

FREE

TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2004

Volume 3, Issue 143

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

00000

FANTASY 5

2, 14, 23, 24, 35

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 3, 9, 4

Evening picks: 7, 1, 9

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 11, Money Bags

2nd Place: 06, Whirl Win

3rd Place: 12, Lucky Charms

Race Time: 1:46.51



NEWS OF THE WEIRD
by Chuck Shepard

■ Raymond Rodriguez, 25, was found not guilty in the murder of a 77-year-old drinking buddy after he testified to having, at the crime scene, hallucinations of bologna and cheese dancing around in the refrigerator and, in the freezer, a green man who told Rodriguez, "Catch me if you can." (San Antonio, December)

■ Patrick Hutchinson was sent for a mental exam in February after police in Lexington, Ky., accused him of murdering his wife. Hutchinson explained that she had been taken over by aliens and that he (as one of only 735 "true humans" left in Lexington, out of 260,000 population) had to stop her, using a weapon supplied by a cobra that was speaking on behalf of God.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"One good thing about music, when it hits, you feel no pain."

— Bob Marley



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Cell companies move through City Hall static

Better reception is on the horizon

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — In an effort to get better reception for cell phone users in Santa Monica, wireless companies are getting dialed into a new law that will govern where antennas can be built here.

Wireless representatives and public utility workers met with city officials on Monday to discuss revisions to a proposed law that dictates where, when and how antennas will be erected throughout the city. If the law is passed by the City Council this summer, better reception for most cell phones users could be a reality by

the end of the year.

The proposed law is expected to be reviewed by the City Council in June with final approval in July. A February moratorium banning the construction of wireless telephone facilities on public land will expire in August. Wireless companies will then be able to submit applications to erect antennas in Santa Monica.

Prompted by two lawsuits levied by Verizon and AT&T, City Hall was forced to draft a law that would allow telecommunication companies to install wireless infrastructure on public land. The companies filed the suits in state and federal court last fall after they applied to put up antennas in Santa Monica but City Hall denied them.

See CELL, page 5

Watch that crack



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press
Jesse Puente, of Venice, recently showed off his moves on the Venice boardwalk.

Volunteers push CEPS measure over the top

By Daily Press staff

School supporters are crediting hundreds of volunteers stationed at "every corner of the city" on Saturday for gathering the last of more than 8,000 signatures needed to place a controversial and unprecedented charter amendment on the November ballot.

The charter amendment would force City Hall to hand over at least \$6 million to the local school district each year, and more when the city's budget grows. City Hall oversees a \$350 million budget and about half of it is unrestricted, meaning it isn't mandated for one particular project or use.

Local politicians have criticized the proposal, calling it government at its worst because it doesn't identify a new revenue source. Leaders from Community for Excellent Public Schools, the organization pushing the charter amendment, counter the proposal is a modest request for a most valued resource — children.

In a Monday announcement, CEPS co-chair Shari Davis said more than 600 people have volunteered to gather signatures for the proposal in the past 10 weeks.

"The volunteer response

See CEPS, page 6

Beach smoking ban may be lit tonight

BY JOHN WOOD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — The ban on lighting up at local beaches and on the Santa Monica Pier will become law in 30 days if it's approved again by City Hall leaders tonight.

Elected officials passed the smoking ban 4-2 last month, citing the health dangers of second-hand smoke, litter problems on the beaches and fire hazards on the pier. Violators

face the same fine as for smoking in Santa Monica parks — \$750.

Every ordinance must be voted on twice before it becomes law. The smoking law has drawn sharp criticisms from members of the business community, who worry where the ban might be expanded to next and question whether it's fair to merchants on the pier.

Though the law allows for designated smoking areas to be set aside on the pier, it prohibits smoking else-

where. Pier officials, who backed the proposal last month, said they didn't realize at the time it extended to outdoor dining areas.

"This was new information to us," said Ben Franz-Knight, executive director of the Pier Restoration Corp., which manages the pier. "And the tenants, understandably so, were very, very concerned about it. And fundamentally it's an issue of fairness — if

See BAN, page 6

City Hall to drop into \$505K skateboard park

(Editor's note: This article is part of an ongoing series on the consent agenda of the Santa Monica City Council. Consent agenda items are routinely passed with little or no discussion or public input, though many items were previously discussed.)

By Daily Press staff

COUNCIL CHAMBERS — A \$505,000 contract to build a new skateboard park in Santa Monica is part of \$3.5 million in expenses local officials are

expected to approve tonight.

Plans for the skate site at Memorial Park were approved by the Architectural Review Board March 1, clearing the way for construction, which is expected to be

See CONSENT, page 6



Rendering courtesy

Officials hope the new skate park will open this fall.

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Gemini, hang with your friends

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)
★★★★ Provoked by a situation, you decide to put on your problem-solving hat. Brainstorming sessions, getting together with others and researching options all play into this scenario. You have what it takes. Relationships benefit from some nurturing along the way. Tonight: Your treat.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Aim for what you want with or without the support of a key associate or partner. You might not be comfortable with everything you hear. Make that OK. Learn to choose your battles. Tonight: Find your pals. Watch a ballgame or get into some other well-loved sport.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Pressure builds, but recognize that you need to take care of your different needs. Investigate what might be going on with someone close. Check out property and investments. You might want to take a stab at something in the near future. Tonight: Order in.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Others play devil's advocate, whether you like it or not. Getting past a problem could be a bit difficult. Responsibilities call left and right. Understanding will come with space. Let yourself flow. Tonight: A must show.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ You might not want to reveal all your thoughts. Keep this concept in mind. Opt to not jabber away, so you don't let the cat out of the bag. Sometimes you might be right to mull over a decision. Know what you want first. Tonight: Hang with friends.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Take the high road, and you'll gain. Don't allow yourself to get into petty quarrels or hassles. You will be drained as a result. Question as much as you need to in order to clear through issues. Tonight: Read between the lines, please.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Deal with an issue that you have put on hold for way too long. You might be letting something go that you really want to achieve. Laughter surrounds meetings and a get-together. Remember, you don't have to impress others. Tonight: Where your friends are.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Defer to others, and you gain a new perspective. What goes on could rapidly change if you work with people individually. Your creativity gets plugged in during a brainstorming session. Let ideas flow as in stream-of-consciousness writing. Tonight: Spend quality time with a loved one.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Stay on top of what you want, and you will get just that. Your ability to take charge will help you grow and develop in new ways. Understanding leads you in a new direction, if you let it. Others seek you out as well. Tonight: Be a take-charge Lion.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Defer as much as you need to. Others appear to be willing to run the show. You might have some personal matters to think through or to handle. You find that by lying back, more information comes forward. Assume that others are well-meaning. Tonight: Follow the crowd (for a change!).

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Inspect and question. Your detachment proves to be your greatest asset as you try to figure out the how and why of a situation. Although you're loaded with personal opinions, hold back until you have done some investigating. Tonight: Play it low-key.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Others pitch in and help you get past an immediate problem. Perhaps a different perspective will help you. Reveal more of what's on your mind. Lighten up and be more forthcoming. Tonight: Work as late as need be.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Vigil planned for teenage prisoners

By Daily Press staff

A candlelight vigil will be held at City Hall on Wednesday to remember the lives of two teenagers who were found dead in their jail cells nearly 100 days ago.

Deon Whitfield, 17, of Los Angeles and Durrell Feaster, 18 of Stockton, were found hanged in their cell at Preston California Youth Authority on Jan. 19.

The vigil is expected to be attended by young people, including youth formerly incarcerated in the California Youth Authority, the families of youth in CYA, human rights activists and community-based organizations from throughout Santa Monica and LA County. The group will mourn the deaths and condemn the alleged abuse of youth in California Youth Authority. The LA County vigil is one of nine vigils happening throughout the state. San Francisco's "Ella Baker Center/Books Not Bars" has called for groups state-wide to host vigils.

A coalition of prominent community groups that represent families, youth, and concerned citizens that are pressing for reforms within the California Youth Authority.

A state report released by Prisoner Legal Services has confirmed that CYA facilities regularly fail to provide youth with basic educational, mental health and drug treatment programs mandated by law, critics say. California's Youth Authority is now considered the most brutal youth prison system in the country, they added.

Learn about the original 'Muscle Beach'

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Historical Society is flexing some muscle.

"Muscle Beach, Santa Monica," an exhibition presented by the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum, opens May 4. The exhibition of vintage photographs of the original Muscle Beach in Santa Monica between the 1930s and 1950s goes back to the beginning of the fitness "revolution" and how "Muscle Beach" began and earned international fame.

Located next to the Santa Monica Pier, Muscle Beach began in the early 1930s and bloomed over 20 years into an extraordinary entertainment of performances for thousands of spectators, city officials say. The exhibition re-lives a time of daring, creative, and original acrobatic performances and body-building on Muscle Beach.

The exhibit will be on display May 4 through Oct. 3, at the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum, 1539 Euclid St. For more information, call (310) 395-2290.

Republicans on SMC campus

By Daily Press staff

Small, but organized, a group of Santa Monica College republican students plan to host two political candidates this week on campus.

Today, Dave Hernandez, Republican candidate for U.S. Congress, District 28, will be on hand to discuss his platform.

Sponsored by SMC College Republicans, the event will take place from 11:45 a.m. to 12:35 p.m. in the business building, room 101.

On Wednesday, Bill Simon, candidate for state treasurer 2006, will give a speech to young Republicans entitled, "Does Character Still Count?"

Sponsored by SMC College Republicans and Young Republican Federation of California, the event will be held between 7:15 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the business building, room 111.

Mystery Photo

So far, there is no winner for last weekend's mystery photo. While many respondents guessed several other locales where greed is prominent in Santa Monica, it's not where this greed head lives. Here's a hint: Most passersby wouldn't notice it since they are traveling on foot at a pretty good clip, unless they are in their cars stuck at the traffic light.



Look for a mix of building SW swell and small NW wind/ground swell today. The good summer breaks in the North Bay through the north half of the South Bay see waist- to head-high surf, along with some occasionally bigger sets. Standout areas with great exposure will be in the overhead range on the average sets and bigger waves going a couple of feet overhead on the best sets. Winds will be light and variable to light S in the morning and will build out of the W to WNW in the 8-12 knot range through the afternoon.

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

Today the water is:

62°

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	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	8:45	-0.3	7:04	2.8	12:45	5.4	4:22	3.0
SUNDAY	10:16	-0.3	9:28	3.1	1:57	5.0	6:09	3.4
MONDAY	11:34	-0.4	11:30	2.7	3:36	4.8	6:55	3.8
TUESDAY	NA	NA	12:33	-0.5	5:11	4.8	7:27	4.2
WEDNESDAY	12:41	2.1	1:18	-0.5	6:24	4.9	7:56	4.6
THURSDAY	1:32	1.4	1:55	-0.4	7:21	5.0	8:22	4.9
FRIDAY	2:15	0.9	2:27	-0.2	8:09	4.9	8:47	5.2

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The Q-Line

There has been a lot of speculation recently that terrorists will once again attack the United States. And it's supposed to happen relatively soon. Before the presidential election, some predict. As we witnessed in Spain several weeks ago, the devastating attack on the train dramatically changed the outcome of that country's elections.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know,

"If we have another terrorist attack, will it change your view on the politics of Washington and possibly change your vote in the presidential elections?"

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



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OPINION

LETTERS



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American compassion is a farce

Editor:

Yaron Brook and Elan Journo of the Ayn Rand Institute assert that the "Bush Administration's war in Iraq embraces compassion instead of the rational goal of self-defense" (SMDP, April 23, page 5). They claim that U.S. troops have "strict orders from Washington to avoid the risk of killing civilians." A fine example of this "compassion" is a Marine Corporal, one of a group of U.S. snipers who have killed hundreds of Iraqis in Fallouja: "Sometimes a guy will go down, and I'll let him scream a bit to destroy the moral of his buddies ... then I'll use a second shot." With 24 "confirmed kills" to his credit, this Marine concluded: "I couldn't have asked to be in a better place. I just got lucky: To be here at the right time and with the right training." (LA Times, April 19).

We must reject the claim that this or any war can be "compassionate" or that an occupying army thousands of miles from home is engaged in "self-defense." As for those "strict orders" to avoid killing civilians: At least 10,000 have died since the invasion began. Now Brook and Journo call for a total and genocidal attack upon the Iraqis in violation of international law and moral decency.

Their commentary brings to mind another American who advocated genocide: L. Frank Baum, author of the well-beloved "Wizard of Oz." It was 1890, the date of the last massacre of original Americans at Wounded Knee, S.D., where hundreds of Lakota men, women and children were killed by the U.S. 7th Cavalry. Historian David Stannard states: "... the survivors were tracked down for miles around and summarily executed ... Women and children accounted for more than two-thirds of the Indian dead." (American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World, page 126).

As editor of the Aberdeen, S.D. Saturday Pioneer, just prior to the massacre Baum wrote that "the nobility of the redskin is extinguished and what few are left are a pack of whining curs who lick the hand that smites them. The whites, by the law of conquest, by civilization, are masters of the American continent, and the best safety of the frontier settlements will be secured by the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians."

After the massacre that ended nearly 300 years of colonial and U.S. military aggression against original Americans which began with English invaders in New England in the early 1600s, Baum called for a Nazi-like final solution: "We had better, in order to protect our civilization, follow it up ... and wipe these untamed and untamable creatures from the face of the earth" (pp. 126, 127). Baum's advocacy of genocide, unknown to Americans who have been raised on the tale of Dorothy and Toto in the Emerald City, has simply been dressed up for contemporary times in a chilling call by Brook and Journo, who urge us to slaughter Iraqis who have the audacity to defend their country against an invading force.

The present assault on Iraq by the U.S., the "Coalition of the Bribe" and thousands of highly-paid mercenaries follows 13 years of heinous economic sanctions that led to the deaths of more than 500,000 children — supported by the UN including "anti-war" France and Germany, and decades of U.S. and Western support for Saddam Hussein — who magically changed from a valued ally showered with weapons into a monster who was a threat to peace.

The Iraqi people are resisting this invasion with every means at their disposal including guerrilla warfare. It is exactly what gun-loving Americans would be doing if the situation were reversed and we were fighting an invading occupation force. As in Vietnam, people who are invaded and oppressed have a sacred right to defend themselves. Brook's and Journo's attempt to turn the victims into victimizers is an old imperialist ploy.

The assertion that U.S. and "coalition" forces, which have killed untold thousands of Iraqis have been "compassionate" is one of the great lies of this or any other century. It must be rejected by citizens who are calling for an end to the war in order to bring our forces home.

John Marciano
Santa Monica

City Hall's obsession with signs is misguided



LEGAL VIEWS AND NEWS

By David Pizarra

"Sign, sign, everywhere a sign, Blockin' out the scenery, breakin' my mind,

"Do this, don't do that, can't you read the sign?"

The 5 Man Electrical Band song that came out originally in 1971 was an anthem for youth, freedom, and a mocking of the business community and homeowners. Today, it is still the anthem of the City Council.

We have a city that won't allow a businessperson to put up a sign announcing their business without a sign permit approval process. Then you have to go through a building permit approval process, and finally prove you have a business license.

Yet the City Council is more than willing to allow those same business people to clutter their windows with "no trespassing" signs that tell the police department when they can and cannot do their jobs by removing the trespassers, versus just having the police remove the obviously homeless from doorways that they don't pay rent on. The logic here is amazing to me. It goes like this, "there might be some people who want the homeless to stay in their doorways, so we should allow all homeless to sleep in doorways, unless a sign is posted otherwise." Frankly, I think it should have been written that if you want a homeless, passed out, bum on your front step you should have to advertise for it with a sign, otherwise the police will make them move.

Councilman Kevin McKeown is concerned about the visual clutter of the city, so he jumps all over the idea of regulation of the business people, but God forbid we make the poor and downtrodden homeless move from the sidewalks.

Mayor Richard Bloom is in charge, if one could call it that, of a City Council that will allow a herd of homeless to encamp themselves on the bluffs in Ocean Park, but won't let them stay in Palisades Park bluffs, away from the public, for their own safety. If these people are so mentally incompetent that they can't determine for themselves where it is safe to sleep, they should be locked up and put in a safe environment. They should not be allowed to roam the streets like hungry Tasmanian devils, scaring the tourists and annoying the residents.

Councilman Herb Katz sees the homeless as a big problem and the business signage issue as a small one. Well, I think he's half right. The homeless are a big problem. They always will be. This is a chronic situation that we will always have to manage. The business signage issue is,

to my mind, a tremendous problem. It is not only a huge issue in its own right, but it is indicative of the larger mentality of the city government. There is a tremendous need for an overhaul of the systems that City Hall uses to regulate business and land development. When I asked one of the City Councilmembers what was being done, I was told they have a consultant looking into it. The problem won't be solved by hiring yet another commission, consultant or free-range marketeer at \$75,000 to \$200,000 apiece.

The fact that the City Council thinks it will get good information from a consultant hired by them is a sign of just how out of touch they are with the way the world works. They want to remove themselves from the process as much as possible. I could accomplish the same thing as the consultant being hired to address the building permitting process, and it would have cost the city about \$1,000.

On a Saturday, I would bring in the head of each department and I would open the meeting to all lawfully operating businesses that have had to navigate the slipstream called the permitting process. I would put them all in the Civic Auditorium, have lunch donated by the local restaurateurs, have paper donated by Sanford, and coffee by Peets and coordinate a solution to expediting the process.

I think the problem is that the bureaucracy is allowed to hide behind the council and the council is allowed to hide behind consultants and commissions. Then they ultimately bury the issue with "staff."

It is a lack of accountability that is holding this city back. No one is accountable to anyone — well, except for Santa Monica's Renters Rights, but that is another column.

Accountability in management is key. In any organization, there must be someone who is accountable to the boss. In this case, the boss is us. We, the citizens of the city, are ultimately responsible for the number of children in our schools who don't live here when there is a budget crisis. We are to blame for the lack of a council that is responsive to our neighborhood needs by not requiring districts. The business community has no one to blame but themselves for their lack of a voice on the council.

Until accountability is brought in, and some of those who have not been accountable are removed, the song will remain the same,

"And the sign said anybody caught trespassin' would be shot on sight,

"So I jumped on the fence and yelled at the house, 'Hey! What gives you the right?"

"To put up a fence to keep me out or to keep Mother Nature in."

(David Pizarra is a partner in the law firm of Pizarra & Grist. He can be reached at dpizarra@pizarra.com. He welcomes your comments and questions).

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.

Officials prefer camouflaged cell antenna towers

"We ask that you exhaust private properties within 300 feet of the site," he told

The main concern from City Hall is

By forcing the companies to apply for permits to install the antennas, City Hall will be able to guarantee that the antennas

are safe, aesthetically pleasing, have a minimal impact on neighbors and don't interfere with other utilities. City officials also prefer "stealth" installations, when companies use existing power lines, camouflage equipment, or install their antennas in a way that blends into the street surroundings, like in street lamps.

West L.A., CA - According to a recently released back pain relief report, most back pain sufferers have no idea how to eliminate their pain. Some use heat, others ice. From sleeping on the floor, to pillows underneath the legs, back pain relief techniques vary. But thanks to a free report, local back pain sufferers finally know exactly what to do. To get a copy of the free "Back Pain Relief Report",

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[illegible]



LOCAL

Public input not allowed at law's second reading

BAN, from page 1

you're going to ban smoking on outdoors area on the pier, you should ban it citywide.

"At this point, you know, hey, let's treat this as a global issue in the whole city," Franz-Knight added. "Let's do it comprehensively. Let's not piecemeal it."

If council members agree smoking should be allowed in outside dining areas on the pier, it's unclear whether the law will have to be redrafted. As written, it calls for designated smoking areas on the pier in locations that have yet to be decided — and it's possible outdoor dining

areas could be grouped into those designated areas.

The council is expected to make a final decision on the exact size and location of the designated areas next month, officials said. Franz-Knight has recommended eight specific areas on the pier be set aside for smoking, plus portions of each outdoor dining area.

Whether council members will agree is unknown. At least one council member on Monday said smoking should be allowed outdoors at restaurants on the pier.

"We allow smoking in restaurants all over the city, and I never thought about it

when I voted for it," said City Councilman Herb Katz. "When we cut it out of the rest of the city, if we ever do, then (we can do it on the pier)."

Katz said if it came before the council he would support a smoking ban in all outdoor dining areas, something several other California cities already have done.

The smoking ban was backed by the Surfrider Foundation, American Lung Association, American Heart Association, American Cancer Society and City Hall's own environmental task force, and the Recreation and Parks Commission, among other groups. Along with a recent decision to outlaw smoking on beaches in the city of Los Angeles — including Cabrillo, Dockweiler, Will Rogers and Venice — the ban covers 13 miles of beaches.

"To me personally, it's really a matter of protecting the rights of non-smokers," said Robert Berger, director of Citizens

Organized Against Smoking and its Trash. "Eighty-four percent of us don't smoke — why should we have to move to accommodate smokers? Why should we have to deal with cigarette butts all over the beach?"

Berger said he will attend tonight's meeting, even though no public input is allowed on items that return to the council for second reading. Other residents said they didn't know about the ban until after the last vote, when it became a national news story. They questioned the fairness and importance of outlawing smoking in an open, windy area.

"If the city's got time to put their resources into banning smoking on the beach, who's in charge of the priorities?" asked Ocean Park resident Kurt Heim, 27. "Surely there must be bigger issues than smoking on the beach."

More than 600 volunteer for charter amendment

CEPS, from page 1

has been amazing," she said. "And we've been very encouraged by the financial contributions to this effort as well ... This is clearly a community that will do what it takes to maintain the excellence of its public education."

Alan Toy, commissioner of the Santa Monica Rent Control Board, and Dr. Mike Gruning, chairman of the local chamber of commerce, were among the volunteers who pitched in to gather signatures over the weekend.

"If we are going to commit government funds to anything, it should be education," Toy said in a prepared statement. "What better way to create a sustainable community than to make sure our schools have the resources they need?"

Though CEPS leaders feel confident

they have the signatures necessary to qualify the charter amendment for the ballot, they likely will continue in their signature drive. That's because all of the signatures have to be from registered Santa Monica voters. Though it needs only 8,640 signatures — or 15 percent of Santa Monica's 57,596 registered voters — to qualify its measure for the ballot, CEPS hoped to gather 11,000 signatures.

Meanwhile, a group of leaders from City Hall, the local school district and Santa Monica College are scheduled to meet Wednesday to discuss possible school funding options. The ongoing talks don't specifically include CEPS, but are widely viewed as the key forum in which a compromise could be reached.

— John Wood

Nine new police cruisers part of \$3.5M consent agenda

CONSENT, from page 1

completed as early as this fall.

Officials said the proposed park reflects Santa Monica's deep skateboarding roots.

"Thirty years ago skateboarding was popularized when skateboarders, in an area between Santa Monica and Venice historically known to skateboarders as 'Dog Town,' demonstrated their aggressive skating skills in pools, stairs, streets and on sidewalks," reads a memo by city staffers to the City Council.

"The final design consists of in-ground concrete bowls and structures that will provide a flowing and challenging experience for skaters and bikers at all levels of expertise," the memo continues. "The skate area is enclosed with decorative fencing and there will be a single point of entry for security and control. The stormwater runoff resulting from the impervious concrete surfaces will be reduced by the installation of new drywells that will percolate stormwater runoff into the groundwater basin."

Also on tonight's agenda is a three-year contract with a transportation company to provide Dial-A-Ride services, which consists of free transportation for disabled people and anyone over 60 years old throughout Santa Monica, seven days a week. Officials estimate that the contract will cost \$1,603,008.

Another \$358,207 is expected to be spent on roadwork being done on Fourth Street between Pico Boulevard and the southern city limit. Crews recently began construction on the curbs, sidewalks, medians and roadways on Fourth Street. They expect to complete the project this fall.

City Hall staffers have recommended spending another \$451,691 on a three-year contract to provide Big Blue Bus advertisement posting services. They've also suggested \$451,691 be spent on nine new gasoline-powered police cruisers and another \$127,809 be spent on a tool and equipment truck.

— John Wood

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STATE



STATE BRIEFS

Palms stolen under cover of darkness

By The Associated Press

SANTA ANA — Rustlers with shovels are preying on neighborhood palm trees, digging them up from front yards in the dead of night and selling them for up to \$10,000 apiece.

Homeowners are now on the lookout for thieves with shovels, and some have chained down the expensive tropical plants.

"Palm trees are big business right now. People don't want to wait 10 or 15 years. They want instant," said Mike Letko, owner of Palm Plantation in Riverside.

Police used a dog to sniff out four men arrested Sunday for allegedly digging up and stealing 18 palm trees worth more than \$5,000. The palms were taken from homes in Floral Park, a wealthy neighborhood with lush gardens.

Miguel Castaneda, 33, of Lake Forest; Adrian Lopez, 27, of Rancho Santa Margarita; Joseph Diaz, 21, of Santa Ana; and Jimmy Torres, 18, of Santa Ana were booked for investigation of grand theft and possession of stolen property.

It was the latest in a string of palm thefts that have struck in Irvine, Newport Beach, Fountain Valley, Anaheim, Placentia and other Orange County cities.

"There's such strong demand for them, and they're a quick sale," Lt. Alan Caddell said.

In Fountain Valley, police have issued a warning about potential palm thieves. "If you have any palm trees or potted plants that have any significant value or beauty, you might be a target," the department said on its Web site.

Some homeowners pour concrete around the trees, then attach them to chains that become permanently embedded in the ground when the concrete dries.

Cell phones a hazard to public safety

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Cellular telephone gridlock in Los Angeles is jeopardizing public safety because they have crowded out police and fire services that use the same bandwidth, authorities said.

The 800 MHz bandwidth, which is occupied by the Police Department for data transfers and the Fire Department for voice signals, is also being used by a growing number of cell phone users, particularly those using Nextel Communications.

"We can talk to dispatchers, but in areas where the Nextel interference is significant, we are unable to hear the dispatcher clearly and in some cases, not at all," fire Capt. Kevin Nida said. "It probably happens many, many times, but we don't know how often it happens. It's significant."

It's especially troubling because there's no way to distinguish between dispatch calls lost due to cellular interference and those lost because of blockage by hills and buildings, equipment malfunctions or sunspots, authorities said.

Cellular interference emerged in the late 1990s as the Federal Communications Commission allocated larger chunks of the 800 MHz bandwidth to cellular companies. Even though they don't share frequencies, the stronger cellular broadcasts often bleed over into the police and fire channels.

Nextel Communications spokesman Tim O'Regan said engineers are working with police and fire departments to reduce interference.

"There's no way we can proactively find out where the interference is. We need to hear from the source, which is the public safety agency, and we'll work with them to correct any problems," he said.

Nextel has proposed a broad reallocation of frequencies in the 800 MHz bandwidth that would separate public safety channels from those used by cell phone companies. The company has offered \$850 million to subsidize the cost of retuning police and fire radios.

Many public safety departments said, however, that it could cost billions.

LA kids are park poor

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Public parks are out of reach for many youngsters.

Two-thirds of children in the city — more than 716,000 youngsters under 18 — don't live within a quarter-mile of a park, the Trust for Public Land said in its No Place to Play report released Monday.

Countywide, only 31 percent of children live within walking distance of a park. Los Angeles fares poorly compared to other cities. In Boston, 78 percent of children live within a quarter-mile of a park and in New York 59 percent do.

"It's a terrible indictment. If you don't have a place to exercise, you aren't going to exercise," said Linda Rosenstock, dean of the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Public Health.

"In Boston and New York, they built places for children. There was planning. In Los Angeles, we don't have outdoor public spaces; we have sprawl and the car culture, and it just aggravates a very bad trend in American life: less physical activity which is leading to a wide array of health problems in our children," Rosenstock said.

Recreation and Parks general manager Jon Kirk Mukri said city officials have long known that the city lacks sufficient public playgrounds.

"We know we have a problem. I think it can be solved, but it is going to take time," Mukri said. "We have so many people here now. Our population is denser than it has ever been. Quite honestly, our parklands never kept up with demand."

The nonprofit Trust for Public Land comparing 2000 U.S. Census data showing where children lived with data from local, state and federal agencies on parks and other open space. It used a quarter-mile radius to measure walking distance because that is the standard used by the National Recreation and Park Association.

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STATE

Schwarzenegger works to keep media under control

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD

Associated Press Writer

BURBANK — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has turned his savvy for handling the Hollywood media to his new role as workaday governor, and reporters are routinely encountering directorial control over what they can see, hear, photograph or record.

Image, you might say, is everything.

As with President George W. Bush, the traditional news conference has become something of an endangered species in Sacramento. Instead, Schwarzenegger's favored pipeline to the public has remained the cozy TV interview — say on Jay Leno's couch or in Oprah Winfrey's studio.

He famously announced his candidacy on Leno's stage last summer, sidestepping the state's political media while reaching the show's 6.2 million nightly viewers.

But since taking office in November, his public events frequently offer little more than choice camera angles and a well-rehearsed sound bite. Almost without exception, reporters are confined inside a breastwork of steel barricades or rope lines, often beyond shouting distance. At times he takes questions, but just as often he does not.

The tightly controlled access raises questions about whether the public is getting a clear-eyed view of the actor-turned-governor, or a deftly shaped persona. Such issues also shadowed him during his carefully scripted campaign last year.

Aides acknowledged limiting media questions to avoid blurring an intended message at an event. However, the tactic also shields the talkative Schwarzenegger from the possibility of a slip up or unexpected inquiries on thorny subjects, such as gay marriage or his racy past.

Bryce Nelson, a professor of journalism at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School

for Communication, said the success of the strategy employed by the governor and his staff can be measured by the fact "he's gotten relatively little critical media attention."

His most favored status in the entertainment media "gives him a great advantage, especially in an era when so many people don't read newspapers or (watch) traditional news," Nelson said.

As for tangling with the mainstream media: "He'll try to get away with as little as possible," Nelson added.

Schwarzenegger grants few of the many interview requests his office receives. He's been known to take a personal hand in how photographers shoot him. And his events are frequently limited to so-called pool coverage, in which only a handful of reporters and photographers are allowed to watch and listen, with others shut out.

When the governor plunged into a crowd of lunchtime shoppers this month to campaign for his workers' compensation plan, for example, reporters and photographers were forced to look on from behind a nest of fencing that was monitored by police. With the media held back, what he said — or what was said to him — remained a mystery.

A staff of media minders patrols his public appearances, instructing reporters where to stand or sit and, at times, restricting what they can observe.

"They've instituted presidential-level media rules at the state level," said Republican media strategist Dan Schnur, who advised John McCain's 2000 presidential campaign. "Most state politicians rely on that interplay with the news media in order to attract coverage. But like a president or a presidential candidate, Schwarzenegger knows that the media is going to cover him whether he talks to them or not."

The fact that Schwarzenegger has sought to frame his public profile to his own liking is no surprise. As one of the world's most popular film stars, he became skilled at manipulating a largely fawning Hollywood press that

would grant interviews on his terms.

As a public figure, tougher questions and candid photographs make it more difficult to control that image. Still, his attempts to do so since being elected in October's recall election are, by Sacramento standards, unprecedented.

"He's doing a masterful job of delivering the message on his terms," said Roger Salazar, a former spokesman for Sen. John Edwards' presidential campaign who earlier worked for Gov. Gray Davis, Schwarzenegger's Democratic predecessor.

As a movie star, Schwarzenegger fiercely protected his lucrative brand, whether marketing his latest movie or Planet Hollywood, the once high-flying theme restaurant. Even today, he has a team of lawyers that keeps the Schwarzenegger image sheltered from illicit profiteers.

While he has a circle of media strategists and advisers, including wife Maria Shriver, a former NBC correspondent, insiders said he is keenly aware of what image means in terms of power in the entertainment industry and, now, politics.

They credit Schwarzenegger with running the show.

"As a movie star, his image is the thing that draws people to buy tickets," said George Gorton, a Schwarzenegger strategist. "The same thing is true in politics. They support him because of his character."

Schwarzenegger has favored television interviews for major appearances, such as stop with Shriver on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" at a time when his campaign was facing questions about his reputation as a womanizer.

"Our rule is, let Arnold be Arnold," said his communications director, Robert Stutzman. "The best way is television. It's a transaction directly with the people. ... It's a particular strength he has, to be in front of the camera."

On one hand, the extraordinary coverage Schwarzenegger has received demanded a policy that would keep crowds and the media under control, aides said.

But at times, limits on the media can appear excessive or unnecessary.

At two large Los Angeles-area rallies to promote his budget bailout, Schwarzenegger gave brief remarks but never took a question from the media, with reporters penned behind barricades far from the stages.

At a March groundbreaking at Dole Foods Co., only photographers — not reporters — were permitted to watch the ceremonial dirt-flipping. Stutzman, who was on the grounds, said Dole handled the media arrangements but added, "Our staff may have assisted."

He acknowledged that there can be "tension between the press wanting access and the governor wanting to interact with people."

There are signs Schwarzenegger is opening up. Recently, he conducted one-on-one interviews with newspaper reporters in Sacramento with no strings attached, a first since coming to the statehouse last year.

But if reporters grumble about their lack of access, the public doesn't seem to care, reveling in their larger-than-life celebrity governor. Schwarzenegger's approval ratings hover around 60 percent, impressive for a Republican in a Democratic-tilting state.

"They didn't elect Arnold Schwarzenegger," longtime Democratic political consultant Joe Cerrell said. "They elected the Terminator."

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STATE



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Grassroots group has big donors

By The Associated Press

BERKELEY — Although the liberal advocacy group MoveOn.org touts itself as a grassroots political group, records show that a sizable lump of money comes from just two donors.

A review of the Berkeley-based group's first quarter fund raising showed nearly half its \$6.98 million came from Peter Lewis, chairman of Progressive Corporation, a Cleveland insurance company, and billionaire philanthropist George Soros. Lewis has donated \$2 million to the group and Soros has given more than \$1 million, the San Francisco Chronicle reported Sunday.

The directors of MoveOn, which has pledged to "bring ordinary people back into politics," say the group still fits the description of a grassroots organization. The average donation from its 160,000 supporters is about \$60, they said.

"We think it's appropriate, because it levels the playing field," said the group's founder, Wes Boyd, who says the large donations have helped the group raise twice as much in small donations. "We are dogged opponents of the Bush administration, because of the issues, because of the policy."

MoveOn and other groups hope to make up for the imbalance between the \$108 million remaining in Bush's re-election campaign and the \$32.2 million fueling that of his likely Democratic opponent, Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry.

The organization's MoveOn Voter Fund and other groups have spent tens of millions on television campaign ads critical of Bush's record and have supported flyer distribution and voter registration drives.

Gas prices continue to climb

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — U.S. gasoline prices climbed another 3 cents per gallon in the past two weeks on the strength of high crude oil prices, tight capacity and soaring demand, an analyst said Sunday.

The nationwide average for all gasoline grades, including taxes, was nearly \$1.86 per gallon on Friday, up 3.07 cents from April 9, according to the Lundberg Survey of 8,000 stations nationwide.

The average price "has broken all-time record highs for two months straight," although it remained about \$1 a gallon lower than the peak price of March 1981 when adjusted for inflation, Trilby Lundberg said.

Since Dec. 19, the average gas price has risen 34.55 cents, she added.

The latest increase was prompted by crude oil prices that have topped \$36 per barrel coupled with OPEC production cuts and a growth in crude oil demand, chiefly in the United States and China, Lundberg said.

She said the U.S. market prices are affected by growing gasoline demand — despite the higher prices — thanks to an improving economy, a tight refining capacity, and new federal rules for formulating less-polluting gasoline which add to the cost and make it harder to import foreign supplies that don't meet the new specifications.

Lundberg said it was impossible to know whether prices will continue to increase but "it seems more likely than not" as the peak summer travel season approaches.

Overall, California continued to have the highest average prices even though the average price for regular dipped a dime per gallon in the past two weeks.

Tests show lead in Mexican sweets

By The Associated Press

SANTA ANA — More than 100 brands of candy sold in the United States, most of it coming from Mexico, tested positive for dangerously high levels of lead over the past 10 years, the Orange County Register reported Sunday.

In almost every instance the candy tested was allowed to remain on store shelves, no action was taken against the manufacturers, and the public was not informed of the results, the newspaper said, citing state and federal records.

"Children are eating poison," said Leticia Ayala, who works for the San Diego-based Environmental Health Coalition, a nonprofit group that has urged the state to better regulate Mexican candies. "They can't just find that there is lead in candies and sit on the data. ... Parents need to know."

The Register's own tests, conducted on 180 samples purchased over the counter at various Southern California stores, recorded high levels of lead 32 percent of the time. Reporters bought the candies at such large chain supermarkets as Ralphs and Vons and at small mom-and-pop outlets that cater to various ethnic groups.

Lead poisoning can cause irreversible brain and nerve damage and result in lowered intelligence and behavioral problems, particularly in children. Lead-poisoning concerns led to the substance being banned from U.S. house paints in the 1970s and gasoline in the 1980s.

State officials have estimated that as many as 15 percent of California children who suffer lead poisoning, or about 3,000 over the past three years, have eaten Mexican candy. About three-quarters of California's lead-poisoning victims are Latino children.

"There cannot be a reasonable justification for having lead in children's candy," said Richard L. Canfield, a Cornell University professor who helped direct a 2003 study that found a 7.4-point drop in IQs among children exposed to even relatively low levels of lead.

The Register, in the first of a six-part series, said the state Department of Health Services has conducted more than 1,500 tests on Mexican candy since 1993 and found high levels of lead in one of every four samples.

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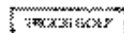


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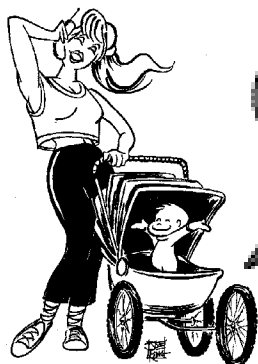


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Santa Monica

A weekly look at events and programs for

Connecting: Your most powerful parenting practice

Guest Commentary

By Vickie Falcone

"How do I get my kids to stop fighting?"
"What's the best way to handle an angry child?"

"How can I persuade my daughter to go to bed on time?"

If you're like most parents, you want practical parenting tools that solve specific problems. You'll need few parenting tools and techniques if you learn how to truly connect with your child.

One evening, after a parenting program, Andy, the father of a 3-year-old boy and a 5-year-old boy, approached me. "Vickie, this stuff might work on girls, but not on my boys. I have to get in their face

to get their attention."

"What is your tone of voice when you get in their face?" I asked.

He laughed. "I've had it, usually, and I'm mad."

I empathized with him. I've been there at the end of the proverbial rope, resorting to the quickest technique I know — yelling. "Continue to get in their face," I insisted. "Just do it with love. Instead of getting 'loud and nasty,' try 'close and kind.' Both get the results you want, and the latter doesn't hurt the child."

It's true that we often get instant results when we get in their face. But we pay for these results with a strained relationship. This father had been practicing a truncated version of the eight steps of truly connecting. He made eye contact, used not-so-loving touch and gave the boys 100 percent of his focused attention. He just needed to add a few more steps to increase his likelihood for cooperation while, at the same time, preserving his relationship with his sons.

Let's look at the eight steps for connecting with your child:

- Set your intention to

connect. Before you approach your children, whether they are playing quietly or embroiled in a fight, take a moment to affirm your desire to use this moment to connect. It's easy to get in the habit of approaching our children with judgments, like saying, "I'm so sick of you two arguing." It takes a strong conscious effort to overcome negative thought patterns.

■ Smile. A smile instantly relaxes the muscles and eases tension in your face. Thich Nhat Hanh, a Tibetan Buddhist monk and peace activist, says, "A tiny bud of a smile on our lips nourishes awareness and calms us miraculously. It returns us to the peace we thought we had lost."

■ Get down on their level. That might mean sitting on the floor or squatting. Or, bring them up to your level. Either way, you establish rapport.

■ Give friendly eye contact. Smile with your eyes. This isn't a flicker, a glimpse, or a glance. Smile for three beats, or for one deep breath. Connect with your child's soul.

■ Lovingly touch your child. Using loving touch, we can capture our child's attention and show our love at the same time.

■ Give all your focused attention. Put down your cup of coffee. Set the newspaper aside. Let go of the world situation, what you want from your child, or what you're going to do or say next. Give 100 percent of your attention to your child.

■ Use few words. When we offer comments, suggestions and lectures without first hearing the child, we disconnect. If

we continually respond this way, over time our children develop a condition called "mommy/daddy deafness."

■ Give information or ask a question. When you speak, start by asking a question or giving information, not commanding. You'll notice that your child often will respond by thinking instead of reacting.

These eight moves are a way to communicate with your child without yelling, nagging, pleading, threatening, manipulating, or worse. When we use negative motivators, we risk damaging our relationship with our child — the most valuable parenting asset we possess.

Nearly any time is a good time to move toward your child with love and connect. Here are a few examples:

- To calm a fight.
- When they feel content.
- When you want to get their attention.
- Instead of yelling or threatening.
- Whether you're trying to get your child to listen or experience some quality time with your child, you'll find that using these eight steps infuses your interactions with more cooperation and peace.

(Vickie Falcone is the emerging voice of today's parents. She is founder of Positive Parenting Network and author of "Buddha Never Raised Kids and Jesus Didn't Drive Carpool: Seven Principles for Parenting with Soul" (Jodere, 2003). www.parentingwithsoul.com).

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SANTA MONICA FESTIVAL, SATURDAY, MAY 1 — Clover Park, 2600 Ocean Park Blvd., noon - 7 p.m.
The 13th Annual Festival celebrates the diversity of our city and ten years of progress toward sustainability with a day full of live music, theater and dance, arts workshops and ecological activities, food from around the world and numerous information and activity booths. Call 458-8350 or visit www.arts.santa-monica.org for more info. Free admission and free parking. Attendees are encouraged to walk, bicycle, rollerblade or take the bus.

WESTSIDE WALDORF SCHOOL MAYFAIRE
1229 4th St. Call 576-0788 for more info.
SESAME STREET LIVE - OUT OF THIS WORLD (sesamestreetlive.com)
Kodak Theatre - Hollywood - May 14 - 16, group discounts call 866-LA-GROUP
Long Beach Terrace Theatre - May 20-23, group discounts call 909-988-9859
Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza - May 27 - 30, group discounts call 805-522-8010
Tickets went on sale March 29th, available thru Ticketmaster - 213-480-3332

TUESDAY

MOVIES FOR MOMS FREE PREVIEW SCREENING!
"Laws of Attraction" showing April 20, 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. www.reelmomms.urbanbaby.com. Pierce Brosnan and Julianne Moore star new York divorce lawyers who face off inside and outside of court. Rated "PG-13."

Storytelling

Main Library - Toddler Storytime at Reed Park; 10:00 & 10:30 a.m. Stories for two year olds with adult.
Fairview Branch Library - 2101 Ocean Park Blvd - 310-450-0443.
Cuentos Para Pequeños - 10:00 a.m., next session April 27 - June 1. Six-week series in Spanish for 24 - 36 month olds with adult.
Lap Time - 11:00 a.m., next session April 27 - June 1. Six-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by the SMMUSD Infant and Family Support Programs.
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.
Ocean Park Branch Library - 2601 Main St. - 310-392-3804.
Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30, April 13 - May 18, registration begins March 31. Music, rhymes and stories for 24-36 month olds with adult.
Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis
Themes change weekly; 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

COMING UP NEXT WEEK - May 4th
Itzy-Bitzy Yoga at Ocean Oasis Day Spa - 1333 Ocean Ave.
Tots (crawling to 24 months) - 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.; Babies (6 wks. to pre-crawling) - 11:30 - 12:30 a.m. On-going 6-week series; \$120. Pre-register at 458-8190; visit www.khefri.net for more info or contact khefri@earthlink.net.

Yoga & Exercise Prenatal Aqua Aerobics - Santa Monica YMCA - 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. 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 Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381 - Mommy & Me (ages 0-5 years) - 10 - 11 a.m.; Pre-natal yoga - 7 - 8:15 p.m.

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 - 11870 Santa Monica Blvd. at the Dance Factory, West LA, 310-394-6711. Pregnancy Exercise - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise - 10:15 - 11:15 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

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 Walking Stick Coffee Lounge - 1630 Ocean Park Blvd., 450-6052
10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4. This neighborhood coffee shop has a comfortable atmosphere, toys and storytelling every Wednesday.
Fairview Branch Library - 2101 Ocean Park Blvd - 310-450-0443.
Preschool Story Time - 10:30 a.m., next session April 28 - June 2, six-week series for 3-5 year olds with adult.
Montana Avenue Branch Library - 1704 Montana Ave - 310-829-7081.
Lap Time - 10:00 & 10:30 a.m., April 14 - May 19; for children ages 0-2.
Toddler Story Time - 11:15 a.m., April 14 - May 19; for 2 year olds.
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.

Yoga & Exercise
Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381 - Mommy & Me (ages 0-5 years) - 10 - 11 a.m.; (infants only) - 1 - 2 p.m. Pre-natal yoga - 11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Yoga Works - 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal - 12:15 - 1:45pm, \$15
Ocean Oasis Day Spa - 1333 Ocean Avenue, 458-8190. Pre/Post Natal Yoga/Gentle Flow - 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. Private sessions available; call Kate Thomas, RN - 408-1717

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

Storytelling

Babystyle - 1324 Montana Avenue, 434-9590 - 10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4.
Main Library - Reed Park
Toddler Storytime at Reed Park; 10:00 a.m. for 2 year olds.
Preschool Story Time at Reed Park; 10:30 a.m.; for ages 3-5.
Fairview Branch Library - 2101 Ocean Park Blvd - 310-450-0443.
Toddler Story Time - 10:30 a.m.; next session April 29 - June 3; for ages 2-3.
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., April 15 - May 20; for 2 year olds.
Preschool Story Time - 11:15 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds.

Ocean Park Branch Library - 2601 Main St. - 310-392-3804.
Lap Time - 9:20 & 10:20 a.m., next session May 6 - June 10. 6-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by the SMMUSD Infant and Family Support Program.

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics - 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 Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381 - Mommy & Me (ages 0-5 years) - 10 - 11 a.m.; Pre-natal yoga - 7 - 8:15 p.m.

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 - 11870 Santa Monica Blvd. at the Dance Factory, West LA, 310-394-6711. Pregnancy Exercise - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise - 10:15 - 11:15 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

FRIDAY

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. (next meeting May 14)

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works - 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal - 12:15 - 1:45 p.m., \$15.

Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381 - Mommy & Me (ages 0-5 years) - 10 - 11 a.m.; (infants only) - 1 - 2 p.m. Pre-natal yoga - 11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Ocean Oasis Day Spa - 1333 Ocean Avenue, 458-8190. Pre/Post Natal Yoga/Gentle Flow - 10:30 - 11:45 a.m.; Yoga for Fitness - noon - 1 p.m. Private sessions available; call Kate Thomas, RN - 408-1717

Prenatal Breath and Movement - a Continuum Movement and Yoga-based program designed to support women through various sound and movement explorations that celebrate pregnancy and labor as powerful rites of passage. 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
With Deborah Raoult at the Continuum Studio, 1629 18th St., #7. For more info call 625-3739, www.openkymovement.com. \$108 for a six-week session.

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.

Other

Sewing Arts Center - 3330 Pico Blvd., 450-4300
April 29 - Part one of a 5-part beginning quilting series - Double Irish Chain. Both classes 6-9 p.m., pre-registration required.

SATURDAY

Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade - Kid's Story Time - 10am - 310-260-9110
Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion - 10:30am - ages 2-5 - 310-475-4144.
Children's Book World - 10500 1/2 Pico Blvd., LA - 10:30 a.m., 310-559-800K.
May 1st - stories with Kathleen Zundell.

Yoga & Exercise

Santa Monica Yoga - Pre & Post-Natal Yoga, Saturdays - 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. 1640 Ocean Park Blvd, 396-4040, www.santamoniciayoga.com

Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381; Prenatal yoga - 9:15 - 10:45 a.m., \$13
Mommy Care - 11870 Santa Monica Blvd. at the Dance Factory, West LA, 394-6711; Pregnancy Exercise - 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise - 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)
Ocean Oasis Day Spa - 1333 Ocean Avenue, 458-8190. Pre/Post Natal Yoga/Gentle Flow - 10:30 - 11:45 a.m.; Yoga for Fitness - noon - 1 p.m. Private sessions available; call Kate Thomas, RN - 408-1717

Other

Snowwhite - a brand new musical for kids of all ages, at the Santa Monica Playhouse. Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m. April 3 - May 30, \$12 adults, \$10 kids ages 12 & under. 394-8779 ext. 1 for reservations. www.santamonicaplayhouse.com

SUNDAY

Concerts on the Pier - every Sunday thru May 30 - 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., FREE! Live music, on the parking deck, weather permitting.

Snowwhite - a brand new musical for kids of all ages, at the Santa Monica Playhouse. Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m. April 3 - May 30, \$12 adults, \$10 kids ages 12 & under. 394-8779 ext. 1 for reservations. www.santamonicaplayhouse.com

Main Street Farmer's Market - 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., corner of Main St. and Ocean Park Blvd. Pony rides, live music, lots of vendors and great family socializing.

Puppetolio - 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested
Magicoopolis - 2 p.m., 1418 4th St. Admission is \$15. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

Puppetolio - 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested
Magicoopolis - 2 and 8 p.m., 1418 4th St. Admission is \$20 for evening, \$15 for matinee. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

Youth Rugby - Santa Monica Rugby Club (ages 6-15, co-ed, non-contact) Saturday mornings thru May 15; times and location vary; get details at www.santamoniarugby.com/youth.html or contact Kilian Kerwin at smyouthrugby@earthlink.net.

Precious Prints - Ceramic Heirlooms for a Lifetime. Second Saturday every month at The Pump Station, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Contact Kristan Ritchie at 310-902-9013 or visit www.preciousprintsstudios.com for more info.

Nature Walk (Children's Nature Institute) - 10:00 a.m., Malibu Lagoon, 23200 PCH, Reservations - 310-998-1151, www.childrensnatureinstitute.org

Breastfeeding

Working Mother's Support Group
The Pump Station - 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., \$12 fee, led by Ilika Sternberger, certified lactation educator. Call 826-5774 for more info.

MONDAY

Storytelling

Main Library - Lap Time at Joslyn Park, 9:30 a.m., Jan. 5 - June 4 (no class May 31). Ages 0-24 months with adult in conjunction with the Infant and Family Support program of SMMUSD.

"Family Connections" - 10:00 a.m., immediately following Lap Time - a series of discussions related to early childhood development and growth. Children welcome, free.

Ocean Park Branch Library - 2601 Main Street, 310-392-3804.

"Spanish for Little Ones", 11:15 a.m., next session April 19 - May 24 (no class April 5 & 12). Rhymes, songs and very simple stories in Spanish for ages 2-5 with adult.
Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade - Toddler Story Time - 10am - 310-260-9110

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.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works - 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal - 12:15 - 1:45pm, \$15

Yoga Garden - Restorative yoga for pre/postnatal - 6:30 p.m., 310-450-0133. www.yogagardenstudios.com
Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381 - Mommy & Me (ages 0-5 years) - 10 - 11 a.m.; (infants only) - 1 - 2 p.m. Pre-natal yoga - 11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Ocean Oasis Day Spa - 1333 Ocean Avenue, 458-8190. Pre/Post Natal Yoga/Gentle Flow - 10:30 - 11:45 a.m.; Yoga for Fitness - noon - 1 p.m. Private sessions available; call Kate Thomas, RN - 408-1717

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STATE

California faces repeat of deregulation debate

BY JENNIFER COLEMAN
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — It looks like California residents might escape a summer of rolling blackouts, and enjoy a period of calm after the energy crisis that plunged millions of people into the dark and sent the state's largest utility into bankruptcy.

That's not to say there aren't energy concerns in the state. California needs to figure out how to reshape its energy market before two events come to pass around 2009 — the expiration of many of the long-term energy contracts that have kept rates stable, and the expected retirement of a large number of power plants. And, in the meantime, Californians are forced daily to cope with electricity rates 20 percent higher than they paid before the 2000-01 crisis.

Randy Rowse, owner of the Paradise Cafe in Santa Barbara, said he can only cut back on labor costs and personnel when rates are so high. "It's one of the

few things you can do."

But he's also changed how he runs his business to lower energy use and costs. He bought more efficient refrigeration systems, cut his use of air conditioning and heat and "we use airpods instead of heating elements for coffee," referring to the Thermos-type containers. "It saves a lot of energy, and it keeps the coffee from cooking."

Such conservation measures give the Independent System Operator, manager of most of the state's power grid, more flexibility in what is expected to be a summer with thin power reserves.

"We should be OK," said ISO spokesman Gregg Fishman, adding that he's cautiously optimistic about the summer electricity outlook despite a Stage 1 power emergency last month, caused by high demand during unusually hot weather.

A Stage 1 alert is called when the state's power reserves fall below 7 percent. That allows grid managers to access emergency resources to maintain its oper-

ating reserves.

Millions of Californians reduced their electricity use during the 2000-01 crisis, and while the impact was hard to measure, Fishman said many of those conservation measures continue today, contributing to energy security.

The crisis began in May 2000, when wholesale prices in the newly deregulated electricity market rose sharply due to a shortage of hydroelectric power, market manipulation by energy traders and a booming economy that demanded more power.

California's utilities ran up huge debts because the deregulation scheme barred them from charging customers the true price of power. The unstable market also led to six days of rolling blackouts in 2001, the bankruptcy of Pacific Gas and Electric Co., and billions in state money spent on power purchases.

Since the crisis, the Legislature has toyed with ways to restructure the state's electricity market, but the current budget crisis and other problems have pushed their plans aside.

What is being debated now, said Doug Heller of the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights, are bills that are "still driven by the idea that we should try to regain a deregulated marketplace." They also contain elements of the flawed 1996 deregulation plan, such as the ability to let large electricity users shop around for their electricity.

So-called "direct access" is in the two

major bills under consideration now. One proposes a "hybrid" system — allowing large energy users to opt out of utility service for a competitive "direct access" market.

A competing bill would also allow direct access for large customers, but would put more restrictions on when they could jump between a utility and a competitor.

State lawmakers halted direct access, a cornerstone of the deregulation law, in September 2001 to stop customers from fleeing utilities for lower-priced competitors and leaving the remaining customers to repay the billions in energy debt in the form of higher rates for years.

When it comes to building new power plants and finding other energy sources, the state needs to determine "who builds, who buys and for whom," said PUC commissioner Loretta Lynch. "And to be smart about it, we need to determine it this year."

The bulk of the long-term power contracts begin expiring around 2009 — which is around the time a number of California's aging power plants are set to retire. And while the state has made progress in building new power plants, adding about 10,000 new megawatts since 2001, Michael Peevey, a former utility executive and now president of the California Public Utilities Commission, said "we need to do more."

"That's where we have to sort out what the market looks like in the future," he said. "The uncertainty doesn't serve anyone."



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STATE



Questions and answers on California's energy crisis

By The Associated Press

Some questions and answers about California's energy crisis:

Q. How do electricity rates compare now to what they were before the energy crisis? How do they compare to other states?

A. Utility customers in California pay some of the highest rates in the nation. That was true before the state attempted to deregulate the electricity market, and now, with utility customers paying off the billions in debts incurred when wholesale rates hit record-high levels in 2000 and 2001.

Before wholesale rates began their skyward spiral in May 2000, Pacific Gas & Electric Co. customers in Northern and Central California were paying 9.4 cents per kilowatt hour. Customers in the Southern California Edison area, which does not include Los Angeles, paid about 10.3 cents per kilowatt hour. San Diego Gas & Electric customers paid approximately 9.5 cents per kilowatt hour.

Now, PG&E customers pay about 12.8 cents; Edison customers pay about 12.4 cents and SDG&E customers pay around 13.6 cents per kilowatt hour.

Q. Are more rolling blackouts possible?

A. Officials for the Independent System Operator say they don't expect blackouts anytime soon, but they warn

that many of the state's aging power plants will be retiring in the next several years. Those plants could go out of service faster than new ones can be built, the ISO warns, which could lead to a future gap between supply and demand. If that were compounded by hot temperatures and a lower-than-average snow pack, which affects the amount of hydroelectric power, that could then lead to shortages and possibly rolling blackouts.

Q. Does California have enough capacity now? Is the state generating enough electricity for its needs?

A. California still depends on imported electricity to meet its demand. California power plants can produce as much as 56,300 megawatts, but those plants are never operating at full speed and all at the same time. At times of peak demand, the state uses about 56,600 megawatts — about a third of that from air conditioners.

Because all states west of the Rockies are connected through the electric grid, California's power can come from Canada, Mexico and points between.

Since 2001, 10,000 new megawatts have come online, the ISO says, but 3,500 megawatts were lost when old plants retired.

Q. What's being done to change the state's power system? What's different from before the crisis happened?

A. A complex blend of state and federal

laws and regulations governs electricity sales. State regulators oversee the utilities that sell power to the customer. The wholesale market is overseen by FERC.

Before the energy crisis, wholesale power was sold through trading floors at the Power Exchange's day-ahead market and the ISO's last-minute spot market. Now, the PX is closed, and a good portion of the utilities' electricity comes from the long-term state contracts signed in 2001. That has reduced the amount of electricity traded at the last minute through the ISO.

The Legislature has at least two bills pending that address the restructuring of California's energy market and lawmakers could debate the issue this year.

Congress would have to change federal laws governing the wholesale side of the energy market, which doesn't seem likely.

Q. What structural or regulatory changes have been made to avoid the next energy crisis?

A. The California Energy Commission has become a clearinghouse of energy information and is required to report to the governor and lawmakers every two years. The hope is that will help facilitate long-term planning so the state won't be blindsided by shortages in the future.

The California Legislature approved and then-Gov. Gray Davis signed a bill requiring that utilities increase their use of

environmentally friendly power. That law is designed to diversify the state's energy supply and decrease its reliance on natural-gas fired plants. Most of California's power plants use natural gas, which is subject to price spikes that can raise the cost of electricity.

Another energy agency, the California Power Authority, was also created during the energy crisis. It can sell up to \$5 billion in bonds to build, buy or lease power plants, or to spend on conservation efforts. It has implemented programs to double the number of solar panels on state buildings and cut commercial power use by 250 megawatts on demand. But Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has proposed scuttling the Power Authority, saying its not vital to solving California's supply problems.

Davis had issued an emergency declaration that streamlined the application process for building new power plants to as little as 21 days, but those orders have since expired. A six-month process could be reinstated by the Legislature this year, which would cut by half the typical application process.

Lawmakers also made it easier for utilities to sign long-term contracts without fear that they'd be penalized later by state regulators.



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NATIONAL

Saving themselves from extinction, rural school districts turn charter

BY JULIA SILVERMAN
Associated Press Writer

PAISLEY, Ore. — The send-off was worthy of a football team going to seek a state title, or a small-town soldier heading to war.

Just about all of the 80 students in Paisley had gathered to cheer on their superintendent and two school board members. The three were on their way to the state Capitol in search of a miracle, after \$286,000 in state budget cuts and years of declining enrollment.

Two years later, with his school \$350,000 flusher and in no immediate danger of closing, Superintendent Mark Jeffery thinks he found the miracle.

Paisley saved itself by becoming a charter district, triggering hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal money that's earmarked to get new charter schools off the ground. It's an increasingly common option among small rural Western schools struggling to survive the triple blows of budget cuts, falling enrollments and forced consolidation.

Paisley, and schools like it in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah, were not what charter supporters expected when the concept first surfaced in Minnesota about 15 years ago, spreading rapidly to 37 other states by 2004.

The original idea was to create independent public schools, still funded with public money but unbound by many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. In exchange, such schools create a "charter," a document that lays out their educational mission, and their plans for fulfilling it.

By contrast, in Paisley and communities like it, charter school money buys not the chance to start a new school from scratch, but to breathe life into an old one.

"Most charters are started by angry parents or innovative outsiders," Jeffery said. "But for us, there was no other help out there. It was either this, or send our kids on some horrific bus ride, and take the heart out of our community."

Paisley, a town of about 250 people in south-central Oregon where the big doings in summer is the Mosquito Festival, has been fighting for its school for years, ever since a local lumber mill closed in the early 1990s. Residents even approved a bond to build a dormitory for foreign students, to boost the school's enrollment, and for a while the strains of Albanian and Korean drifted incongruously through downtown.

But by 2002, Jeffery had to close the school's cafeteria and library, cut out languages and the school's business program, and fire the janitor. Even that wasn't anywhere near enough, and families were beginning to consider the possibility of putting their kids on a bumpy 50-mile school bus ride down a two-lane road that ices over from November to March.

Without a school, the two other pillars of the Paisley economy — the local Forest Service office and the cattle ranches that surround the town — might well have collapsed, said Bill Aney, who is the district ranger for the Forest Service, as well as a school board member and the high school's volunteer track coach.

"If you don't have a school, it cuts out

a whole element of people (to recruit)," Aney said. "Our family would never have moved here if there wasn't a school."

The possibility of a charter as savior emerged after discussions with coordinators at the Oregon Department of Education, and research into existing rural charters, like the seven members of the Rural Charter Network in Colorado.

Those seven schools — all in far-flung small towns like Marble, Paradox and Guffey — shared similar stories of fights against consolidations and dangerous winter drives over mountain passes. All saw going charter as a new chance, said Frank Betts, who now directs the network, and have since banded together to increase their purchasing power and share financial planning strategies.

In Paisley, discussions about going charter drew about 150 people to a community meeting, Jeffery said, the largest town gathering he can remember, outside of Friday night basketball games and kindergarten graduation ceremonies.

Typically, charter school supporters run into some opposition from school boards, concerned that badly needed money will be siphoned away to support the charter school. In Oregon, charter schools can keep 80 percent of their per-pupil funding, while the remaining 20 percent goes to the district. In Paisley, though, the charter school was replacing the district, so there was no tussling.

There was some skepticism, Jeffery remembered, from those who had never heard of charter schools, from those who thought a pared-down program would offer too bare-bones of an education and from those who thought the approach a Band-Aid solution that would collapse when the federal startup money ran out.

That last is still a concern, especially since the flow of federal money stops in May 2005, and the school will have to return to relying on shaky state funding.

But consider the alternative, said Linda Banister, who teaches social studies and English to middle and high schoolers in Paisley.

"If it is postponing the inevitable, well, then we are going out in an exceptional way," she said. "If we are going to cease as a school, we will cease on our own terms, doing the best we can."

Jeffery thinks enough has changed since the charter began to allow the Paisley school to survive when the federal money, which is only to be used for startup costs, and not for salary, benefits or day-to-day operations, dries up.

The school fired a math and English teacher. A history and a science teacher, respectively, now teach those topics. Curriculum is more tightly focused on state testing standards, with added emphasis on agriculture and natural resource education.

The cafeteria is still closed, but a volunteer lunch program supported by the community has taken its place. The janitor's job is gone, but kids have been taught to sweep the halls and scrub down their desks.

And the federal money went to new textbooks, supplies, technology and professional development for teachers — and then, of course, for the cows.

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NATIONAL □ INTERNATIONAL



Ties with China, Libya improving despite strains

BY TOM RAUM
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Across the world, it seems that U.S. diplomacy is breaking down.

America's ties with Europe and the United Nations are frayed. The Arab world is furious over U.S. support for Israel on West Bank settlements. Pleas for help in stabilizing Iraq have found few takers. Troops from Spain, Honduras and the Dominican Republic are leaving. And coalition leaders still standing with President Bush face rising political dissent at home.

On the other hand, relations are clearly improving with China and Libya. The U.S. overtures to these old totalitarian foes might have startled administration foreign policy hawks just a few years ago, but the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have produced some seismic shifts in global dynamics.

Libya is Bush's poster child of a rogue

regime that saw the light. The administration is poised to lift some sanctions to reward Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi for abandoning weapons of mass destruction and accepting responsibility for the 1988 Pan Am 103 bombing.

And forging closer ties with China is a courtship of convenience. The United States is looking to Beijing to help defuse the North Korean nuclear standoff and to open more of China's markets to U.S. companies. It has also helped on the global war on terror.

Given the turmoil in Iraq and the rest of the Middle East, the last thing the Bush administration needs is confrontation with Beijing or a flare up in North Korea. The administration also is under political attacks for not doing enough to narrow America's soaring trade deficit with China.

"This really is an amazing relationship. It's gone from almost nothing to one of the most significant bilateral relationships anywhere in the world today," Vice President Dick Cheney said on a recent

trip to China.

China, now America's third-largest trading partner, agreed during high-level talks in Washington last week to a series of agreements to open more markets to U.S. goods and to crack down on piracy of copyrighted CDs, movies and computer software. Commerce Secretary Don Evans called it "a landmark day."

Meanwhile, China's leaders apparently went along with a direct appeal by Cheney to exert more pressure on North Korean leader Kim Jong Il to dismantle his nuclear program.

Visiting Beijing last week just days after Cheney, Kim told Chinese officials he is committed to continuing six-nation talks and ending the nuclear dispute through dialogue, China's official Xinhua News Agency reported.

China even broadcast a Cheney speech in Shanghai without censorship — although later edited out the vice president's remarks on Taiwan and human rights in a government-posted transcript.

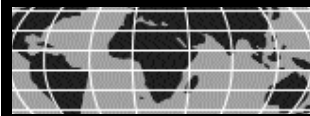
Washington and Beijing share a strate-

gic interest in a nuclear-free Korean peninsula and in keeping oil shipping lanes open in the Persian Gulf. China, the world's fastest-growing economy, is becoming one of its thirstiest oil importers.

"There's no doubt that the United States is isolated from the rest of the world and that China is a country that superficially seems to have an agenda in foreign policy that dovetails with ours," said Alan Tonelson, a research fellow at the U.S. Business & Industrial Council in Washington, a business trade group.

However, Tonelson cautions: "While the Bush administration and China can clearly work together, I think the Bush folks need to be more mindful of the fact that the Chinese bottom line is not the same as the U.S. bottom line."

The breakneck integration of China into the world economy continues to hurt many American manufacturers and cost U.S. jobs, and China's military buildup looms as an ever-present national security concern, Tonelson said.



WORLD BRIEFLY

No direct elections in Hong Kong

By The Associated Press

HONG KONG — Mainland China dealt a crushing blow to Hong Kong's hopes for a quick move toward full democracy on Monday, when its most powerful legislative panel ruled that the territory won't have direct elections for its next leader and legislature.

Many people in Hong Kong have been demanding the right to democratically elect a successor to their chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, a former shipping tycoon chosen for his position by an 800-member committee that tends to side with Beijing.

But the Chinese National People's Congress Standing Committee said "universal suffrage shall not apply" to the selection of Tung successor in 2007 or members of the Legislative Council the following year.

Under the ruling, the territory will be allowed to make changes to its electoral methods — but only "in the principle of gradual and orderly progress." China's official news agency Xinhua quoted the committee as saying.

In a hint of the reforms that might be possible, Hong Kong's No. 2 official, Donald Tsang, said the committee that selects Tung's successor could be expanded to make it more representative.

But Tsang sought to play down any hopes that the public will have a greater say. "We must understand the political reality," he said.

SARS eruption in China

The Associated Press

BEIJING — Nearly 500 people were in quarantine in China's capital and a southern province on Monday as authorities raced to contain a small eruption of SARS before a national holiday puts millions of travelers on the road.

Two confirmed cases of severe acute respiratory syndrome and six suspected ones have been announced over the past week, with all of them linked to people who worked in a SARS lab in Beijing.

People in Beijing and in Anhui province believed to have come in contact with those cases — 337 in the capital and 133 in the province — are under quarantine, according to the official newspaper China Daily. Government investigators also fanned out to examine labs that do SARS research, China Daily said.

The May Day vacation beginning this weekend poses a dilemma for leaders. They fear that having so many travelers on the move could spread SARS again but also worry that canceling or curtailing the holiday could

cause serious economic damage.

Kerry blasts Bush on trade

By The Associated Press

WHEELING, W.Va. — As he begins a tour of four industrial states, John Kerry says President Bush has failed to enforce trade agreements that protect U.S. workers.

The Democratic presidential candidate said Bush is not taking action to stop jobs from going overseas, such as aggressively filing unfair-trade cases with the World Trade Organization, or WTO.

"To engage and win in the global economy, we must not only open markets, we must ensure a level playing field for American workers," Kerry said in remarks prepared for delivery Monday. "As with most economic issues that impact American jobs and American workers, when it comes to enforcing our trade laws, this administration has been asleep on the job."

Kerry's speech kicks off a three-day bus tour through West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan. The four states combined have lost more than 470,000 manufacturing jobs during Bush's presidency, according to figures by the Bureau of Labor Statistics cited by the Kerry campaign.

Production of '7E7 Dreamliner' to begin

By The Associated Press

SEATTLE — The Boeing Co. board of directors has approved production of the 7E7 Dreamliner with a company-record launch order of 50 planes by All Nippon Airways, the manufacturer and carrier announced Monday.

The order is worth \$6 billion at list prices, although airlines typically negotiate substantial discounts for large orders. The precise dollar figure of the order was withheld.

Dreamliner production is scheduled to begin in 2006. The first flight of the planes — billed as a lighter, roomier, more fuel-efficient airliner — is anticipated the next year and deliveries are scheduled to begin in 2008, according to the news release.

The deal set a record for the number of planes ordered from Boeing by a single customer to begin production.

The 7E7 is designed to compete with the Airbus A300 series — manufactured by Boeing's European rival — as well as to replace the 757 and 767.

The Dreamliner, designed to use 15 percent to 20 percent less fuel per passenger with bigger windows and

slightly wider aisles and seats than other planes, will be assembled in Everett, about 25 miles north of Seattle, where the 747, 767 and 777 are now made.

Bush stumps in Minnesota

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Tying high-tech innovation to prosperity, President Bush is using a speech in a swing state to address an election-year vulnerability: a sluggish job market that hasn't rebounded with the national economy.

In a speech Monday in Minnesota, Bush is urging Congress to slap a permanent ban on taxes consumers pay for high-speed Internet hookups called broadband. He also is touting proposals to make electronic medical records the norm and move hydrogen fuel technology from the lab to the showroom.

The White House on Sunday night released a 14-page summary of the remarks Bush is scheduled to make to about 2,000 community college, business and other leaders attending the American Association of Community Colleges annual convention in Minneapolis.

After the speech, the president attends a Republican fund-raiser — his fourth such event in a week — at a private residence in Edina, a well-heeled suburb in the Twin Cities.

Abortion rights activists look ahead

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Energized by a turnout of hundreds of thousands on the National Mall, abortion-rights activists are looking to the November presidential elections to reverse what they see as the gradual chipping away of women's reproductive rights.

From across the nation and from nearly 60 countries, women marched Sunday with their daughters, mothers, husbands and others in support of the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling that made abortion legal.

That ruling, they say, is under attack by the Bush administration. So too, they worry is a broader scope of women's health issues, including equal access to birth control and sex education.

The rally stretched from the base of the U.S. Capitol about a mile back to the Washington Monument. While authorities no longer give formal crowd estimates, various police sources informally gauged the throng at between 500,000 and 800,000 people.

Democratic Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York urged marchers to vote in big numbers on Nov. 2 to evict an administration "filled with people who disparage sexual harassment laws, who claim the pay gap between women and men is phony ... who consider Roe v. Wade the worst abomination of constitutional law in our history."

COMICS

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ACROSS

- 1 Soup dish
- 7 Cordial
- 11 Advice giver
- 12 Creative gem
- 13 Lionel Richie song
- 15 Joined the cast
- 16 Rotisserie part
- 18 Editor's place
- 21 Son's mate
- 22 "Rat"
- 24 Crunch targets
- 25 Nearest star
- 26 Bear's kin
- 27 Tear off
- 29 Have supper
- 30 Nevada city
- 31 Cronies
- 32 Watery porridge
- 34 Programmer's goal
- 40 Uncivil
- 41 Paper holder
- 42 Small workers
- 43 List of players

DOWN

- 1 Shoe part

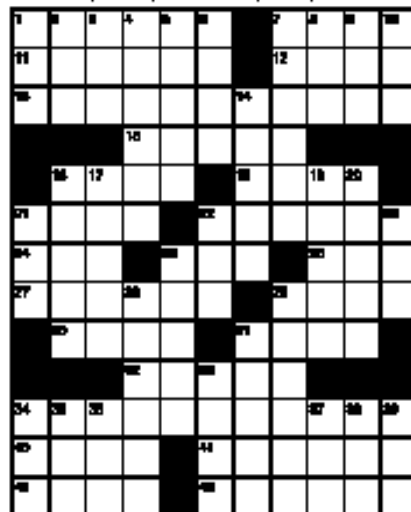
- 2 Fancy planter
- 3 "Gnarly"
- 4 Bakery treat
- 5 Vote in
- 6 Comfy spot
- 7 "Some Like It Hot" director
- 8 Fuss
- 9 Gun
- 10 Writer Rita — Brown
- 14 Car choice
- 16 Quite serious
- 17 Cut follower
- 19 Natural slowpoke

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KRAZY	KAT
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ADLIB	NOTED
PLAGE	ECOLE
TENET	SKIN

Yesterday's answers

- 20 Pottery ovens
- 21 Rotten
- 22 "Isn't that obvious?"
- 23 Golf peg
- 25 Get a touchdown
- 26 What protractors measure
- 28 Home of the Cowboys
- 31 Boal sauce
- 33 Cold War aide
- 34 Bit of history
- 35 Habit inhabitant
- 36 Banned pesticide
- 37 Chooses
- 38 Flamenco cry
- 39 Each

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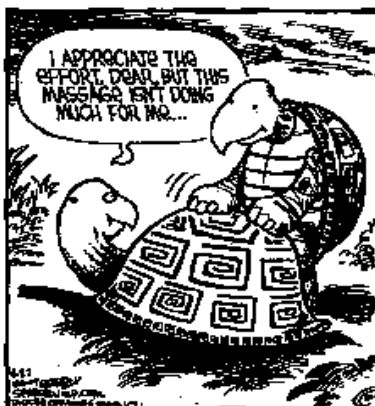
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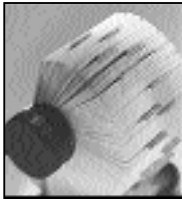
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DANIEL BYRAM MAY

A joyous service in honor of beloved son and brother, Daniel Byram May, will be held on what would have been his 29th birthday, Tues., April 27, 2004 at 10:30 a.m. at the Windmill Chapel of Self Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine at 17190 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades 90272. (Use the first SRF entrance up Sunset from PCH.) All who knew Daniel are invited to this celebration of a life

notable for compassion, cordiality, courage, humility, service, scholarship, patriotism and devotion to God. Daniel skipped two grades, graduated with honors with a B.A. in Physics, received the Chancellor's Service Award, provided leadership for the Undergraduate Physics Society at UCLA, and played clarinet at the Rose Bowl with the UCLA Marching Band. He was also a very dedicated teacher, who took nine Compton students to Disneyland in a limousine. He started an Internet "newspaper" (AngelsWeekly.com) which showcased good things happening in the LA area. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Daniel's honor to Self Realization Fellowship, where Daniel served as camp counselor, Sunday School teacher, choir member and audio/visual crew member. Following the service, the celebration will continue at a reception in Malibu.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Stone recognized as advocate for homosexuals

By The Associated Press

■ **SAN FRANCISCO** — Sharon Stone has been recognized by the National Center for Lesbian Rights for her support of gay and lesbian civil rights.

The actress who has helped raise millions of dollars for AIDS research and has portrayed lesbian characters in movies including "Basic Instinct," received the NCLR Spirit Award at the organization's 27th anniversary celebration Saturday night in San Francisco.

"Sharon Stone has a very long history of leadership and involvement with volunteer groups," said Ruth Harris, a spokeswoman for the San Francisco-based center. "We're honoring her for a whole range of things over a many year period."

Stone's contributions include raising money for the American Foundation for AIDS Research, founding the homeless youth camp Planet Hope, and working with Project Angel Food, a Los Angeles County program that brings food to homebound victims of AIDS.

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, who sparked a national debate by issuing marriage licenses to gay couples, presented the 46-year-old actress with the award at Saturday's event.

■ **PHNOM PENH, Cambodia** — Jackie Chan, who's best known for his daredevil stunts, was named a goodwill ambassador Monday for the United

Nations' Children's Fund and U.N. AIDS agencies.

The Hong Kong action film star will help fight the spread of HIV/AIDS and discrimination against people affected by it, and advance the causes of children, particularly those who suffer through armed conflict, said Rodney Hatfield, UNICEF's representative in Cambodia.

"Let me know whatever I can do, wherever I can go. I promise you I'll do it," Chan said at a news conference, where he wore a turquoise T-shirt bearing the word UNICEF.

Chan, a box-office star of Hollywood and Chinese-language movies for more than 20 years, will visit children suffering from AIDS and tour land mine rehabilitation centers during his three-day stay in Cambodia, which ends Wednesday.

"We are confident that Jackie's prestige, great talent and genuine concern for children will help the United Nations send a powerful message on the impact of HIV/AIDS and conflict on children that will reach the hearts and minds of people throughout the world," Hatfield said.

Cambodia has Southeast Asia's highest HIV infection rate, although it dropped to 2.6 percent in 2002 from 3.8 percent in 1997.

Chan, whose movies include "The Legend of Drunken Master," "Shanghai Noon" and the sequel "Shanghai Knights," will likely begin shooting the third film in the "Rush

Hour" series later this year.

"I always think I am so lucky," he said. "So, now it's time to give back."

Other UNICEF goodwill ambassadors include actors Roger Moore and Jessica Lange and singers Harry Belafonte and Ricky Martin.

■ **LONDON** — The Beatles' psychedelic cartoon "The Yellow Submarine" is being adapted for a children's book, the group's record label said Monday.

Apple Corps Ltd. said it had joined with Walker Books to create the book, which is expected to arrive in stores in September, 36 years after the original animated feature film was released.

The book was inspired by the success of the release in 1999 of a digitally restored DVD version of the 1968 cult classic.

"The Yellow Submarine" was made as a psychedelic film in the sixties, but it has had a timeless appeal, particularly for children, over the last four decades," Apple Corps. said.

The film followed the release of the "The Yellow Submarine" single in 1966, which was a hit in Britain, Australia, Canada, Germany, Holland, Norway, New Zealand and Sweden.

It was translated into many languages, including Yiddish and Latin, and was taken up as an anthem by American activists opposing the war in Vietnam.

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