American who wants to provide an exciting time for their family, in good clean fun is the sort of person that normally will be going to the river.

But this year, we were seeing people who were at the river, but rather than cruising up and down the way most of us do, there were more cove parties.

Where a group of people, and their two, three or four boats are just moored at a cove, hanging out, drinking something cool, and letting the kids play in the water.

I think it is because the high cost of fuel. This price level is still a shock to many of us, when it takes \$80 to fill my gas tank, it still gets my attention, or worse, when the machine shuts off before my tank is full because they haven't upgraded the pre-authorization amounts high enough.

It is my feeling that the local economy on the Colorado River is going to suffer immensely this season, as more and more of the people who have been the traditional patrons, are going to be losing their homes to the banks this year.

Many of the people that we have been playing with for the past few years out there, are residents of Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

I can remember vividly a Riverside couple we met two years ago. They had recently purchased their home, and the first thing they did was to extend their equity line. They bought a water-ski boat, a trailer and a new truck. Haven't seen them back in any of the trips we've made recently.

They are people who have bought their toys with the equity in their homes, and now that the homes are not worth as

much, and the mortgages are starting to reset, they are losing their homes. But before hitting rock bottom, they are going to give up their boats, their jet skis, the trailer to stay in and the trucks to pull it all.

So how is this going to help us? I think that what will happen is there will be a great many more day-trips to the beach. I think that we are going to see an increase in the number of greater Los Angeles basin patrons at our local beaches and restaurants this year.

THEY ARE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BOUGHT THEIR TOYS WITH THE EQUITY IN THEIR HOMES, AND NOW THAT THE HOMES ARE NOT WORTH AS MUCH, AND THE MORTGAGES ARE STARTING TO RESET, THEY ARE LOSING THEIR HOMES.

I think people will not be able to get away for a 2 week vacation at the river, or be able to afford the gas and a hotel for a trip to Yosemite. So instead they'll settle for a day trip, or maybe two days, to Santa Monica, to take the kids to the beach, enjoy the pier and have some inexpensive fun.

This is a golden opportunity for our local businesses, many of whom seem to be suffering (at least by the rate of open commercial spaces that I've been seeing), to take advantage of the downturn in the economy and market themselves as the perfect getaway to those people in Riverside, San Bernardino and Orange County.

If the local Chamber of Commerce coordinates a public relations effort to get out the message of all the low cost ways to enjoy Santa Monica to our neighbors, we could end up having a banner summer, even though surrounding us is a financial quagmire.

DAVID PISARRA is a family law attorney focusing on father's rights in the Santa Monica firm of Pizarra & Grist. He welcomes your questions and comments. He can be reached at dpizarra@pizarra.com or (310) 664-9969.

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That Rutherford Guy

John H. Whitehead

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Is this the end of freedom in America?

ACCORDING TO THE NEW JERSEY ACLU legal director, Marcus Borden has fostered a "destructive environment" for students. What did Borden, a high school football coach in East Brunswick, N.J., and a recipient of the national Caring Coach of the Year award, do to create such a "destructive" environment?

He bowed his head, silently. Sometimes he knelt down on one knee, silently. Coach Borden wasn't attempting to pray with his football players, nor was he leading them in prayer. He was showing silent respect for their long-standing pre-game tradition by bowing his head.

But the forces of political correctness have gotten so absurd that even the most obscure, non-verbal expressions are targeted for censorship if religion is even remotely involved.

Yet as a student athletic trainer who worked with Borden during his first year as a coach at East Brunswick remarked, "The tradition of student-initiated prayer goes back many, many years. I think with all that is wrong in our schools today, gun violence, bullying, promiscuity, etc., that the energy being spent on Marcus Borden bowing his head and taking a knee is a waste. Here is a man trying to support the youth in his care and be a positive role model and all these administrative yahoos can worry about is his presence in a room with his players while they pray. It is time people stopped obsessing over the positive messages a coach is trying to send and start worrying about the real problems in school today."

Pre-game, student-led prayer has been a regular part of football for many years. In fact, East Brunswick High's practice of player-initiated, pre-game prayer has been in effect for over 25 years, with more than 2,000 former East Brunswick football players opting to voluntarily pray before taking the field on game days. The prayers are a simple, solemn request for safety and honor on the field: "Dear Lord, please guide us today in our quest in our game. Please let us represent our families and our communities well. Lastly, please guide our players and opponents so that they can come out of this game unscathed, no one is hurt."

But after some parents reportedly complained about a prayer that was offered at a pre-game pasta dinner, the practice became a target for official school censure. Quick to

jump on the "thou-shalt-not-offend" bandwagon, school officials passed a policy in October 2005 prohibiting representatives of the school district from participating in student-initiated prayer.

But school officials went so far as to order Borden, who also teaches Spanish, to stand still rather than bending a knee and silently bowing his head while his players recited pre-game prayers. The penalty for disobeying was disciplinary action, including the loss of his job as a coach and tenured teacher. School officials justified their actions by insisting that while student athletes have the constitutionally protected right to pray, that privilege does not extend to coaches, who are public employees and whose participation would violate the so-called "separation of church and state."

At the same time, believing that he was taking "a stand for every high school football coach in America," Borden filed a lawsuit asking the courts to review the school's prayer policy.

In siding with Coach Borden, Judge Dennis Cavanaugh ruled that the school district had violated Borden's constitutional rights to free speech, freedom of association and academic freedom when they prohibited him from silently bowing his head and "taking a knee" with his players while they engaged in student-initiated, student-led, nonsectarian pre-game prayers.

But the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit recently overturned Cavanaugh's decision and ruled that a football coach may not silently bow his head or "take a knee" with his team as a gesture of respect for student-led prayers prior to a game.

We have become a politically correct society, one that stands for uniformity, not diversity. If someone might be offended, freedom of speech is erased.

But if all freedoms hang together, then they will fall together, too. And if America continues on its present course, it will mean the end of freedom.

Constitutional attorney and author **JOHN W. WHITEHEAD** is founder and president of The Rutherford Institute. He can be contacted at johnw@rutherford.org. Information about The Rutherford Institute is available at www.rutherford.org.

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The Q-Line

Crime and punishment

Last week, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of lethal injections. This latest ruling has thrust the controversial practice back into the spotlight and is raising a lot of questions here in California where lethal injections are legal.

So this week's Q-Line question asks:

Where do you stand on capital punishment and why?

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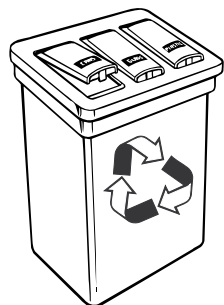
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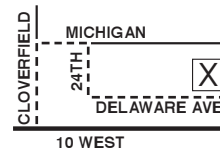
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City dogs discover sheep, cattle, and hidden talents

KATHLEEN HENNESSEY

Associated Press Writer

VINCENT, Calif. The sun is shining, the fields are clear, and the sheep — a jittery trio of fluff — are just getting comfortable.

Suckers.

Selkie, a border collie recovering from a tennis ball addiction, gets her cue. She cuts a wide curve around the field, hunches low and creeps in. Bleats of protest are useless. The sheep stiffen and get moving.

It's a good day to be a dog.

Selkie isn't really a stock dog but she plays one at Drummond Ranch, which isn't really a livestock ranch, but a 40-acre haven an hour outside Los Angeles. There, city dogs escape their leash-and-lounge existence and learn to get in touch with their inner herder.

The ranch is part of a trend that mixes training techniques, a back-to-basics ethos and a hint of dog (and human) therapy.

"It really, really seems to center the dog and give the dog a sense of confidence and fulfillment, a good assertiveness, a good energy," said ranch owner Janna Duncan, who has taught dozens of canines and their owners the art of moving livestock.

"It's almost as if the dog needs a job. And when they discover, 'This is what my job is supposed to be,' then everything falls into place."

The American Kennel Club says new herding clubs are popping up across the country, although it does not track exact numbers. Nearly 200 clubs held herding trials last year. More than 10,000 dogs competed, a roughly 10 percent increase over 2006.

Owners describe the practice as an antidote to tighter leash laws and disappearing dog-friendly spaces in U.S. cities.

They talk of their dogs' first time in the arena with the pride and amazement usually reserved for describing a child's first day at kindergarten.

Many also acknowledge that herding was a last resort.

"I'd been through about three trainers and was getting nowhere," said Ann Preston, patting her panting, post-workout Selkie. "I had two vets tell me she was stark-raving mad."

Preston acknowledges Selkie's problem was really an owner problem. As a border collie, she was bred to herd. She needed mental stimulation and as well as a physical workout. As a couch companion for Preston, a 65-year-old sculptor, she was a poor match.

"I'm gentle. I just want to play and cuddle my dog and scratch its tummy and, you know, have my face licked and maybe my feet licked on occasion," she said.

Selkie wasn't interested. She was sensitive to noise, pushy and obsessive. She wanted her ball thrown. All day. And tomorrow.

Experts say the dog-owner mismatch is common. People spend too little time

researching a breed's temperament and habits before choosing their family's new addition. A fluffy St. Bernard, for example, is a working breed that may protect your kids — against the letter carrier. Then you've got a lawsuit.

Preston said she's lucky she found Drummond Ranch and Selkie found sheep. One look and the light bulb went on, Preston said.

Duncan's clientele isn't limited to the traditional herding breeds. She's trained huskies, Labrador retrievers, even a four-pound Yorkie from Malibu.

On a recent morning, a hulking Bernese mountain dog named Kerry thumped around an arena cajoling the sheep on cue to Duncan's screeching whistles and clipped calls.

Each breed, Duncan explained, has its own persuasion technique.

Referring to Kerry, she said, "The guardian dogs get to know their flock. They befriend the sheep and the sheep feel safe. They'll follow them anywhere."

But not all breeds have such charisma.

Trainers use an instinct test to suss out the herders from the non-herders. Placed in a small pen with sheep and a trainer, the dogs' reactions are evaluated for style, temperament, responsiveness to commands and use of force.

At Drummond Ranch, those deemed trainable continue with classes. A four-week series cost \$165.

Carol Delsman oversees the American Kennel

Club's herding program from her cattle ranch in Baker City, in rural northeastern Oregon. Delsman is happy to see urbanites discovering their dogs' hidden talents but considers her primary job preserving a lost art.

Herding breeds have spent centuries as companions for shepherds and ranchers. In Scotland and England, border collies are revered for their ability to disappear into the hills and come back with a herd unharmed.

"But as people decide not to have kids but to have dogs, breeds actually get altered. If we alter a breed too much, it can't do what it was bred to do," Delsman said.

The challenge is less about training dogs to handle sheep than about coaching humans to properly handle their dogs, she says.

The dogs already know how to herd; they just need to learn to do it on command.

The new communication can be transformative for dogs and humans.

Preston says Selkie is a different dog — though it took work and weekly visits. She also says she's a different human, with a new understanding of obedience and control, and an appreciation for the power of finding a calling.

Selkie, of course, just pants. Her tail flaps furiously. Preston can guess the thought inside that black-and-white head: This is too good to be true.

I'M GENTLE. I JUST WANT TO PLAY AND CUDDLE MY DOG AND SCRATCH ITS TUMMY AND, YOU KNOW, HAVE MY FACE LICKED AND MAYBE MY FEET LICKED ON OCCASION."

Ann Preston

Owner of Selkie

County 'in good shape' despite fiscal challenges

FROM BUDGET PAGE 3

programs, collaborative initiatives and projects that produce ongoing efficiencies. Providing one-time funding for initiatives to create ongoing efficiencies will result in lower costs to the county, Fujioka said.

This is the first year that the budget has been drafted under the county's new administrative structure, which has resulted in a more collaborative effort in identifying high-priority programs, ways to streamline processes and elimination of duplicative efforts, officials said.

CEO staff will continue throughout the year to work with departments to identify additional efficiencies and opportunities for improved service delivery. Special emphasis will be given to implementing innovative technology projects and continuing a collaborative approach by departments in solving their problems and providing services.

The budget will be formally presented to the supervisors today for adoption to allow public hearings to be scheduled. Hearings are proposed to begin May 7, with the board deliberations on June 16. The county's fiscal year begins July 1.

A 35-position decrease in employee count, bringing the county workforce to 102,240, would still maintain the county's ranking as the largest employer in the five-county region.

A total of \$36.1 million was eliminated from some departments' budgets, but the reductions would not impact current services as the funding cuts were from long-term vacancies or other savings, county officials said.

The Department of Health Services has a net decrease of 111 positions, the largest of any department, while the Sheriff's Department is targeted to receive 240 more positions.

The impacts of the threatened significant cuts in state and federal funding are not yet known so are not reflected in the budget. The budget does include a decrease of \$127 million for health services; a plan for addressing the department's structural deficit will be presented to the board in June.

Among major recommendations included in the proposed budget are:

Public Safety:

- \$10 million for final year of a four-year plan to improve medical services within the sheriff's custody system.

- \$3.9 million for the Sheriff's Operation Safe Streets program to enhance gang enforcement and criminal investigations, and \$3.6 million for summer gang suppression program.

- \$5.6 million to increase patrols in unincorporated areas.

- \$1 million to implement a program that would allow youth to report to a day center instead of being institutionalized in a probation facility; \$2 million for mental health services for juveniles in probation camps and halls; and \$2.1 million for the Alternate Public Defender to reduce the escalating cost of contract defense attorneys.

- \$6.5 million for the Fire Department to handle increased demands for emergency and preventive services.

Children and Families Well-Being

- \$30.6 million to handle cost increases of the In-Home Supportive Services program; \$4.1 million for additional General Relief recipients; \$4.3 million for critical infrastructure repairs at community and senior centers; and \$3.7 million to handle 8.3 per-

cent increase in caseloads in the adoption assistance program.

- \$12.4 million to implement additional provisions required of the Katie A. settlement for foster children to meet 30-day hearing requirement for persons appealing the loss of welfare benefits; and restructuring of Children and Family Services to strengthen investigative operations for child deaths and to improve procurement and inventory management.

Health and Mental Health:

- \$7.2 million for a program to provide intensive mental health services in a locked setting as alternative to jail and hospitalization; \$3.2 million for mental health court program to transform the type of services provided to mentally ill individuals involved in the criminal justice system; \$500,000 to enhance services to conservatees and to reduce caseloads; and \$2.6 million for a new smoking cessation program.

Community and Municipal Services:

- \$1.7 million for improvements at six animal care shelters and \$2.5 million to address staffing shortage at the shelters; and \$2 million for increased operating costs at the Museum of Art due to opening of Broad Contemporary Art Museum and a parking garage.

Capital Projects:

The \$1.5 billion capital projects budget is \$183.8 million less than the current budget due to the completion of 129 projects in 2007-08, including the County+USC Medical Center Replacement Project. The new projects reflect the county's commitment to increased sustainability and a reduction in energy and resource consumption, with "green-building" technologies incorporated into the designs of 162 projects, county officials said.

Among the recommended capital projects are \$523 million for public protection facilities, including refurbishment of Men's Central Jail, new barracks at Pitchess Detention center, construction at Sybil Brand Institute and Biscailuz Center Training Academy, new fire stations in Santa Clarita Valley, refurbishment and expansion of the coroner's facility; security improvements at juvenile halls and camps, construction of a new animal shelter in the east Antelope Valley, and new spay and neuter clinics at three shelters.

The budget is based on a continuous decline in the real estate market. The resale housing market presents the biggest risk to the county, Fujioka said, because it might negatively impact property taxes, the county's most important source of revenue. Property taxes account for approximately 22 percent of the overall revenue and approximately 62 percent of the locally-generated revenue.

Even with the downturn in the economy, the budget projects a 5 percent growth for property taxes, down from the 9 percent in 2007-08. The appreciation in home values over the last five years would help offset any future valuation reductions, but if declines continue for several more years, the property tax base would likely be affected, Fujioka said.

Retail sales are expected to remain difficult in '08 and '09. Prior fiscal years saw double-digit growth in taxable sales, but the budget reflects growth ranging from 1 percent to 3.5 percent, depending on programs.

Overall the county, because of its fiscal practices, is in good shape to deal with these challenges, said Fujioka.

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Mother, son share fond memories

FROM GENERATIONS PAGE 3

views of the pier.

"Every day in my wanderings about the halls, I had the opportunity to look out one of the windows and see the pier, including the carousel building," she said. "From 1982 until 1987 I actually worked on the fifth floor and the windows looked almost directly out over the pier."

That the merry-go-round is the same machine that has been on the pier since her first visit is something of a marvel to Joyce. As she reflected upon it, though, it's not really a surprise.

"The carousel seems much the same, however the pier is much improved," she noted. "It is cleaner and the restaurants are wonderful and the shops are far nicer."

Dan has been working the carousel parties for the past three years. He found out about the position through one of Joyce's colleagues, and has been pleased to be a part of the enjoyable atmosphere that the carousel brings to the children. He's quick to point out, though, that the children are not the only ones enthralled with the circling horses.

"A lot of parents and grandparents tell me that they rode the merry-go-round when they were kids," he said. "This brings back a lot of memories for them."

The significance of his employment at a place that Marguerite loved so much is not lost on either Dan or Joyce.

"I know how much this all meant to my mother," Joyce said, "and I'm sure she's looking down and that she's so happy, because this was just the end-all to her. The beach, Santa Monica. Her grandson is right here, working. That's really special."

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■ Send letters to editor@smdp.com



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New Father's Office could alleviate lines

FROM FATHER'S OFFICE PAGE 1

"It'll be interesting to see if I go on a Saturday and compare (the line) to three weekends before," Balla, who has seen the new Father's Office space, said. "That was a destination that people came from all over to see."

Regulars at the Father's Office seem to have mixed reactions as to whether they will ditch the old for the new.

Adam Taylor and Evelyn Chang said they would rather wait out the line in Santa Monica than make the drive through traffic in Los Angeles, pointing out that they live only 10 minutes away and walk to the bar.

The couple was among the customers in line early Thursday evening, their stomachs empty as they waited for their place inside, cars passing by on Montana Avenue on a cool night as the sounds of good times slipped through the front door's cracks, a sneak preview of what was to come for the patient. It can at times be a battle of wills — fighting the will to give up and go to another restaurant.

"It's the wait inside that kills me," Taylor said.

The couple at one time waited 30 minutes inside for a table, that's aside from the wait outside.

"But they have really good burgers and a good selection of beer," Chang piped in.

Standing in line in front of them, Jack

Jones of Santa Monica seemed pleased to hear that a Father's Office opened in Los Angeles, a drive he would consider to get his fix of his favorite burger.

"I definitely don't like doing this," Jones said about standing in line. "But (Father's Office) is a happening place."

Balla predicts the biggest fans of the new Father's Office will be the regulars and locals in Santa Monica who might not have to deal with customers who come from all over the country to visit, customers that might not be familiar with the dining etiquette in the bar — don't hog a table unless everyone in the party is present and be willing to give up the unused seats at the table to strangers.

The restaurant opened at 1018 Montana Ave. in 1953, given the name by its original owner who was called dad by locals. When Soon purchased the restaurant in 2000, he redesigned the bar menu, added an "esoteric wine" selection and installed a temperature control system of the 36 micro brews, according to the bar's Web site. Aside from size, one of the differences between the old and the new is the introduction of hard alcohol and carefully crafted cocktails with no substitutions, which is the policy for the burgers.

"The restaurant is over 50 years old, it has a great ambiance, but this new one is a little splashier," Balla said.

melodyh@smdp.com

School officials seeking closure to special ed saga

FROM FUNDING PAGE 1

ments were often thought to be a cost-savings alternative for the district to reaching a solution as opposed to a costly legal battle with parents. But in the past two years, many parents of special education students have spoken out about the confidentiality clauses, which they believe restricts them from talking to a third-party about the services in which their children received.

When it came time for the district to receive the half million dollar bump in the Master Facility Use Agreement — a contract where the cities provide revenue to the district in exchange for use of school facilities — some councilmembers wanted to hold back temporarily, concerned with the calls they received from parents.

During a meeting in June, the council imposed a series of conditions on the funds — the report must be completed and a moratorium had to be placed on confidentiality agreements, unless they were requested by the parent. The Board of Education imposed the moratorium in July.

"We the council asked them to get full transparency and that hasn't been done yet, nor have I heard any commitment to that," Mayor Herb Katz said. "We the city do not want to hold back from the students, it's not our intent."

The report by found that while settlement agreements and confidentiality clauses are not illegal, there was concern in the amount of such contracts the district had entered into — more than 140 in the past three years. Most of the school districts interviewed by the consultant found that they did use the settlement agreements, but sparingly.

The report also concluded that the district is well equipped with highly-qualified staff and provides a broad continuum of services to meet the needs of students with diverse disabilities.

Superintendent Dianne Talarico is expected to present her preliminary draft response to the report, contained within it several action steps that include making the settlement agreements a last resort that would require the top school official's approval.

Other action steps include decentralizing central staff and empowering school sites, providing workshops and briefings on special ed law for parents, and more training for special education staff.

But perhaps most importantly, Talarico, who presented the draft response to the school board last Thursday, pledged to create a culture of inclusion for all parents and students with special needs.

Talarico on Monday said she couldn't speculate on what the outcome will be of tomorrow's council meeting and whether the \$530,000 increase will still be withheld from the district.

"I would like to bring closure to it, which may or may not happen tomorrow night," Talarico said.

City Manager Lamont Ewell said he believes the district will need to take a three-pronged approach in order to successfully reach a resolution — fully adopt the best practices outlined in the consultant's report, honor the council's commitment that new settlement agreements would not be made unless requested by a parent; and incorporating any additional request that could be made by the council tonight.

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City set to speed up maintenance request system

FROM CONSENT PAGE 3

\$387,000, those costs will be offset by the fees collected through the program, raising roughly \$108,000 for City Hall.

The level of participation for the two programs has grown gradually over the years. In 2002, more than 380 kids between the ages of 8 and 18 participated. As the program expanded, so did attendance, with nearly 600 youth and 170 adults enrolled in the current fiscal year.

The same trend was experienced with Socceropolis with more nearly 1,000 student enrolled in the camps and classes. Approximately 1,100 students are expected to enroll this summer.

In operating the surf and soccer schools, city staff handles all administrative duties such as registration while the contractors provide the instruction.

“As a city provider, Surf Academy has the capacity to offer a selection of affordable programs that are accessible to all members of the public,” according to a staff report.

MANAGING PARKING CITATIONS

City Hall is looking to extend an existing contract with ACS State and Local Services to continue processing the unfriendly teal and white parking violation slips that sit on the windshields of offending motorists.

The cities of Santa Monica and West Hollywood jointly contracted parking citation processing services from ACS, whose current agreement with both municipalities expire on June 30. Both City Halls have agreed to extend the contract for two years.

If the council agrees, ACS will receive an extension worth an estimated \$2.8 million.

Among the services that ACS provides is processing payments, scheduling hearings, collecting on delinquent accounts and customer service.

“A two-year extension will provide the cities the opportunity to realign contract

expiration dates and move forward as a unified group,” according to a staff report.

TAX AUDITS FOR CITY HALL

In order to ensure accurate reporting of payments for the Utility Users Tax, which is a fee affixed to electricity, cable, telecommunication and natural gas services, City Hall is seeking extending a contract with MuniServices LLC to continue providing auditing services well past the expiration on April 30.

The firm has been contracted over the years to perform audits on the UUT, and the Franchise Tax and Transient Occupancy Taxes, resulting in \$960,000 in additional revenue for City Hall.

The contract includes an \$85,000 Utility Users Tax Program, which provides ongoing monitoring of legislative and technological updates and \$80,000 audit for the Transient Occupancy Tax.

“MuniServices LLC is the only firm known to provide the full range of audit and revenue enhancement services required by the city,” the staff report states.

MAINTAINING THE CITY

In order to update an archaic work order system that relies on phone calls and e-mails to different maintenance staff, City Hall is looking to install an new and efficient computerized management program.

The Maintenance Connection could receive a contract worth more than \$447,000 to install a new management system that will allow city staff to submit and track their requests online and be notified of changes via e-mail when the status of the request changes.

“The existing system went into production in 1998 and after a decade is no longer considered to be responsive to the city’s needs,” the staff report states.

melodyh@smdp.com

Sentencing set for June 24

FROM VERDICT PAGE 1

the last two counts against Rutterschmidt, but were ordered to start deliberations over on those counts because of the new member. The verdicts came after about an hour of talks.

Superior Court Judge David Wesley said the jurors indicated they did not wish to speak to reporters.

Prosecutors said the two women collected \$2.8 million before their scheme was uncovered during the investigation into the death of McDavid in 2005.

It seemed at first to be a hit-and-run accident, but then an investigator overheard another detective discussing the 1999 death of Vados in very similar circumstances.

The women were accused of recruiting the men from among Hollywood’s homeless and giving them lodging and food while taking out numerous insurance policies on them. Prosecutors said they then drugged them and ran them over in secluded alleys.

Golay, a landlord who owned three properties in Santa Monica, will be sentenced June 24, while Rutterschmidt’s sentencing was set for July 15. The convictions carry life prison terms without possibility of parole for both women. Prosecutors chose to not seek the death penalty.

Rutterschmidt’s defense attorney, Michael Sklar, said he will begin working on a motion for a new trial, but had no other comment.

Both he and Golay’s attorney, Roger Jon Diamond, had conceded the women were involved in insurance fraud but denied they had formed a murder conspiracy.

The jury saw a secretly recorded videotape of the two in a lockup after their arrests. Rutterschmidt berated Golay, saying her actions in taking out 23 insurance policies raised a red flag when the men died.

“It’s your fault,” Rutterschmidt told Golay. “You can’t have that many insurances. ... You were greedy. That’s the problem.”

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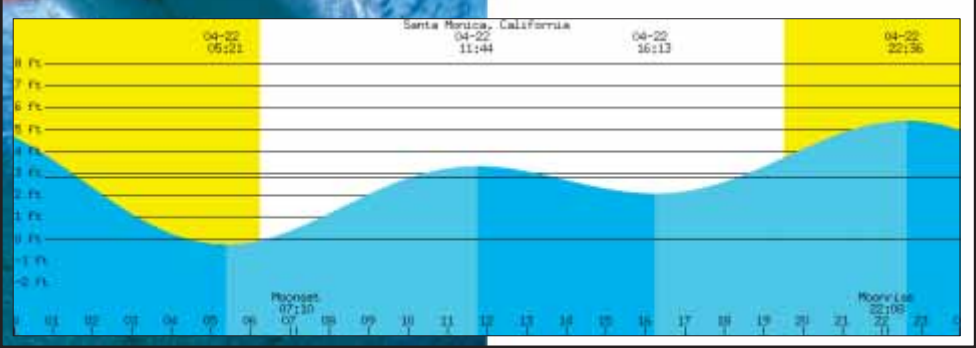
SWELL FORECAST (3-4 FT)

Today the NW wind swell should back off as some light southern hemi remains. Waist to chest most everywhere seems like a reasonable call. Winds should relax slightly from previous days, at least for the AM hours as a temporary ridge noses into the area. Tide on Tuesday runs rather low around dawn, otherwise, moderate depths will dominate the day.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

NW WIND SWELL IN VARYING DEGREES THIS WEEK...

TIDE FORECAST FOR TODAY IN SANTA MONICA





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QUICK STATS
(for the last 28 days)

Number of sewage spills -- 0

Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0

Number of wet days -- 0

Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 35 / ns

Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 11 / ns

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Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth	C	ns
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachusa and Los Aliso creeks	A+	ns
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	ns
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A	ns
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	ns
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	ns
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	F	ns
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	F	ns
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	B	ns
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach	F	ns
Puerto State Beach at creek mouth	F	ns
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerto Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	F	ns
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	ns
Surfrider Beach (beach location)- daily	F	ns
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A+	ns
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A	ns
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A	ns
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	A	ns
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	ns
Tuna Canyon	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	F	ns
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	C	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	ns

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone

WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days

ns -- no sample taken



Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

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Janric Classic Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest).

Difficulty
SILVER

6	5	1		8	9			
	9						8	
		4	7			5		6
				1	4		7	
4		5				3		1
	7		8	2				
5		2			6	8		
	1						5	
			3	9		6	1	2

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GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

1	4	3	7	9	2	6	5	8
2	7	5	6	8	3	4	9	1
9	6	8	5	4	1	2	7	3
4	9	1	3	2	7	8	6	5
3	5	7	8	6	9	1	4	2
8	2	6	1	5	4	9	3	7
7	8	4	9	1	5	3	2	6
6	3	9	2	7	8	5	1	4
5	1	2	4	3	6	7	8	9

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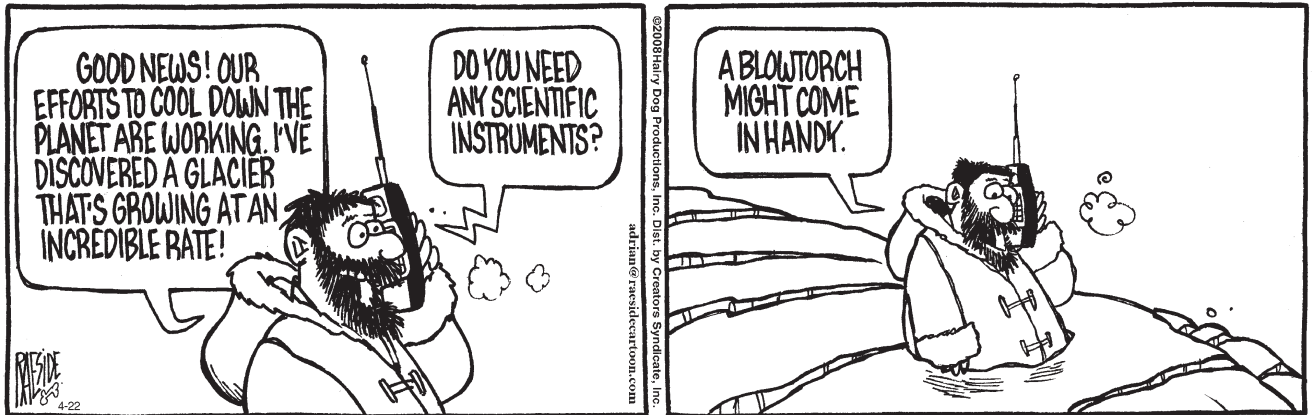
The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



The Other Coast

By Adrian Raeside



Garfield

By Jim Davis

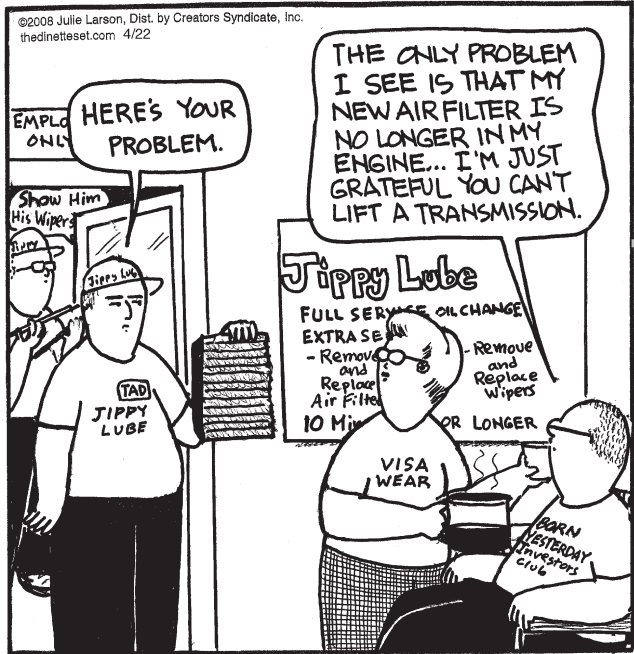


Dog eat Doug

By Brian Anderson



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Strange Brew

By John Deering

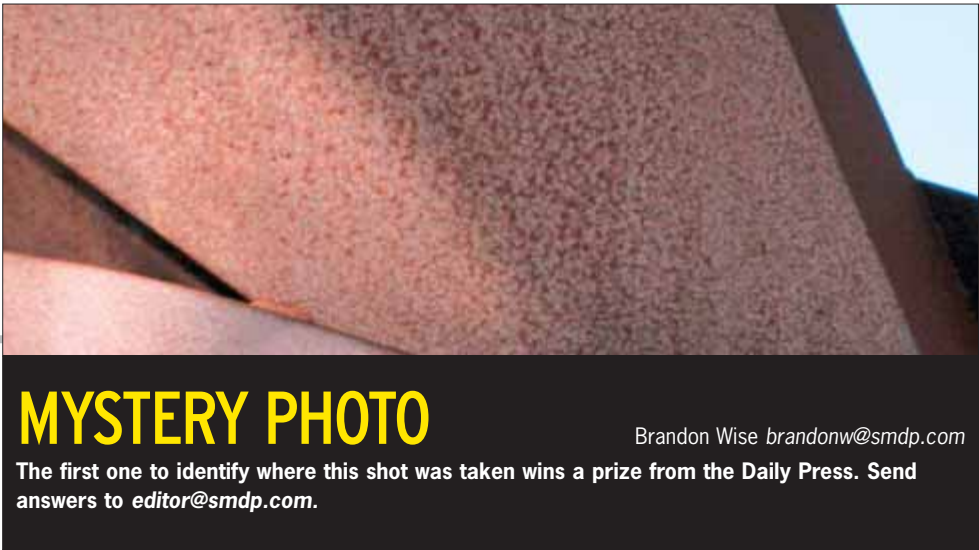


Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Rector's charge
- 7 Crimson Tide, for short
- 11 Slow passage
- 12 Tells tales
- 13 Practical
- 15 External
- 16 Diamond cover
- 18 Paper purchase
- 21 The Eternal City
- 22 Duel weapon
- 24 Numerical prefix
- 25 Fawn's mom
- 26 Tofu source
- 27 Flung
- 29 Hand over
- 30 Horse halter
- 31 Potter's stuff
- 32 Woodard of TV
- 34 Cat Stevens album
- 40 Bible twin
- 41 Canada capital
- 42 Lawman Wyatt
- 43 Tyrant

DOWN

- 1 Beatnik's digs
- 2 Flurry
- 3 Unrefined
- 4 Disregard
- 5 Gym exercise
- 6 Owl output
- 7 Trumpet sounds
- 8 Melody
- 9 Came together
- 10 Cabinet wood
- 14 Spooky
- 16 So far
- 17 "Witness" group
- 19 Puzzled
- 20 Temperamental
- 21 Deep groove

- 22 Okra holder
- 23 Caustic stuff
- 25 Gave out hands
- 28 Draw in, like a sponge
- 29 Sports shoe parts
- 31 Minos' kingdom

- 33 Chow
- 34 Garden visitor
- 35 — rule (usually)
- 36 Compact, for one
- 37 Kanye West's music
- 38 Binary base
- 39 Chapeau

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10
11							12			
13						14				
			15							
	16	17				18		19	20	
21					22					23
24				25				26		
27			28				29			
	30					31				
			32		33					
34	35	36						37	38	39
40					41					
42					43					

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS	24 28 36 50 53 Meganumber: 29 Jackpot: \$60M
Super LOTTO	3 5 6 19 25 Meganumber: 10 Jackpot: \$11M
Fantasy 5	2 11 19 20 36
DAILY 3	MIDDAY: 4 0 1 EVENING: 1 7 6
DAILY DERRY	1st: 10 Solid Gold 2nd: 09 Winning Spirit 3rd: 11 Money Bags RACE TIME: 1.42.22

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at <http://www.calottery.com>

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Prison reformer James McDonough revealed in February the extent of the mess he inherited when taking over the Florida Department of Corrections in 2006 (40 officials charged with crimes, 90 fired, 280 demoted) and said much of the problem centered on inter-department softball. Even though former officials had admitted to contract kickbacks and frequent taxpayer-funded "orgies," McDonough said, "I cannot explain how big an obsession softball had become. People were promoted on the spot after a softball game ... to high positions in the department because they were able to hit a softball out of the park ... The connection between softball and the parties and the corruption and the beatings (of prisoners) was greatly intertwined."

■ Orlando "public artist" Brian Feldman celebrated Feb. 29 (Leap Day) by devoting himself to "leaping," according to a report on WOFL-TV. For the entire 24 hours, beginning at midnight, Feldman leaped off a 12-foot-high platform every three minutes and 56 seconds (a total of 366 times).

TODAY IN HISTORY

1889 the Oklahoma Land Rush began at noon as thousands of homesteaders staked claims.

1509 Henry VIII became king of England following the death of his father, Henry the VII.

1864 Congress authorized the use of the phrase "In God We Trust" on coins.

1938 45 workers were killed in a coal mine explosion at Keen Mountain in Buchanan County, Va.

1944 during World War II, U.S. forces began invading Japanese-held New Guinea with amphibious landings at Hollandia and Aitape.

1954 the publicly televised sessions of the Senate Army-McCarthy hearings began.

1964 President Johnson opened the New York World's Fair.

1970 millions of Americans concerned about the environment observed the first "Earth Day."

1983 the West German news magazine Stern announced the discovery of 60 volumes of personal diaries purportedly written by Adolf Hitler. However, the diaries turned out to be a hoax.

WORD UP!

chimera \ky-MIR-uh\, noun:
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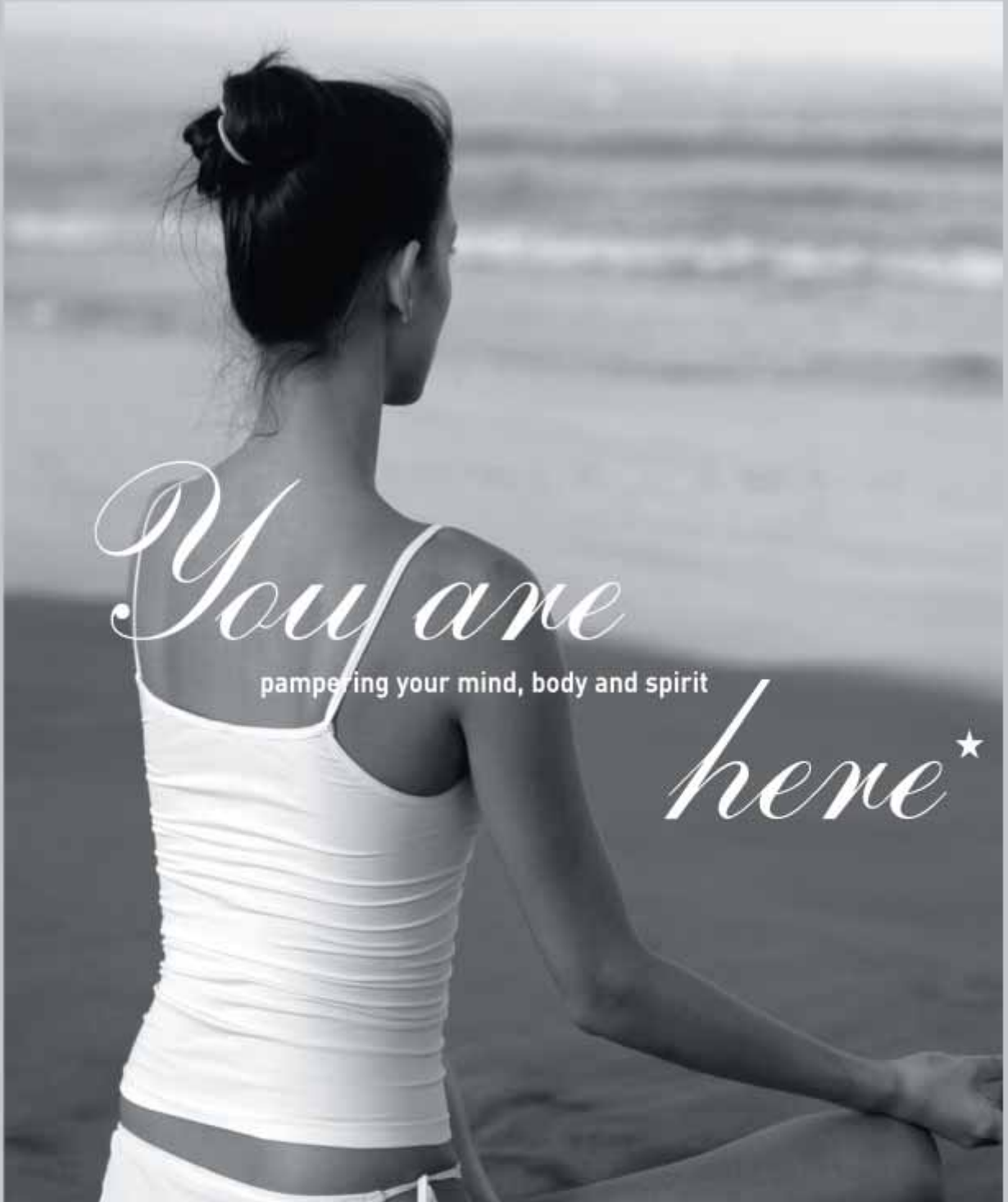
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Between Wilshire & Montana	=	\$ 1,841,333	\$ 919,343
South of Wilshire	=	\$ 866,632	\$ 735,631
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