

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

10 11 16 22 29
Meganumber: 25
Jackpot: \$33 Million

FANTASY 5

2 7 29 30 31

DAILY 3

Daytime: 9 8 7
Evening: 8 3 2

DAILY DERBY

1st: 10 Solid Gold
2nd: 09 Winning Spirit
3rd: 12 Lucky Charms

RACE TIME: 1:46.80

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ In June 2004, Beth Rice and Stanley Blacker of Florida held a lavish wedding weekend in Las Vegas, before friends and family, said their vows, exchanged rings, with a rabbi presiding, in a traditional Jewish wedding. They came home, moved in together, and opened a joint bank account. However, according to a January report in the St. Petersburg Times, the couple purposely failed to get a marriage license. As a result, a judge ruled in January that under Florida law, Rice had not "re-married" and that her ex-husband must continue to honor the couple's divorce settlement and pay her \$5,000 a month.

■ In 2002, 17 U.S. pilots captured and beaten by Saddam Hussein's forces in the 1991 Gulf War filed a lawsuit asking for nearly \$1 billion from Saddam's assets frozen by the United States, and in 2003, a federal judge ruled in their favor. However, an appeals court tossed out the case, citing a 2003 post-invasion law that removed jurisdiction for the lawsuit at the behest of the Bush administration, which wants to reserve the frozen assets for rebuilding Iraq. An even larger irony is that Defense Secretary Rumsfeld has publicly conceded that the Iraqi detainees who were abused in 2003 at the Abu Ghraib prison should be compensated, even though the U.S. pilots endured perhaps worse abuse at the same Abu Ghraib facility in 1991.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Politics is supposed to be the second oldest profession. I have come to realize that it bears a very close resemblance to the first.

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New area code causes disconnect

BY KIM CALVERT

Special to the Daily Press

If the telephone companies have their way, Santa Monicans may soon have more than one area code — even when their other line is in the next room.

T-Mobile, Nextel of California, Verizon Wireless, Verizon California, Inc., Sprint, Cingular Wireless and SBC joined together last month and submitted a petition to the California Public Utilities Commission requesting that a

modification be made to an earlier decision to create a new area code south of Imperial Highway, which is known as a "split." The CPUC ruled in 2000 that a new area code could be established once the phone companies could prove that they had exhausted all of the available numbers.

As an alternative, the phone companies now want to perform what's been called a "triggered overlay." The overlay would allow the phone companies to issue a new 424 area code when assigning

new phone numbers within the existing 310 area, which includes Santa Monica. The petition asks the CPUC to allow the phone companies to enact the overlay whenever they decide it's necessary.

Splits and overlays are common practices by phone companies and are done when there are no longer enough phone numbers in an area code to meet consumer demand, according to the CPUC.

"It's a sneaky, backdoor way for the phone companies to get what they want," said City

Councilman Kevin McKeown. "They don't have to do this — either the split or the overlay. What they need to do is manage their phone numbers better."

Public meetings will be held on the issue this week throughout cities that would be affected. McKeown said city staff members are planning to make objections to the phone companies' petition at the California Public Utilities Commission's meeting scheduled for Wednesday at 10

See AREA 424, page 4

Pair finds pimping ain't easy

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

Local police busted up an alleged prostitution ring in Santa Monica last week, arresting two men for pimping escorts over the Internet.

Santa Monica Police arrested Clark Roy Decker, 42, and Ronnie Polk, 28, last Thursday on charges of pimping and conspiracy. The two are accused of using an Internet site to arrange and schedule prostitutes to meet men at various Santa Monica hotels.

"The prostitutes would often utilize the same room, handing off the key to the next prostitute," said SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega.

After receiving several complaints and tips from area residents, SMPD vice officers launched an investigation and discovered the Web site. Officers allege the escorts charged between \$400 and \$1,000 an hour, or \$3,500 for an overnight encounter, Fabrega said.

SMPD officers on April 21 served a search warrant at Decker's residence in Hermosa Beach, seizing an undisclosed amount of currency, computer records pertaining to the prostitution ring and a variety of illegal

See WEB OF DECEIT, page 5

Tickell's their fancy



Fabian Lewkowicz/Special to the Daily Press

Veggie Van Voyager director Joshua Tickell (right), who traveled 25,000 miles on veggie fuel, stops to sign autographs and take photographs after the screening of his movie at the SMC Earth Day Film Festival this past weekend.

Big Blue Bus to get big bucks from Council

(Editor's note: This is part of an ongoing series that tracks the city's expenditures which appear on the upcoming Santa Monica City Council consent agenda. 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.)

BY KIM CALVERT

Special to the Daily Press

COUNCIL CHAMBERS — Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus is expected to receive nearly \$1 million tonight.

City Hall will be asked to write a check in the amount of \$405,715 to

replace bus engines and transmissions. Another \$284,000 will buy aluminum rims that need to be replaced because of wear, cracking or other damage, and \$200,000 more will be spent on brake kits used to perform routine maintenance.

City staff say that funding for bus maintenance is available in

accounts already established to keep Santa Monica's 192 Big Blue buses on the road. The budget allotted for bus mechanical components in the current fiscal year is \$2,987,875, according to Joe Stitcher, assistant director of tran-

See CONSENT, page 5

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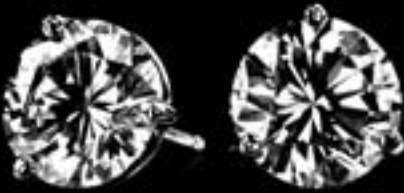
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Eddie Guerboian

Request for Proposals for the Operation of a Vending Cart on the Santa Monica Pier

The City of Santa Monica is requesting proposals from interested and qualified entities for a revocable, nonexclusive license to operate a retail or food vending cart, supplied by Vendor at designated locations along the Santa Monica Pier.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) package contains the informational requirements of the Santa Monica Pier Vending Cart Program and questions for the respondents to address.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE EXTENDED TO THURSDAY JUNE 9th 2005 at 2:00 PM

For more information or to request a Request for Proposal (RFP) package be mailed to you, call (310) 451-6030, fax (310) 451-3670, or e-mail your request to: elana.buegoff@smgov.net

Thinking about Bankruptcy

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Happy at home, Virgo

Santa Monica Daily Press



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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Push yourself to get past an immediate restriction and/or problem. When you do this, you could easily figure out what is blocking you. Let go of what has been a problem. Discussions initiated by others bring on a new dimension of understanding. Tonight: Think like someone else.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Work with one other person, and you'll get results. You could discover that what you want is a lot different from what you thought you wanted. Open your mind to new ideas. Be willing to walk a different path. Tonight: Defer to someone else.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ You have no control over anybody but yourself. This fact becomes abundantly clear today. You don't want to be negative about others. Practice loving detachment. You'll gain a new perspective if you do. Tonight: Be flexible with those who count.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ Stunning news might encourage you to scatter. Recognize the end results of doing just that. Force yourself to concentrate and do one project after another. You laugh, and someone responds. Try something different. Tonight: Don't push yourself.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ With the exception of one situation, communication flourishes. Try not to focus on what is going wrong, but all that is right in your life. Consider a risk and evaluate the potential damage. Difficulties surround financial dealings with others. Tonight: Lighten up your mood with some laughter and fun.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ You might want to understand what is happening with a family member and/or domestic matter. Others might be cantankerous and erratic. Listen well to others' points of view. You don't have to agree. Tonight: Happy at home.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Your good mood melts barriers faster than logic or even laughter. Listen and respond to what others share. Be willing to revamp your schedule, if need be. Your ability to flex could make or break your day. Flex, please. Tonight: Munchies at a favorite place.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Your intuition helps you zero in on a money venture. Your ability to read between the lines helps many — including you — be more effective and understanding. A problem demands creative brainstorming. Do just that. Tonight: Your treat.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You energize with the Moon in your sign. You can easily accomplish a lot more than you thought possible. Ask for support and help. Before you know it, what you were trying to do will be a done deal. Tonight: Others follow your lead.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Take your time getting down to basics. You see that not everyone has the same ideas as you. Something workable could emerge through an unexpected call or comment. Accept compliments gracefully. Tonight: Plan on some downtime.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ A sudden expenditure could backfire. You need to be careful with spending, even if there doesn't appear to be a cloud on the horizon. Focus on your long-term desires. You will hit the bull's-eye before you know it. Tonight: Get into a favorite game or pastime.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ You could shake up the status quo if you're not careful. Listen to feedback from those around you. Understanding takes you in a new direction. Respond to a close friend's or associate's feedback. Accept more responsibility. Tonight: Out late.



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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Running from cops not a good idea

By Daily Press staff

A recent footrace through the desert has proven Santa Monica's cops are some of the fastest in the country.

Santa Monica Police Chief James T. Butts, Jr., has announced that the SMPD's 2005 Baker to Vegas Team finished in fourth place out of 23 teams entered in the under-300 division. The team's overall time was 16 hours and two minutes.

On April 23-24, 2005, the SMPD participated in the 21st Annual Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay. The Challenge Cup Relay is the largest and most unique law enforcement race in the world. It is a 120-mile, 20-stage, footrace beginning at Baker, Calif. and finishing at Las Vegas. The relay racecourse runs from Baker through the Mojave Desert to Shoshone, Calif., then north to Pahrump, Nev., over the Mountain Springs Pass (5,600 feet) and down to Las Vegas. More than 213 teams of 20 runners entered this year's competition.

The runners are followed by a van driven by a volunteer support staff member. Support staff provides transportation to and from each of the stage points. The staff has rotating shifts, since they work around the clock for the duration of the race.

Legal ease: Santa Monican nabs scholarship

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica resident Gregory Smolar, a second-year student at Pepperdine University School of Law, is one of eight law students who received a scholarship from the Association of Southern California Defense Counsel (ASCDC). Smolar was recently awarded the scholarship at the ASCDC's 44th annual seminar at the Beverly Hilton.

Each of the eight students was awarded a \$1,500 law scholarship. The recipients were selected based on specific criteria including grade point average in torts and civil procedure; demonstrated ability in oral argument, and financial need. The scholarship recipients come from prestigious law institutions throughout Southern California including University of Southern California, University of San Diego School of Law, UCLA School of Law, California Western School of Law, Loyola Law School, Southwestern University School of Law, Pepperdine University School of Law and Whittier Law School.

Smolar has recently been published in the New York Law Journal, is a member of the American Bar Association, Jewish Law Students Association, and is an editor for the Law, Contractual, and Regulatory Principle Work Group of the Generally Accepted Information Security Principles. He received his bachelor of business administration with distinction in finance and marketing from the University of Michigan. He also worked abroad in Sydney, Australia, through CCUSA.

Established in 1960, the Association of Southern California Defense Counsel was organized by a small group of Los Angeles insurance defense attorneys who felt it was essential for their professional interest to be equally represented. It now encompasses a group of approximately 2,000 men and women of all ages, races and religions, who practice from north of Santa Barbara to the Mexican border, and from the desert of the Inland Empire to the shores of Santa Monica.

Volunteers get payback

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center recently honored more than 200 adult volunteers to celebrate "National Volunteer Week," held from April 17-23.

A volunteer recognition luncheon was held on April 20 at the DoubleTree Guest Suites, which recognized almost 100 volunteers who achieved hour and year milestones at the medical center during the past year. Santa Monica resident Jette Simmons was the top honoree, with more than 69,000 hours of service. Two other Westside residents — Alice Kurtz of West Los Angeles and Kuljit Marwah of Malibu — were honored for 36,000 and 23,000 hours of service, respectively.

Helen Beasom was honored for reaching the 50-year milestone, while Simmons was a double honoree with 40 years of volunteer service. Two other volunteers, Hazel Hanson of Brentwood and Carol Serling of Pacific Palisades, were recognized for 35 years of service.

The luncheon also paid tribute to the Santa Monica-UCLA Gift Shop volunteers. The hospital's gift shop, operated entirely by volunteers, has raised more than \$2 million since opening its doors in 1969.

Adult volunteers donated more than 50,000 hours of service to Santa Monica-UCLA in 2004 by assisting caregivers, working in non-clinical departments and running the gift shop.

Santa Monica-UCLA's volunteer workforce includes adults, pre-medical students called "care extenders," junior volunteers ages 15 to 18 and pet-assisted activity teams that visit patients in the hospital. For information about volunteer opportunities at Santa Monica-UCLA, call (310) 319-4614.



SURF REPORT

Patchy low clouds and fog is expected this morning, otherwise expect mostly sunny. Highs in the mid to upper 60s. The SW is expected to drop towards knee- to waist-high and it looks like we'll see an ever so slight burst of NW ground swell fill into the mix. This NW is from a high riding system in the Gulf that's thrown some meager energy our way with periods averaging 12-14 seconds. Size from the NW is only knee to waist high.

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	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	3:31	-0.1	3:10	0.9	9:35	4.3	9:25	5.7
SUNDAY	4:08	-0.5	3:36	1.2	10:18	4.1	9:51	5.9
MONDAY	4:49	-0.7	4:03	1.6	11:06	3.8	10:22	6.1
TUESDAY	5:35	-0.8	4:32	1.9	12:00	3.5	10:58	6.0
WEDNESDAY	6:28	-0.8	5:03	2.3	1:08	3.2	11:40	5.8
THURSDAY	7:31	-0.6	5:43	2.7	2:40	3.0	N/A	N/A
FRIDAY	8:07	-0.4	6:24	2.9	3:02	2.8	12:35	5.4

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The QLine

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger apologized last week for suggesting that California's border with Mexico be closed in an effort to solve the nation's illegal immigration problem. Schwarzenegger insisted that he misspoke to newspaper editors and publishers, intending to say the border should be secured.

The comments thrust the issue of illegal immigrants in the United States back to the fore, so this week, Q-Line wants to know:

What steps, if any, should the United States take to quell the rush of illegal immigrants into the United States via the southern border?

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

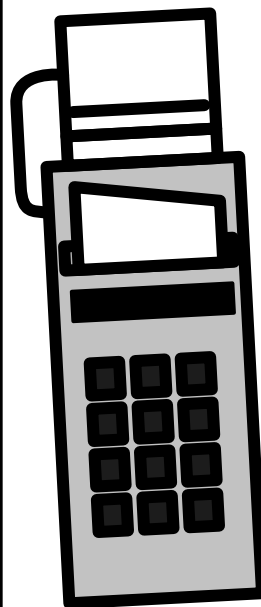
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Santa Monica Daily Press



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LOCAL

City looks to break area code

AREA 424, from page 1

a.m. at the Malibu Council Chambers. Other public meetings will be held today in El Segundo and Redondo Beach, and on Wednesday in Culver City.

McKeown said the overlay plan would create a situation where next-door neighbors would have different area codes and a second line in the same home would have a different area code.

He said, beyond the illogic of overlapping area codes, there also are other inconveniences for consumers, such as the necessity to always dial 11-digit phone numbers, even when dialing from one 310 phone number to another.

"Dialing 11 numbers is going to be a big problem for seniors and children," McKeown said, "and a big hassle and expense in terms of all the reprogramming that will be required for fax and phone machines in city government offices alone."

"We need to fight this on two fronts," McKeown said. "We need to go before the CPUC and object to this petition and we need to do everything we can to support the passage of AB 1380."

Assembly Bill 1380, also known as the Area Code Conservation and Consumer Protection Act of 2006, would create rules for governing telecommunications carriers that hold phone numbers in California. The goal of the bill is to prevent the premature exhaustion of an area code by forcing phone companies to allow the government to monitor their phone number inventories.

City Councilman Ken Genser said AB 1380 was one solution to both the proposed split and overlay. But he is concerned that the bill won't pass in time to stop the phone companies' new petition from being adopted by the CPUC.

"What we need to do is stop the petition that's currently in front of the CPUC now — the petition that would create the overlay," said Genser.

According to Genser, the Santa Monica community needs to express its opinion on the issue to legislators, the CPUC and to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The March 9 petition submitted to the CPUC by the phone companies states the overlay plan is "the best solution" for an inevitable need to create more phone numbers.

The petition claims: "The impact on consumers is minimal since, among other things, no consumer is forced to change his or her existing telephone number (i.e., no existing number is changed to a new area code, as would happen with a 'geographic split.'"

The petition also states: "Overlays have, as a general matter, proven to be such an elegant solution to the need for area code relief that they have been implemented in over 30 metropolitan areas in the country, including New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Portland and Miami."

Areas that would be affected by the overlay plan include Santa Monica, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Brentwood, Beverly Hills, West Los Angeles and south to Rancho Palos Verdes.

Area code splits

■ Splits provide a single area code for each geographic area.

■ Splits require an area code change for approximately one-half of the consumers in a two-way split. Consumers may have a different area code for their residence telephone numbers compared to their cell phone or business telephone numbers. This depends on the rate center associated with the prefix or exchange of the telephone number.

■ Splits permit seven-digit dialing within an area code.

■ Consumers receiving the new area code will need to change stationary, business cards, advertising, etc. They will also need to notify people of the new area code, if needed. Manual or over-the-air reprogramming of cell phones may be needed.

■ Future splits will reduce the geographic size of the area code.

Area code overlays

■ With an overlay, there will be more than one area code in a geographic area.

■ An overlay will not require consumers with existing telephone numbers to change their area code. Consumers who want new telephone numbers may have to accept telephone numbers with a new area code. Some consumers might be assigned a different area code for new telephone numbers within the same residence or business where multiple telephone numbers already exist.

■ An overlay requires consumers to dial 11 digits. For example, 1 + area code + seven digit number, for all calls.

■ There is no need to revise stationary, business cards, and advertising for business owners with existing telephone numbers. Consumers, especially security alarm companies, apartment complexes, and gated communities, will need to ensure their telecommunications equipment will be able to handle 11 digit dialing.

■ Overlays will likely end further shrinking of the geographic size of the area code because subsequent relief will probably be another overlay.

PUBLIC MEETINGS on 310 AREA CODE CHANGE

El Segundo: Tuesday, April 26, 10 a.m.
 El Segundo Council Chambers
 350 Main St., El Segundo

El Segundo: Tuesday, April 26, 2 p.m.
 El Segundo Council Chambers
 350 Main St., El Segundo

Redondo Beach: Tuesday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.
 Redondo Beach Council Chambers
 415 Diamond St., Redondo Beach

Malibu: Wednesday, April 27, 10 a.m.
 Malibu Council Chambers
 23815 Stuart Ranch Road, Malibu

Culver City: Wednesday, April 27, 7 p.m.
 Culver City Senior Center, Assembly Room B47
 Veterans Memorial Complex
 4095 Overland Ave., Culver City

Source: California Public Utilities Commission



Yes, Virginia, there is additional funding

CONSENT, from page 1

sit operations.

The City Council will also be asked to spend an additional \$255,800 on the Virginia Avenue Park expansion project because of what city staff are calling “unforeseen conditions ... which delayed the completion of the project and resulted in a 10-month delay beyond the original completion date of Dec. 7, 2004.”

City Engineer Anthony Antich said unforeseen conditions are typical when doing any kind of remodeling project.

“When we took away outer walls, we found things that weren’t how they needed to be in order to meet today’s building code standards,” Antich said.

Examples include discovering wood studs in inner walls that were too small and foundations put in 60 years ago that no longer meet code requirements, Antich said.

Located at 2200 Virginia Ave., between Pico and Cloverfield boulevards, the 5.8-acre park site will have a 2.9-acre

open lawn area with a meandering path, two full-size basketball courts, two playgrounds, an interactive water play feature, and additional parking to accommodate a Saturday farmers’ market and expanded park programs.

The park project also includes the addition of a park building and renovation of existing buildings. The buildings will be used for community workshops, a youth center, a Police Activities League fitness gym, park administration offices and a Santa Monica Police Department substation.

Because of the unforeseen conditions, city staff said the design company and the construction management company hired to do the work will need extra money.

With the contract modification put before the City Council tonight, Koning Eizenberg Architecture will receive a total of \$1,352,500 for its services. Black & Veatch, responsible for construction management, will receive a total of \$1,184,300.

Police bust up alleged online prostitution ring

WEB OF DECEIT, from page 1

drugs, said Fabrega. Decker is believed to be the Web site’s operator.

Decker and Polk were released on \$35,000 bail apiece. The Los Angeles District Attorney’s Office is reviewing the case to determine whether more charges will be filed. Additional individuals involved in the alleged ring might also be targeted by authorities.

The Web site, which isn’t being disclosed because of the ongoing investigation, had profiled about 15 different women, with their photographs and backgrounds.

On Monday, the site was operable and had two women profiled. “Beth” was described as “19 and fresh from the Midwest where she was a model. (She) is the perfect ‘10’ that’s every man’s fantasy. Fun loving and outgoing, her incredi-

ble natural 36c, 24, 34, figure and French heritage will only prove why she’s high on our list of new providers. Like the perfect French tart, she’ll have you coming back for more. ...”

“Julie” also was described on the site: “The 20-year-old former high school cheerleader’s favorite sport is indoors. Blond and girl-next-door-beautiful, her natural 5’6, 110 pound, 34C, 24, 33 body is built for speed and she’s always ready for the big race. Sweet, smart and charming, she will have you doing cheers for her ...”

A page on the site to direct potential customers to LA’s best escorts was not available on Monday, but it offered a phone number to not only inquire about its services, but also employment. However, the voicemail attached to the phone number was full and a message couldn’t be left. The voicemail boxes for the women profiled on the site also were full.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Residents rant about city’s lack of vision

Editor:
(Editor’s note: This letter was originally addressed to the Santa Monica planning department and the City Council. It ran incomplete in the April 18 edition of the Santa Monica Daily Press and is now being re-printed in its entirety.)

We are residents and/or business owners who love Santa Monica and want to ensure that the city applies responsible planning practices to major development projects. We are very concerned about the future of Santa Monica Place. We are writing to you now because we believe that our city’s planning and decision-making process is seriously flawed: (1) it does not encourage sustainable growth — workable developments that are within existing zoning and the general plan and which do not impose substantial negative impacts on traffic and air quality; and (2) it does not enable our residents to have meaningful input into decisions about our city’s growth.

If this flawed process is not fixed our city will no longer feel like our home and Santa Monica residents will be burdened with a city that is overdeveloped and overrun by intolerable traffic, worsening air quality, high density construction, and a lack of open space.

We were alarmed by the recent city/Macerich community workshops on the future of Santa Monica Place, which provided one of the first opportunities for residents to express our views on the proposed project, even though Macerich had been quietly negotiating the project with city staff for almost two years.

What we would have expected was a close look at what has been under discussion for so long with a wide-ranging public discussion of its merits/demerits. Instead, the city and Macerich ignored the plan presented to the City Council only a few weeks earlier, ignored existing zoning and general plan requirements for the site, and made no attempt to posit a development for a sustainable community. Residents were told to act as though there were no planning rules, given children’s building blocks, and

asked to become mall designers “on the spot.” Participants were not told how the blocks that were added to the site plan would increase the square footage of the existing mall; they were simply encouraged to add as many blocks as they wanted. At the end of each session, photographs of the site plans were taken — photographs we are concerned will now be used to imply that residents favor increased density at the site, something that most residents argued strongly against during the open forum portion of the workshops.

This “mall designer” exercise was presented in the name of “we’re open to all ideas,” but really was aimed at avoiding any reaction to or criticism of the very real, expedited project Macerich and the city have in mind. Fortunately, many residents rejected being manipulated like this and insisted upon being heard about the plan that previously had been proposed to the City Council.

What emerged from the community workshops is that the overwhelming majority of the residents who attended and voiced their views are strongly opposed to changes to Santa Monica Place that would violate existing zoning, or which would have significant impacts. These residents asked vital questions, many of which simply were not answered.

Key unanswered questions included:

- What project is currently “on the table?”
- Why can’t the existing mall simply be “refreshed” without adding more density?
- What is the city’s total financial contribution to the project, given an expected city contribution of extremely valuable city owned land?
- What required agreements have been reached with the two department store tenants which have fee interests or long-term leases?
- What impacts will there be on traffic, congestion, noise, air pollution and open

See **LETTERS**, page 7

GUEST COMMENTARY BY CLIFF NICHOLS

Let molesters choose their own castration

Not many years ago, an adult male admitted to having had sexual intercourse with the daughter of his live-in girlfriend. When asked why he had done it, he responded, “Because she was coming on to me.” The little girl in question was 18 months old.

In the hope of protecting our children from such predators, all states now have combined some form of a Megan’s Law with Amber Alert technology. The former attempts to keep us informed as to who these molesters are, what they are and where they are via the Internet. Whereas Amber Alerts have been designed, in part, to help us to respond effectively on those occasions when the well-intentioned hopes of Megan’s Law fail.

In many cases, however, the truth is that both systems are significantly defective. Consider the case of John Evander Couey. On Feb. 23, this registered sex offender spontaneously, and without warning to anyone, responded to an urge to go “out” for the evening. So, he entered the home of 9-year-old Jessica Lunsford, evaded detection by her father and grandfather who resided in the home, and successfully secreted her in the dark of night to a location down her street where he then sexually abused her, strangled her and buried her. Who was Couey and why was he able to do what he did? Prior to that fateful night his arrest history included the following:

- Drug possession
- Lewd act upon a child
- Burglary
- Drunk and disorderly conduct
- Driving while intoxicated
- Indecent exposure
- Fraud and larceny

How is it possible for a man with such a background to render both of our country’s national child molestation preven-

tion systems impotent? It is because people like Couey are well aware of the defects and shortcomings of these systems and that knowledge, in turn, enables them to effectively perpetrate their crimes in ways that allows them to satiate their lusts unhindered until it is too late.

All who are not perpetrators themselves — and maybe even some of them as well — would most certainly agree that such a gaping loophole cannot be permitted to continue. A remedy is imperative. Jessica’s father is now insisting upon it. Similar to our response to the cases of 7-year-old Megan Kanka and 7-year-old Amber Hagerman, Mr. Lunsford is now rightly demanding these perpetrators be kept off our streets and away from our children. To this end he has proclaimed that, “(t)here should (now) be a law for Jesse.”

No doubt there shall be such a law and perhaps many. Therefore, before they are drafted, perhaps we should view this eventuality as an opportunity to be seized. Who knows? Perhaps this time around we can do it right.

Now may well be the time for us to seriously consider the enactment of a federal law mandating that all convicted child molesters in this country submit to chemical castration for the remainder of their lives as a prerequisite to their release from prison — a concept afforded legitimacy by laws already enacted to this effect in Florida, California and Oklahoma.

Criminal laws are generally intended to balance in varying degrees four purposes: punishment, retribution, rehabilitation and the protection of society. To achieve the appropriate balance in the case of child molesters requires that we first acknowledge the fact that they are by definition dangerously psychopathic people; utterly indifferent to, if not contemptuous of, our society’s concepts of right and wrong.

Once this is settled, the notions of retribution, punishment and the protection of society clearly dictate that child molesters should rightly be incarcerated for many years, if not for life. Such, however, is not the case presently. Figures released by the Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Statistics indicate that sex offenders in the United States receive on average an eight-year sentence and of that time serve only three years prior to their release.

This suggests that the lofty goal of rehabilitating these offenders has somehow been given priority in our sentencing decisions. But is this justified? Again, it would not appear so in light of the fact that the same Justice Department statistics indicate that 70 percent of the men convicted for sex crimes in the U.S. were molesters of children predominately under 13 years old and that, of all those released from prison, sex offenders are four times more likely to be rearrested for another sex crime within three years following their release. These figures would suggest something approaching a life sentence is justified to protect our children irregardless of anyone’s concerns about rehabilitating the perpetrators.

But can imprisonment for life be justified? Yes, if one compares it to the possible life sentences now available for kidnapping and then further considers that by comparison to many, if not most, child molestations, kidnapping might well be viewed as a far less egregious offense. For example, to prevent what John Evander Couey did to Jessica Lunsford upon his release from prison a life sentence could easily be justified. His kidnapping of this young girl was merely a preparatory act necessary for him to be able to engage in the truly heinous acts that followed.

Yet there are certain to be some civil libertarians who will disagree. They will argue that a life sentence would be dis-

proportionate to the gravity of the crime of molestation, absent the concurrent occurrence of other crimes such as murder. However, that is where the value of making available a chemical castration option lies.

To placate the libertarians — if that is even possible — the law might be structured as follows: Convicted child molesters shall receive a mandatory life sentence from which there shall be only one possibility of parole (available only after the felon has served a mandatory minimum period of incarceration set forth in the federal sentencing guidelines) — if the molester consents to submit to the chemical castration procedure for the remainder of his life.

Moreover, to overcome yet another libertarian concern that such consent may not be completely voluntary, the law should not require that the election be made by the convicted molester at sentencing. Rather the option should remain available to be elected by the prisoner at any time during the course of his incarceration, subject to him having served the statutory minimum number of years. After all, why not let such a person have all the time they need to decide the matter for themselves?

Either way, whatever they decide the point is that our society’s goals will have been met. Our children will be afforded greater protection than they now have and so no doubt will be able to rest easier than Jessica Lunsford did on the night she met John Evander Couey..

(Cliff Nichols is an attorney practicing criminal defense/entertainment law in Santa Monica, California. He may be contacted regarding this editorial at either (310) 917-1083, www.cliffnicholslaw.com or www.cliffnicholsradio.com)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS, from page 6

space?

Given this objectionable beginning, we residents of Santa Monica insist upon a meaningful and extensive public process preceded by a development proposal for Santa Monica Place that clearly shows the height and density of the proposed buildings, that is based upon reasonable and responsible planning practices, which includes a comprehensive environmental report that accurately assesses the impacts of traffic, congestion, noise, water runoff, light, and open space, during and after construction.

The city and Macerich must hold meaningful public meetings, designed to encourage wide-ranging discussion and public comment and to accommodate the community vision in response to the real project. All of the questions that were (and will be) raised must be answered, particularly what tangible benefits would our community receive if we were to allow intensive, private use of prime public property, the disregarding of applicable zoning, and the conversion of a shopping center into an extensive real estate development?

To learn more, log onto www.smclc.net.

Abby Arnold, Bill Bauer, Ellen Brennan, Nancy Campeau, Rev. Jim Conn, Peter Davison, Victor Fresco, John Gabree, Marge Ghiz, Diana Greene Gordon, Nora Jane Hamill, Art Harris, Claire Heron, A. Holcomb, Sherrill Kushner, Lois Lambert, Ruthann Lehrer, Maria Loya, Beatrice H. Nemlaha, Laurel Roennau, Paul Rosenstein, Jacob Samuel, Jeff Segal, Robert Seldon, Clyde Smith, Doris Sosin, Linda Sullivan, Peter Tigler, Ted Winterer, Denny Zane, Randy Walburger.

Santa Monica

Gangbangers on campus is reprehensible

Editor:

Oscar de la Torre's conduct at Samohi last week was absolutely appalling, particularly for an elected official (SMDP, April 23-24, page 1). Rather than working to defuse the already tense situation, he contributed to an escalation of it by bringing two "guests" dressed in obvious gang attire (one of whom is known to the police to be a prominent gang member) and then ignoring the requests of the Samohi administration and the police to leave. Unlike Emily Bloomfield, I do not believe this was simply a case of good intentions and bad judgment.

How can bringing obvious gangbangers onto the campus in the aftermath of recent events be simply bad judgment?

Why would anyone believe these two were "reformed" gang members given the way they dressed and acted?

How can a dismissive refusal to obey the request of campus administration and the police be simply bad judgment?

Why would any parent with school age children be willing to send them to a campus with this kind of leadership?

How can a district which is apparently willing to tolerate this kind of behavior expect continuing community support when it asks for additional funding?

Educating all of our children is perhaps the most important task undertaken by city government, second only to public safety. And it cannot be accomplished in an atmosphere where racial tensions are fanned by elected leaders. Actions like this are likely to result in a backlash against the schools, and Samohi in particular. As a parent of two children who graduated from Samohi and as a strong supporter of public schools, I must say that this is a sad day.

Someone needs to stand up and say the obvious truth — Mr. de la Torre's conduct was reprehensible and he should be recalled from the school board.

Tom Larmore
Santa Monica

If patience is a virtue, LAX is test of mettle



ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL

I think the high-level security breach in baggage check was a clear sign that this was going to be a trip like no other.

Airports naturally swallow huge chunks of your time without hesitation. That's why I prepared for the worst like a traveling veteran. I took a flight that would have me check in at LAX by 7:15 a.m. I even sacrificed my love for immense overpacking and took the minimal essentials to cut out the 40-plus minutes of waiting for baggage claim. However, no work of my own could prepare me for the weekend I was about to incur.

My reservation information was not surfacing when I went to self check-in at Alaska Airlines. I used my booking I.D., flight number, and all forms of credit cards, but they had no record of me in their system.

I looked at the itinerary hastily crumpled in my front pocket. Alaska Airlines flight operated by Delta. Check in with Delta Airlines.

After arriving to the terminal two down the line, I pushed my belongings through the baggage check, feeling peace since the hardest part had been conquered. A security guard then yelled "freeze," fiercely at the top of his lungs. Three workers sprinted ahead after the culprit and formed an unified, impenetrable front. After 30 seconds of unexplained panic, someone yelled "clear," and the workers returned to their stations as if nothing happened.

More than slightly concerned at the heightened security outburst, I asked the bag handler near me what the reason was for this alarm.

"Oh nothing," she replied. "It's just a test."

In waiting 20 minutes for a man to leave the airplane bathroom, I feel like this whole weekend is a test in waiting — also known as patience. I would usually study up on the subject, but this one led me with little desire to know the subject matter.

I felt like I was in the opening to the movie "Office Space." There were bath-

rooms in the back of the plane, and I bet on the one occupied by a man as emptying sooner. I waited five minutes wondering what he could possibly be doing in there. Five turned to 10 and three people had come and gone from the other bathroom. But I knew that as soon as I moved over to the other side, the man would surely come out. Ten turned to 15 and the bathroom walls resounded with a flush.

Finally, my hard-earned waiting would be rewarded.

Three minutes later the man was still not out, and by this time my patience had morphed to visible frustration. I abruptly asked the elderly man standing near the other restroom if I could possibly go before him, since I committed 18 minutes to the cause. He readily agreed as he was not waiting in line anyways. Finally the 20-minute miracle paraded out, feeling no remorse for spending 1/15 of the flight in a seat not his own.

You see, LA residents aren't good at waiting, and neither are New Yorkers as I've come to discover. But when you sit in the airplane shuttle van for three and a half hours after your flight, listening to caustic NY talk radio, you have two choices. You can either throw quarters at the driver's head, or submit to the fact that you have no choice in the matter. You will cross Times Square four times before you reach your destination and be the last one in the van of nine to be dropped off.

I finally reached my roommates at 9 p.m. Worn-out and sleepy-eyed, we were ready to take on the world.

The next question on the weekend test arrived the following day as my roommate, suitemate and I waited 20 minutes in a line halfway around the block for a Magnolia cupcake. Are some things worth waiting for?

Finally, I sat down with my friends with my vanilla on vanilla cupcake and took a bite. The afternoon in Manhattan was just what I needed with my prior busy work week. And the cupcake — happiness in a pleated wrapper.

I filled in the "yes" bubble of the test's scantron. Some things in life are worth waiting for. The rest I'll hopefully stick in a van of newsradio, and let them cross the Hudson 15 times in one afternoon.

(Heidi can be reached at anydayin-la@gmail.com.)

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.



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DEAR DORIE

Don't wait for doctor's detection

Dear Dorie,
I noticed the other day that my 9-month-old tends to lift her head way back when she looks at things. What does this mean?

— **Watching Her Watch**

Dear Watching,
Hopefully, and probably, nothing. But a head gesture like that could indicate a vision issue or other developmental scenarios. It should be brought up with your pediatrician just to be safe. At 9 months old, you probably just visited the doctor and won't see him or her again until your well-baby check-up at one year. Don't wait. Call and schedule an appointment for this specific question. Jot down specific details when you observe the gesture and include as much information as possible (time of day, location of object, lighting, etc.). You are your child's advocate and "better safe than sorry" is the accepted mantra. Good luck.

Dorie

(Dorie Meek is director of the Infant & Family Support Program, provided by Saint John's Health Center in partnership with the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. Meek answers questions concerning children ages birth to 5 years old. Submit your questions to "Dear Dorie" at meek@smmusd.org, or call (310) 452-6132; fax (310) 452-6392).

An Emmett by any other name

By Daily Press staff

You've had nine months to think, debate, and possibly argue — but the time has come. You need to name your baby.

According to officials at Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica, most parents choose a name while mother and baby are still in the hospital. Filling out a birth certificate, including your baby on your insurance plan, and registering him or her for a Social Security number are all much easier to do in the hospital.

Even so, a surprising number of parents take their new baby home without a name, hospital officials said. It's little wonder, considering the vast array of traditional and non-traditional names available, they added. In her book, "The Baby Name Wizard," national researcher and demographics expert Laura Wattenberg explores some prevalent trends in names today.

Traditional names and their variations

In the 1950s, names like Robert, Carol, Linda and William were highly popular. The girls' names were short to begin with, and the boys' names could easily be shortened to become Bob or Bobby, Bill or Billy.

Today, Carol and Linda are not as common, but Robert and William are back in the top 10. These little boys, however, are no longer shortening their names. Instead they join Henry and James on the playground, leaving Hank and Jim and Bill and Bob to their fathers. In parallel, little girls are also bearing longer names. Jennifer and Abigail have regained popularity and are seldom shortened to diminutives.

Name forecast

Mary and John have had their ups and downs, but they

remain the most consistently popular names throughout the ages. With thousands of names available — and the ability to make up a name if wanted — many parents find it easiest to stick to the classics, or name their baby after a family member.

A forecast of popular girls' names this summer includes: Ainsley, Annalise, Willow, Susannah and Estella. Boys names include: Asher, Jude, Declan, Emmett and Hudson.

Regardless of what name you choose for your baby, it's essential that you find a good pediatrician to help you keep them healthy and well. During pregnancy, even before names become an issue, it is good idea to begin interviewing doctors.

To find a pediatrician (or any type of physician), log onto the Saint John's Web site at www.stjohns.org. Select "Find a Physician" and respond to the computer prompts. Browsers can choose from a wide range of specialists, which are then sorted by location, gender and language. The service instantly refers patients to one of Saint John's experienced and caring physicians.

Ethnic heritage

In the early 1900s, immigrants to America were quick to shed their traditional names. Sean became John, Wilhelm became William, Emmet became Edward, and Annellise and Hannah became Ann. Today, names that reflect a cultural heritage — even if it isn't your own — are popular.

Sean is a favorite name, as are Liam, Jacob and Dillon. Girls are returning to Annellise and Hannah.

African Americans, many of whose ancestors were forcibly renamed upon arriving in America, began adopting African names in the 1970s, following the Black Power Movement. Those names have remained popular.

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The Santa Monica Daily Press is now running birth announcements every Tuesday. Call 310-458-PRESS (7737) x 101 for details.

SANTA MONICA PARENTING

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SPECIAL EVENTS

TODAY!
TUESDAYS – ongoing – ATTACHMENT PARENTING CLASS

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

WEDNESDAYS through JUNE 8 – ENCHANTED LUNCHTIME THEATRE

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

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

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

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

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

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

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

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, APRIL 23 & 24

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

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

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

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

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

LOW-COST BIRTH DOULA SERVICES – DONA

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

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

TUESDAY

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

Storytelling

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 2 to 3 year olds. Register now for next session – April 19 – May 24.

Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis

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

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

Classes

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

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

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA

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

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

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

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

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m.

Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

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

Breastfeeding Group

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

WEDNESDAY

Storytelling

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Preschool Twilight Story Time – 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Parents/children ages 3-5. **Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion** – 2 pm – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144 **Border's, Westwood** – 11am – 310-475-3444.

Classes

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

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

Yoga & Exercise

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

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

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

Breastfeeding Group

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

Other

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

THURSDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Classes

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

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA

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

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

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info. **Kids' Yoga Circle** – Yoga for ages 6 - 10, 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. (students may be dropped off at 3:30 for indoor play, song and snacks). \$18 drop-in, discounted multiple week passes available, reservations required.

Family Yoga, 5:15 – 6:30 p.m., includes 15 minutes of indoor play and song. 8-week series for parents and 1 child, \$250, \$100 each additional child. 1814 14th St., #208, 260-2736

Breastfeeding Group

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

FRIDAY

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

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

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

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STATE

Sierra Club rejects policy advocating reduced migration

BY KIM CURTIS
 Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — With the “distraction” of the group’s immigration policy behind it, the Sierra Club’s president said Monday he’s eager to get on with the business of protecting the planet and ensuring clean air and water.

Sierra Club members rejected a change in the group’s immigration policy that would have advocated reducing migration to the United States as a way to lessen the environmental consequences of population growth.

The proposal was defeated by nearly 84 percent of the 122,308 members who voted, the club announced in a statement. About 16 percent of the club’s more than 750,000 members cast ballots during voting that began in early March.

“We would rather focus our attention on the Bush agenda for so-called free trade or getting back to a sane energy policy, protecting against Arctic drilling, curbing sprawl all around the country,” said President Larry Fahn shortly after the results were announced.

Members also elected five new members to the 15-member board of directors, which sets club policy and oversees the San Francisco-based organization’s \$100 million annual budget.

Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization, a network of club activists seeking to limit immigration, backed five of their own candidates and pushed a “yes” vote. None of the group’s candidates won board seats.

Initiative supporters said Americans are the world’s largest consumers, and that when immigrants come to this country they adapt quickly, significantly increasing their own consumption.

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The immigration control advocates said the U.S. population, now about 300 million, is expected to more than double this century if nothing is done to slow its growth. They said overpopulation has led to a variety of environmental problems, including exploitation of resources, the erosion of wilderness areas and species extinction.

“I think there’s a lack of understanding of the sheer magnitude of the problem,” Dick Schneider, a supporter of the immigration proposal, said Monday after the ballots were counted. “The connection between population and environmental degradation is so clear-cut that it’s a natural issue for the Sierra Club to be involved in.”

Opponents, including many current and former club leaders, argued that wading into the politics of immigration would alienate allies such as labor unions and civil rights groups, and will not slow population growth worldwide.

Fahn said it was time to get back to basics.

“Our members have once again displayed great wisdom and made their views perfectly clear,” he said in a statement. “Now we can put our focus back where it is needed most, into strengthening communities and building alliances to protect our environment for our families and our future.”

The final tally against the immigration question was 102,455 to 18,998. Some members voted for directors but did not cast votes on the proposal.

Schneider said it was unlikely the immigration issue would be put to voters again next year.

“More Sierra Club members are going to have to recognize the issue as salient,” he said. “When we sense there’s that recognition will be the time to come back ... whether it’s two years or five years or seven years.”

The club, founded by famed conservationist John Muir in 1892, has debated its position on immigration for years and in 1998 voted to remain neutral.

Last April, a record number of members — 171,616 out of 757,058 — spoke out on the contentious issue and elected club-endorsed candidates to all five open seats.

Here is the current Sierra Club position on immigration, followed by the proposal to revise the policy that members rejected on Monday:

CURRENT POSITION: The Sierra Club supports the decision of the board of directors to take no position on U.S. immigration levels and policies. The Sierra Club recognizes the need to reduce U.S. birthrates.

REJECTED PROPOSAL: The Sierra Club recognizes the need to reduce U.S. birthrates and adopt lower limits on migration to the United States to address our nation’s rapid population growth and its harmful effects on the domestic and global environment.



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Despite U.S. pressure, Iraqi Cabinet still bare

BY SAMEER N. YACCOUB

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraqi politicians, pressured by the United States, tried again Monday to end a nearly three-month deadlock over forming a new transitional government, with insurgents emboldened by the impasse launching well-coordinated weekend attacks that killed 29.

Three road bombs aimed at U.S. military convoys exploded in the capital Monday, including one in western Baghdad that killed an American soldier, said Army Lt. Col. Clifford Kent.

Another roadside bomb hit a convoy in eastern Baghdad on Sunday, killing one American soldier and wounding two, the U.S. military said. Iraqi police said two civilians also were wounded.

At least 1,569 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

Militants also launched two separate attacks Monday aimed at Iraq's oil industry in the north, setting fire to pumps near Kirkuk and opening fire on police guarding a convoy of tanker trucks, officials said. Two policemen were wounded and three insurgents arrested in a one-hour gunbattle over the convoy, police said.

On Sunday, lawmakers loyal to Prime Minister-designate Ibrahim al-Jaafari said he was ready to announce a Cabinet that would exclude his interim predecessor, Ayad Allawi.

Al-Jaafari had decided to shun further attempts to include members of the party headed by Allawi, the secular Shiite politician who was prime minister as the country prepared for elections Jan. 30.

Members of Allawi's Iraqi List said his party had not been officially informed of the development. Allawi loyalists were bidding for at least four ministries, including a senior government post and a deputy premiership.

"Whoever says the Iraqi List has withdrawn from the negotiations about the Cabinet is not right. We haven't done that," Iraqi List legislator Hussein al-Fadr said

Monday.

Al-Jaafari's list could be submitted to parliament Monday, some officials said, but others indicated Tuesday was more likely.

"I don't see how it can be national unity government without our participation," Iraqi List legislator Hussein al-Sadr told reporters.

Members of al-Jaafari's United Iraqi Alliance were holding several rounds of talks Monday.

Sunnis initially tried to include former Baathists on their list of names for ministerial posts, said Jawad al-Maliki, a lawmaker and senior member in the alliance. When that was rejected, they dropped their demand, he told reporters.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice telephoned Massoud Barzani, head of the Kurdish Democratic Party, to ask him to finish forming a government as soon as possible, two State Department officials said Monday on condition of anonymity. Rice did not provide a formula of her own in the Friday phone call, one of the officials said.

Rice also met at the White House Friday with Adil Abdul Mahdi, a senior Shiite politician who is slated to be one of Iraq's new vice presidents, one official said. Rice conveyed the message that the Bush administration wanted to see a government formed quickly.

President Jalal Talabani told a Turkish newspaper that Iraq's Kurds won't accept the establishment of an Islamic state. Talabani, a Kurd, added that Iraq's Islamic identity would be respected.

"We Kurds will never accept the formation of an Islamic regime in Iraq," Talabani was quoted as saying in Monday's Sabah newspaper.

"Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, Sunni, Shia, Muslims, Christians all live together and this structure would not allow an Islamic regime," he said.

"All of us, including Islamic parties, want a democratic, federal, united and independent Iraq. We will never pass legislation that is contrary to Islam."

On Sunday, an emboldened Iraqi insurgency staged carefully coordinated dual bombings in Saddam's home-

town of Tikrit and a Shiite neighborhood in western Baghdad, killing and wounding dozens of Iraqi police and civilians.

The U.S. military said it had detained four more suspects in the downing of a civilian Mi-8 helicopter Thursday. All 11 passengers and crew were killed, including a survivor gunned down by insurgents. Ten suspects have been apprehended in all, the military said.

A vehicle packed with explosives was driven into a crowd gathered in front of a popular ice cream shop in Baghdad's western al-Shoulah neighborhood Sunday, police Maj. Mousa Abdul Karim said. Minutes later, as police and residents rushed to help the victims, a second suicide car bomber plowed into the crowd. At least 23 people were killed and 41 wounded, officials at two hospitals said Monday.

In Tikrit, two remotely detonated car bombs exploded in quick succession outside a police academy, killing at least six Iraqis and wounding 33, police and a hospital official said. The blasts occurred as recruits were about to travel to Jordan for training, said police Lt. Shalan Allawi.

Al-Qaida in Iraq claimed responsibility for the Tikrit and eastern Baghdad attacks in statements posted on militant Web sites. The group also claimed responsibility for a roadside bomb targeting a U.S. patrol near the Abu Ghraib prison, west of Baghdad. The U.S. military said no one was hurt in that attack.

The authenticity of those claims could not be verified.

The U.S. military said a suicide car bomb exploded in Ramadi, 70 miles west of Baghdad, on Monday, wounding two civilians and slightly damaging a U.S. Marine vehicle; and a 20-year-old Iraqi died at a U.S. military hospital of injuries he suffered two weeks ago while attacking coalition forces.

Iraqi police discovered the bodies of three people in a river in the center of the country, the Polish military said Monday. The bodies were found late Sunday evening near Tahir, 25 miles east of Diwaniyah, Lt. Col. Zbigniew Staszko said.

Fallen activist recalled as defender of human rights

BY BRIAN MELLEY

Associated Press Writer

LAKEPORT, Calif. — Marla Ruzicka was resourceful and goodhearted even as a child.

At age 8, she sold rocks door-to-door to buy carnations for her mother, even getting the flowers on the cheap from the florist. Years later, she used her pluck to get millions in funding for civilian casualties of war in Iraq, eventually giving her life to the cause that was her passion.

Ruzicka, who was killed by a car bomb in Iraq earlier this month, was remembered Saturday at her funeral as a spirited young woman whose boundless energy led her to accomplish much in her 28 years. Friends, family, journalists and colleagues came from around the world to take part in the service.

Kevin Danaher, co-founder of San Francisco-based Global Exchange, a nonprofit international human rights organization, said Ruzicka's magic was understanding and showing unconditional love.

"That's why a 28-year-old woman from a small town in Northern California has so many people around the world grieving for her," Danaher said.

Ruzicka traveled to Iraq before the March 2003 U.S.-led invasion and later founded a group called CIVIC, the

Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict, whose aim was to tally the number of Iraqi civilian deaths in the conflict. She was also instrumental in securing millions in aid money from the federal government for distribution in Iraq.

On April 16, Ruzicka was killed in a car bombing in Baghdad, along with her interpreter and another foreigner.

The Rev. Ted Oswald, who conducted the Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church, said it was sad that it took a tragedy to bring to light all the good Ruzicka did.

"There's no doubt in my mind that the good Lord has his hands full right now," he said, referring to Ruzicka's sometimes outspoken nature. "Not only does he have his hands full, but heaven will never be the same."

The upbeat homily brought laughter from the more than 600 mourners, which included actor Sean Penn, who said he counted Ruzicka among his heroes, and U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer.

Bobby Muller, chairman of Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, said the true value of Ruzicka's work was her ability to counter people's cynicism.

"Marla demonstrated the fact that an individual can make a profound difference in this world," Muller said. "This woman was our inspiration."

Ruzicka's activism began in this town 350 miles

north of San Francisco, where she worked at a convalescent home, helped abused children and started a girl's soccer team in high school. Eventually, it led her around the world — to parts of Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, where she often traveled in harm's way.

With passion for her causes and an unbridled capacity for having fun, she was remembered as a force of nature, a cross between Mother Teresa and Buffy the Vampire Slayer, said Quill Lawrence, a radio reporter for the British Broadcasting Corp.

Ruzicka often arrived in war-torn places unprepared and nearly broke, he said. But Lawrence said she quickly managed to win over the hearts of those she was helping and those whose help she needed.

Lawrence said Ruzicka repaid favors with her friendship, kindness and a ready smile. She organized parties, slipped heartfelt notes under the doors of friends' rooms and hugged guards at military checkpoints.

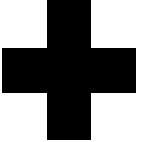
"She made me feel like I was the greatest person on earth," Lawrence told the crowd.

Ruzicka's organization, CIVIC, is urging people to honor her memory and her cause on May 3 by holding vigils to bring attention to civilian casualties of war. Another memorial for Ruzicka is planned in Washington on May 14.

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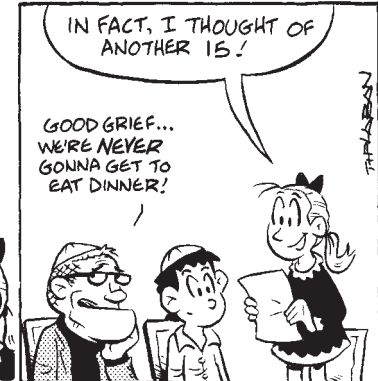


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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Down and out in West Virginia: Nolte's son busted

By The Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The 18-year-old son of Nick Nolte has been charged with possession of marijuana with intent to deliver, according to a criminal complaint filed in Kanawha County Magistrate Court.

Brawley King Nolte of Malibu was arrested early Sunday. He was a passenger in a car that was stopped by state police in St. Albans for having a broken front headlight. The police trooper smelled marijuana, entered the car and found a freezer bag containing 70 grams of marijuana, the complaint said.

Nolte posted \$2,500 bond Sunday night and was released from South Central Region Jail.

Becky Linger Nolte and Nick Nolte lived for a short time in Charleston. They divorced in 1994.

Brawley Nolte had roles in the 1996 film "Ransom" and 1997's "Affliction," which starred his father.

HAGERSTOWN, Md. — The mayor has struck out in his bid to rename a city street for baseball great Willie Mays.

Mayor William M. Breichner had hoped to make up for the poor treatment Mays received in the early 1950s when he made his minor league debut here to catcalls and racial jeers. However, his plans to rename Memorial Boulevard ran afoul of war veterans.

The backlash prompted Breichner and the city council last week to drop plans for renaming the street Willie Mays Way.

Mays said he wasn't offended.

He told The (Baltimore) Sun he understands why the city heeded veterans' objections.

"I think veterans who go to war and come back have the right to say what's on their mind," Mays, 73, said in a phone interview from his home in Atherton, Calif.,

just south of San Francisco.

"I don't live there," he added. "They're the veterans who live there. If the veterans are saying a street shouldn't be in my name, that's fine."

The rejection came eight months after Mays returned to the western Maryland city. At the Aug. 9 event, Breichner publicly apologized to the Hall of Famer and promised to name a street in his honor. After Breichner formally tried last month to make good on his pledge, scores of war veterans protested.

Breichner said he still hopes Hagerstown will make "some other, even more appropriate recognition," such as renaming its old-fashioned ballpark — or possibly using Mays' name as the marquee if it builds a stadium.

"I really appreciate his comments," the mayor said. "Mr. Mays is a very gracious individual, a true gentleman."

PARIS — Salma Hayek and Javier Bardem are among the members of the jury at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

Sarajevo-born director Emir Kusturica heads the jury, which also includes writer Toni Morrison, Indian actress Nandita Das, and directors John Woo, Agnes Varda, Benoit Jacquot and Fatih Akin, organizers announced last week.

This year's festival will run May 11-22. Twenty movies from 13 countries have been selected to compete. The awards will be announced May 21.

ROSEDALE, Md. — Motley Crue is joining efforts to find a Baltimore area woman missing since March 6, when she failed to meet friends for the band's concert in Washington.

Tracey Gardner-Tetso, 32, of Rosedale, was reported missing by her husband after she didn't meet friends at the

"Red, White & Crue Tour 2005" show at the MCI Center.

The band will match an earlier reward of up to \$10,000 to increase publicity about the woman's disappearance, said Katie McNeil of 10th Street Entertainment, Motley Crue's management company.

"We hope our involvement helps bring more attention to this case, and anyone with information will step forward," Nikki Sixx, the group's bass player, said in a recent statement.

The earlier reward was offered by the Victims' Rights Foundation of Gaithersburg, Metro Crime Stoppers and Aggregate Industries, where Gardner-Tetso worked as a dispatcher.

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Grammy-winning singer Lauryn Hill will perform at the Stockholm Jazz Festival, to be held on the banks of the downtown Skeppsholmen island in July.

Some 25,000 people are expected to attend the concerts, which also will feature Roy Haynes, Lee Ritenour, Angelique Kidjo and Toots Thielemans, organizers said Monday.

Hill, a former member of the Fugees, won five Grammy Awards in 1999 for her album, "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill." In 2002, she released "MTV Unplugged 2.0," which interspersed folk-style songs with nine spoken-word interludes in which she talked about her personal and artistic problems.

Some concerts during the July 19-23 festival will be held in the Stockholm Concert Hall and in the Kungstradgarden park in the city center, said Bosse Persson, the festival's executive director.

"About 70 percent of the music will be acoustic jazz and the rest more pop," said Persson, who is also a musician.

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