

FREE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2003

Volume 2, Issue 144

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

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FANTASY 5

01, 06, 12, 18, 30

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 7, 4, 9

Evening picks: 9, 0, 1

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 12, Lucky Charms

2nd Place: 05, California Classic

3rd Place: 10, Solid Gold

Race time: 1:47.67



NEWS OF THE WEIRD
by Chuck Shepard

■ A 6-year-old boy was permanently expelled from elementary school (after 18 months of failed discipline) as being too unruly and dangerous (but who, at home, is an angel, according to his dad) (Ashton, England).

■ Officials of the prestigious Crufts dog show began an investigation of whether its current Supreme Champion (the Pekinese, Danny, which beat out 20,000 challengers) had had an illegal facelift (London).

■ Florida family welfare officials finally put their foot down and suspended a woman who had become the fourth child protection investigator recently dating or marrying accused or convicted criminals (this one a convicted killer and accused child-support dodger) (Largo, Fla.).



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Most Texans think Hanukkah is some sort of duck call."

— Richard Lewis



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Pavilions trial now in defense's hands

Grocery store accused of overcharging customers

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

City prosecutors argued in front of a Malibu jury Tuesday that Pavilions on Montana Avenue is guilty of overcharging its customers. The city rested its case against the Santa Monica grocery store Tuesday afternoon in what is expected to be a two-day trial. Defense attorneys are scheduled to present their case this morning.

The Vons Company, which owns Pavilions, faces six counts of overcharging customers and one count of false advertising. If convicted, it could face more than \$20,000 in fines, officials said.

Criminal charges were filed by the consumer affairs unit of the Santa Monica City Attorney's office after an October 2001

undercover investigation revealed the grocery store was allegedly overcharging customers on sale items.

"This case is about a big corporation taking advantage of its unsuspecting customers."

— EDA SUH
Deputy City Attorney

City attorneys claim that Pavilions charged full price at the checkout register for items that were advertised on tags displayed in the aisles as on sale.

"This case is about a big corporation taking advantage of its unsuspecting customers," said

See TRIAL, page 5

Board ranks issues facing downtown

Cleanliness, safety and vagrancy are top priority

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

A group of officials charged with managing downtown recently ranked the most critical issues facing businesses in Santa Monica.

As in years past, the cleanliness and safety of the Third Street Promenade are the biggest concerns for merchants, residents and tourists.

The board of directors for the Bayside District Corp., a non-profit organization that runs downtown with the city, recently placed cleanliness and vagrancy as their top priorities, followed by parking and traffic issues.

With a macro perspective in mind, officials said they can now make the most of their limited resources.

Balancing the mix of retail and restaurant merchants downtown came in as the third priority, accord-

ing to a tally of board members' votes.

Bayside plans to increase its marketing efforts, which is its fourth priority.

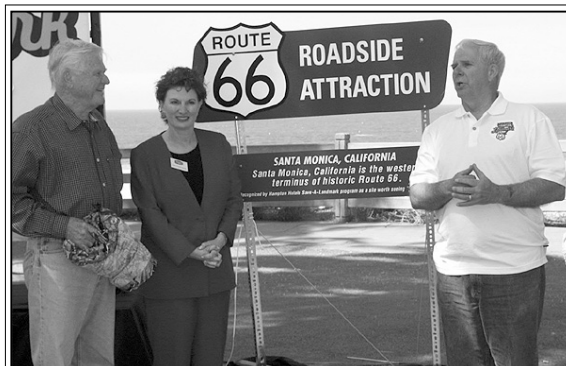
Strengthening Bayside's relationship with neighboring communities and the Santa Monica Pier placed as the fifth priority.

"This is the top of the list," said John Warfel, chair of Bayside's board. "This is where we want to focus our energies going forward."

Board members said they ranked cleanliness and vagrancy first for a number of reasons. Because of its aging infrastructure, the Promenade requires daily maintenance to keep it competitive.

The long-standing vagrancy issue comes from complaints by tourists and business owners who say consumers are turned off by excessive panhandling, and apparent safety and health concerns posed by Santa Monica's large

See BAYSIDE, page 6



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Above: (Left to right) Actor Martin Milner who appeared on the famed television show, "Route 66," Hampton Hotels vice president of marketing Judy Christa-Cathey and Jim Conkle unveil a new sign on Tuesday dedicating Palisades Park as the end of "America's Main Street."

Below: The decorated RV with a map of Route 66 is Conkle's home for the next 66 days as he travels the road to Chicago.

Historian gets his 'kicks on Route 66'

Preservationist's 66-day journey starts in Santa Monica

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

It was the beginning of the end for Jim Conkle on Tuesday when he set out for a 66-day journey across the country on Route 66.

Conkle, a Route 66 historian and preservationist, made Palisades Park, widely known as the "symbolic ending" of America's most famous road, the beginning point for his 2,448-mile journey.

Conkle is using the trip as a pilgrimage to mark historic landmarks along the route and bring awareness to the road most commonly referred to as "America's Main Street."

On the journey in his decorated RV, Conkle and a handful of other Route 66 enthusiasts will make more than 60 stops to post new Route 66 "Roadside Attraction" signs that tell the story of the historic sites, treasured landmarks and vintage establishments. The first sign was put up in Palisades Park on Tuesday.

Route 66 is much more than a just a road, Conkle said. The communi-

See ROUTE 66, page 6



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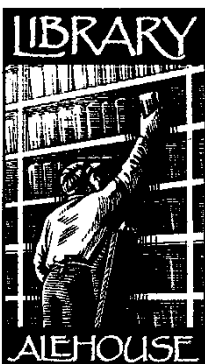
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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, April 30, 2003:

What you want lands in your lap quite suddenly and from out of the blue. Be ready to seize the moment and run with it. Bosses and those in charge could be testy and difficult. Set goals this year with the expectation of accomplishing them. Your security needs to be of highest importance through August. Your libido energies soar in September. Give you a problem, and you'll find a solution. If you are single, you're one hot number, especially this year. Sort through your choices. You could find someone quite special. If you are attached, a relationship warms up this year because of your willingness to drop your defenses. TAURUS is a soul mate.

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Expenses could easily get out of control. Unexpected news flies your way that encourages you to handle a matter differently. Pressure comes from a friend who you might not be ready to deal with. Time to dip into your creativity. Tonight: Your treat.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ You're suddenly energized and ready to make a difference that counts. You might shake your head at what a boss does or thinks. Stay in touch with your long-term needs. Evaluate what you expect from someone you put on a pedestal. How reasonable are you being? Tonight: Whatever floats your boat.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Take your time, and you will be less likely to make a big error. Think about long-term gains concerning your abilities. Don't count on what you're hearing, but more on what you know to be true. Use your creativity and abilities. Don't hesitate to pull back. Tonight: Do your thing.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Groups rather than individuals open doors. You might feel more in tune with the many. Keep your objectives in mind. Do not sell out, but pursue a steady course. Not everyone needs to agree. You know where you're heading. Tonight: Where the gang is.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Others listen and expect you to take charge. Associates push hard for what they want, especially regarding money and division of labor. State your case, but don't be surprised by a touch of flak. Experiment with new ideas. Tonight: Get home as early as you can.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Others press hard, but they might not deliver as you would like. Your temper could manifest itself in an odd manner when dealing with an associate. If you feel the heat building, go off and take a walk or indulge in a stress-buster. Detach, and you'll gain answers. Tonight: Return calls.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ A partner might be more dominant than you like. Take your time with decision-making, and understand your limits. Your nerves might be taking a greater toll on you than you realize. It's time for a break or vacation. Demonstrate realism about your energy. Tonight: A pal or loved one needs to clear the air. Get ready!

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Defer to others in the face of a potential uproar involving a friend or loved one. Right now you might not be able to have the influence or control you like. Let others demonstrate their agendas. They need to see the end results. Tonight: Accept an invitation.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Get your job done. Someone close might easily lose his or her temper. Could there be a grain of truth to what he or she is saying? Be honest with yourself. Uproar surrounds a domestic matter or a real estate investment. Until calm returns, lay back. Tonight: Soak away stress.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Your imagination could lead to a risk. Be involved, but also know when to back out. Be as diplomatic as possible, recognizing the impact your words might have. Use your unique style to express yourself. Your ingenuity makes a difference. Tonight: Take a midweek break.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ You lose your temper far too easily. Think before you take action or spew out words. Be sensitive to others. Don't get locked into a position; leave a way out. Your understanding does make a difference. Tonight: Order in. Make it easy.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Your unpredictability leads you down a new path. Investigate what someone thinks is a great idea. Don't automatically nix it. Enlisting others could make or break the situation. Don't obsess about a personal matter. Tonight: Out and about.

Santa Monica Daily Press

Published Monday through Saturday
Phone: 310.458.PRESS(7737) • Fax: 310.576.9913
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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Bike rodeo comin' to town

By Daily Press staff

A rodeo of the two-wheeled nature is coming to Santa Monica.

The Santa Monica Police Department, in observing "May is Bicycle Safety Month," will be hosting a Traffic Safety Bicycle Rodeo on Sunday, May 4, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Virginia Avenue Park, located at 2200 Virginia Avenue.

Safe Moves, a non-profit organization dedicated to saving children's lives through education, will be on hand to assist in the bicycle rodeo by presenting an interactive program. The program, "Safe Moves City," is designed to simulate traffic hazards facing students when they walk, ride and roll as pedestrians, bicyclists, skaters, skateboarders, and scooter riders.

Bicycles and helmets will be provided for participants to use. Participants also may bring their own bicycles, scooters and skateboards and helmets.

The SMPD, through a grant from the Office of Traffic Safety, will be giving free helmets to the first 100 participants.

'Read to Feed' raises \$20,000

By Daily Press staff

Students at St. Paul the Apostle School in Westwood yielded more than \$20,000 to benefit less fortunate men, women and children in the westside community.

The two-month-long Read-a-Thon, with its motto: "Read to Feed," will benefit homeless and low-income clients of St. Joseph Center in Venice.

"The 7th graders go from class to class, giving talks to inspire the younger children," said Maria Alderete, SJC Volunteer Coordinator. "The first-graders make public address announcements and carry signs around the campus as reminders."

The children also create artwork to encourage their fellow students to obtain sponsors, who will then donate a certain amount for each page of a book or article the student reads.

"We feel it contributes to the education of the whole child to be involved in service to the community," says Sr. Stella Maria Enright, who has been principal at St. Paul the Apostle School for 35 years.

Local joins Boys and Girls

By Daily Press staff

A Santa Monica resident and former Los Angeles Business Journal columnist has joined the board of directors for the Variety Boys' and Girls' Club in Boyle Heights.

Mel Potesman, a retired partner of the West L.A. certified public accounting and business consulting firm, Levine, Cooper, Spiegel & Co., frequented the clubs when he was a child.

"Growing up, I spent many an afternoon in the club's after school programs," Potesman said in a press release. "I have very fond memories and truly believe that they did me a great service back then."

Westside residents join together for moment of prayer

By Daily Press staff

Approximately 300 to 500 people are expected to gather in front of City Hall at 7 a.m. on Thursday for a moment of silent prayer.

May 1 is the nation's 52nd annual National Day of Prayer, and the gathering at Santa Monica City Hall is part of an effort to get thousands of people together for prayer and worship.

This year's theme is "Righteousness Exalts a Nation," based on Proverbs 14:34. City Hall is located at 1685 Main Street. Participants can join an optional continental breakfast at 6:30 a.m. on the lawn. A donation of \$5 is suggested for the breakfast.



surf report

Information compiled by Jesse Haley

Today northwest swell starts to back down, and we'll see a transition with some southwest swell coming in for Thursday. Expect chest-high surf on average at north-west exposures.

Southwest swell should put those exposures in waist to chest-high waves as it builds.

On Thursday, a southwest swell from the Southern Hemisphere increases size to waist- to chest-high, smaller at west facing breaks as the northwest swell peters out.

Things look pretty clean as far as winds. Best conditions should be during dawn patrol.

**Today's Tides:**

Low- 3:49 a.m. 0.04'
High- 9:46 a.m. 3.93'
Low- 3:24 p.m. 1.06'
High- 9:28 p.m. 5.18'

Location	Wednesday	Thursday	Water Quality
County Line	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Zuma	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Surfrider	1-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	B
Topanga	1-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	A
Breakwater	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
El Porto	2-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A

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The Q Line

There has been much in the news recently about local rent control laws, tenants and landlords. A new law passed in March now allows landlords to increase tenants' rents if they are found to be using their rent-controlled apartments for something other than living full-time.

Many tenants at the Shores Apartments, the 17-story towers at the beach near Hill Street, will have to prove to City Hall officials that they are using their units as their primary residences or be forced to pay thousands of dollars more in rent. Some tenants admit they own property elsewhere and use the units as

secondary residences or as offices. Some Shores residents pay as little \$600 a month for the same size apartment as someone who pays \$1,600.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Is it fair for a person to own property or live somewhere else and still be able to secure a rent-controlled apartment in Santa Monica? Why or why not?"

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



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—Anthony Dias Blue
Bon Appetit Lifestyle



OPINION

LETTERS

Losing faith in government

Editor:

President George W. Bush announced that he will not permit Iraq to have a theocratic government. Yet that is precisely the direction he is foisting upon America. Is Muslim not an appropriate government religion, but Christianity is?

Our taxes should not be supporting ANYTHING religious or faith-based.

Flo Ginsburg
Santa Monica

Hydrogen is next door

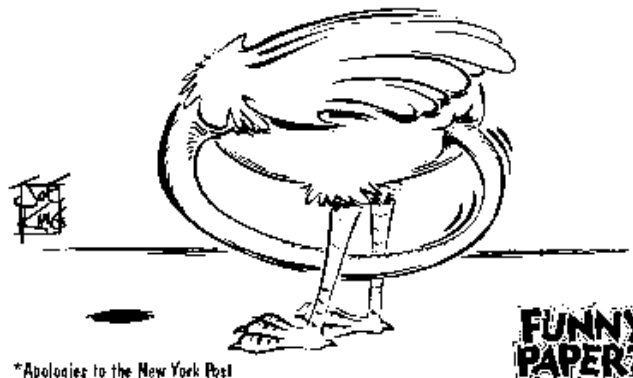
Editor:

Your article of April 25, "World's first hydrogen service station opens in Iceland" was very interesting but incomplete. Your readers may wish to know that such a service station has been operating for some time next door. The BMW engineering and Emissions Control Test Center is located in Oxnard, Calif., and has been operating a liquid hydrogen filling station for a fleet of test cars — BMW 750 LL sedans — using advanced technologies such as robotics tanking arms and other innovations.

The existence of this large testing facility for an international cooperation properly recognizes the many benefits of hydrogen internal combustion, as contrasted to the continual emphasis on fuel cell technologies. This Oxnard location of the major BMW facility reflects the unique role of California in addressing clean air demands. The testing results are available publicly upon suitable request.

Bruno W. Angenstein
Pacific Palisades

"THE NATIONAL BIRD OF FRANCE"



*Apologies to the New York Post

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Problem within — one man's success also reveals flaws



INCITES

By Ed Silverstein

(Editor's note: This is the third installment of a three-part series that tracks how a man lifted himself off the streets of Santa Monica with the help of California's social services and some of the inherent problems within.)

James McCord is a recovering drug addict from Alabama who came to California to find help. The first two articles last week detailed James becoming addicted to crack cocaine, his decision to seek help and his road to recovery.

James McCord utilized California's programs to kick his drug addiction, find shelter, secure employment and gain affordable housing. But his experiences, while positive, highlight many problems cited by critics.

A case in point is the charge that California's generous social programs attract an unfair number of homeless to the state. James has confirmed that it is common knowledge on the streets that California offers the most social services and financial assistance. In fact, as James would admit late in our interview, this was his third trip to California for help. He had previously been in programs in Los Angeles and in Santa Cruz.

The influx of transients creates enormous consequences for progressive cities where the majority of social programs are located.

Theodore Dues, executive director of Samoshel homeless shelter, acknowledges that the homeless population in Santa Monica has created a social crisis.

Exploding homeless populations devastate businesses and adversely impact city revenue needed to pay for programs. City services, such as police and emergency health care, are strained to the breaking point. Quality of life plummets as crime skyrockets.

James admits that had he not achieved sobriety as quickly as he did, he would have committed crimes here.

"The first I would have done would be shoplifting," he said. "I kind of got a rush off of going in a department store or whatever kind of store and the excitement of getting away. I just stole three pair of jeans and they didn't see me and I got away. I'm a hustler. I go back to the dope man. 'Whatcha need, man I got your size, pair of jeans, shirt, tennis shoes.'"

Another common complaint concerns the method of determining funding levels for social service agencies.

"Money and politics get in the way," James observed. "You write certain grants based on how many clients you have. Sometimes it gets to the point that they're not concerned with who succeeds and doesn't succeed; we just need a certain amount of people to fill the particular facility, to fill the beds."

While Joel Schwartz, senior administrative analyst for homeless services for Santa Monica, and Dues deny this is the case, many people involved in the field support James' observations. They also suggest that funding by numbers creates incentive to maintain clients on the rolls rather than move them off. The result is that many languish in the system.

"They're taking people, I don't want to say they don't have a chance, because I'd like to believe all people have a chance, but they're taking people who don't have a real desire," James said. "They are re-treats, been in the program seven or eight

times. They need to cut off some because they're taking a bed of someone who may really be trying to change."

A 1998 University of Pennsylvania study, cited by Joel Stein in his Time Magazine article "The Real Face Of Homelessness," demonstrated that chronic homeless cases, such as the severely mentally ill, hard core drug and alcohol users and the very sick, take up 50 percent of the beds in shelters, while only representing about 10 percent of the homeless population.

The study concluded that these cases would be better served if we provided less expensive alternatives such as free apartments exclusive of any ancillary services. Stein also cited other experts who contend that some poor people, who wouldn't normally be homeless, are attracted to shelters as a quick way to tap into government assistance.

In addition to taking up scarce resources, accepting chronic homeless candidates has a negative impact on caregivers. James suggests that many of the staff, faced with too many unmotivated clients, become emotionally guarded and reluctant to become personally involved. This is troubling as James attributes much of his success to the efforts of a few individuals who took a personal interest in his case.

Another issue that plagues these programs is a lack of accountability. Although the means are available, social service agencies rarely track their clients once they leave a program. Santa Monica has a computer system that coordinates 18 programs, but some agencies refuse to require social security numbers.

This allows clients to make up fictitious names and defeats detection of abuse. Even if accurate information is provided, agencies rarely employ it to evaluate the suitability of a client for a program.

Dues admitted that he does not use this

system as criteria for admittance into Samoshel. The system is further circumvented by shutting the homeless between downtown Los Angeles and Santa Monica. One resident claims to have witnessed several instances in which busloads of homeless were deposited at the Santa Monica Civic Center at 4 a.m.

Social programs need to improve, but this can only be achieved through tracking those in the system. In addition, success, rather than head counts, should be rewarded with additional funding. Mr. Schwartz, who oversees these programs in Santa Monica, agrees that this would be worthwhile, but says that there is no source of funding for tracking clients. Yet, with the existing computer system already in place, funding could be created through savings realized by reducing duplication of services and by eliminating existing ineffective programs.

One such program is General Relief (GR) payments that provide several hundred dollars a month to cover subsistence items.

However, since these needs are already met by social services, these tax dollars are usually used to purchase drugs and alcohol.

In one egregious case, a liquor store allowed transients to use its address to receive GR checks, cashed them and kept the money on account for the purchase of liquor. GR payments should be replaced with vouchers (or debit cards) good for specific items and services. A further measure to prevent abuse would require identification to redeem vouchers as well as food stamps.

One of the most divisive issues is that of public feedings. Several outside groups were providing meals to hundreds of homeless in Santa Monica parks and public properties, attracting even greater numbers of recipients to the area. The situation

See INCITES, page 5

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.

LOCAL



Pavilions manager to take stand in court today

TRIAL, from page 1

Deputy City Attorney Eda Suh in her opening statements.

"We're not talking about securities fraud," she added. "We're not talking about millions of dollars. We're talking about small, everyday things that affect you and me."

Pavilions' "value plus" cardholders buying Hungry Jack waffles, Taglio Primo brie cheese, Vons-brand spaghetti and three other items were being overcharged by as much as \$2.90, said inspectors from the L.A. County weights and measures department.

Vons attorneys didn't dispute that allegation.

"This is going to be factually a very simple case," said Vons attorney Stephen Peacock.

Peacock argued that price tags at Pavilions clearly list expiration dates in bold type. Peacock said the 2001 inspection took place one day after the offers in question had expired. Workers were in the process of updating the sale tags, he said.

"We're dealing with human beings who are pulling these down and putting them up," Peacock said. "There are going to be mistakes made."

Peacock added that during an average week, there are between 6,000 and 10,000 value plus sales offered by Pavilions. He said the company has a 99.9 percent rate of accuracy.

The Vons Company has faced similar charges in the past.

A Ventura jury recently let Vons off the hook for 16 similar charges and a Santa Monica judge ruled against the city on a 1998 lawsuit brought against Pavilions alleging the same infractions.

Both a Whittier judge and an L.A.

county administrative judge have thrown out similar cases on the grounds that the issues have been tried in Vons' favor in the past.

Despite that history, Malibu Superior Court Judge Lawrence Mira denied an earlier motion by Vons to dismiss the case. He ruled that the alleged violations should be dealt with separately from prior cases.

After lawyers made their opening state-

"If there's a posted or advertised price it's our job to make sure you get the lowest advertised price."

— LARRY GODWIN
County investigator

ments, Suh presented the city's evidence to the jury of eight women and four men.

Although the overcharges appear small, Suh said the company turns a significant profit on expired labels because of the volume of customers they attract.

Suh called Larry Godwin, the county official who conducted the 2001 investigation, as her only witness. Godwin said he pulled 20 items during his investigation and was overcharged for six of them at the checkout register.

"If there's a posted or advertised price it's our job to make sure you get the lowest advertised price," Godwin said.

Jeff Haddox, manager of the Pavilions on Montana Avenue, is the only witness Vons attorneys intend to call, Peacock said.

Opinion

Homeless may need tough love

INCITES, from page 4

became so acute that Santa Monica, like many other cities, passed an ordinance to severely restrict public feedings.

Though widely supported, the laws have been challenged in court by feeding groups and homeless advocates, including attorney Robert Myers. Myers was the City Attorney for Santa Monica until he was fired by the City Council for refusing to draw up a law prohibiting camping in public parks. Should Myers and his group prevail it will only work against the people they are purportedly trying to help.

Dues, who was a homeless substance abuser prior to seeking help from and going to work at Samoshel, agrees that "frontline feedings" need to be linked to more intensive services. And Gary Silverstein, executive director of The Therapy Center, a private mental/behavioral health practice, concurs with many experts in the field who suggest that a tough love approach is most effective in treating substance abusers and the mentally ill.

"The only impetus for change is when people are uncomfortable enough or distressed enough with their circumstances to face the rigors of change," he said.

Programs such as public feedings and GR payments enable the homeless to continue their self-destructive behavior. In

James' case it was his family's support that stalled his seeking help and prolonged his addiction. James concedes that if the streets were less comfortable, the homeless would make more and better use of social services, but he also cautions, "It (making the streets less hospitable) must also come from a place of compassion rather than indignation or self-righteousness. It should not be done only to get rid of the problem."

As James demonstrates, social programs are needed and can be effective. And despite the current administration's attempt to undermine these programs through draconian tax cuts, most Americans are more than willing to support services that help those less fortunate or in crisis. But too often these services lack proper oversight and evaluation. And few want to see our tax dollars wasted. It is up to the city, the state and the federal government to insist on accountability. It is only through true appraisal that these agencies and programs will improve and success stories such as that of James McCord will become the rule rather than the exception.

(Ed Silverstein is a freelance writer living in Santa Monica. He thanks James McCord for his insights and honesty. Comments can be e-mailed to: edsinci@att.net).

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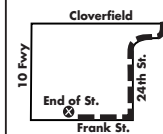
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LOCAL

Historian to eat 72-ounce steak on nationwide trek

ROUTE 66, from page 1

ties and cultures along it are a slice of what America represents. It has been immortalized in American culture for its quirky diners, neon signs and funky roadside attractions.

"We are celebrating Americana," Conkle said. "It's the culture of the road."

Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom, who was on hand at the small ceremony Tuesday, said Route 66 is a large reason for the growth of Southern California and stands for all that is important to diversity across America.

"We have no future without our past and we have no past without our future," he said. "Preserving heritage and the character of our communities is so much of what we do in municipal government."

After two years of planning, Conkle, with the help of Hampton Hotels and Route 66 associations, will refurbish select locations along the route to help bring them back to their original glory.

Conkle, in his RV, and more than a dozen Route 66 enthusiasts drove their classic cars — representing every decade — down Santa Monica Boulevard Tuesday morning for the first leg of the cross-country trip to Chicago, where the road ends, or begins, depending on where you begin the journey.

Conkle will travel through eight states before landing in Chicago. Along the way, Conkle plans to take in several events at towns located on Route 66. He planned his trip around those communities' events so he could celebrate their traditions and cultures. Some of those events include the 10th Annual Fun Run in Kingman, Ariz., and the

Galena Good Old Days in Galena, Kan.

Conkle's biggest challenge of the trip may be his attempt to eat all of the 72-ounce steak at the Big Texan Steak Ranch in Amarillo, Tex.

"They make you eat all the salad and bread too," he joked. "I tried to get them to make a 66-ounce steak but they said 'no.'"

Route 66 is 76 years old this year and although entrepreneurs Cyrus Avery of Tulsa, Okla., and John Woodruff of Springfield, Mo., deserve most of the credit for promoting the idea of an inter-regional roadway between Chicago and Los Angeles, their lobbying efforts were not realized until their dream emerged with the national program of highway and road development.

While legislation for public highways first appeared in 1916, with revisions in 1921, it was not until 1925 that the government executed its plan for national highway construction.

When the official numerical designation of 66 was assigned in 1926, it was acknowledged that the roadway was one of the nation's most principal east-west roadway arteries.

Public road planners intended U.S. 66 to connect the main streets of rural and urban communities along its course because small towns had no prior access to a major national thoroughfare. Its diagonal route linked hundreds of predominately rural communities in Illinois, Missouri and Kansas to Chicago, thus enabling farmers to transport grain and produce for redistribution.

John Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath," coined Route 66 as the "Mother Road,"

and an estimated 210,000 people migrating to California to escape the Dust Bowl used it as the "road to opportunity."

Ironically, the public lobby for rapid mobility and improved highways that gained Route 66 its enormous popularity eventually signaled its demise in the early 1950s.

When the Federal Aid Highway Act passed in 1956, a financial umbrella opened to underwrite the cost of the national interstate and defense highway system.

Bayside to focus on safety, marketing, relationships

BAYSIDE, from page 1

homeless population, board members said.

Two laws aimed at curbing Santa Monica's homeless population were passed last fall. One, which prohibits public feedings in outdoor spaces, is tied up in a First Amendment lawsuit and not currently being enforced. Police recently began issuing warnings to violators of the second law, which bans sleeping in doorways downtown.

Parking and traffic issues are second most important to the success of businesses downtown, board members said.

Many shoppers are turned away from downtown Santa Monica because of heavy congestion and the difficulty of finding a parking space, officials said.

A plan that combines building new parking structures and upgrading the existing ones is currently winding its way through the city's review and approval process. Bayside also hopes to establish a comprehensive valet parking plan for visiting shoppers.

Board members ranked as third most important the ambiance created by the mix of retail and restaurant venues downtown — as well as the mix of chain stores with independent businesses.

Many blame the high rents being charged downtown for the decline in restaurants. The Promenade Task Force, a group formed to address that issue along the Promenade, recently drafted a series of recommendations which are headed to the Santa Monica City Council for approval.

The suggestions would make it easier for restaurants to open or expand their outdoor dining. It also would ease restrictions on "sandwich board" sidewalk advertisements, while increasing the number of vending carts, among other things.

In Dwight D. Eisenhower's second term, the federal government spent millions to develop a national highway system.

By 1970, nearly all segments of the original Route 66 were replaced by a modern four-lane highway. The outdated, poorly maintained vestiges of U.S. Highway 66 completely succumbed to the interstate system in 1984 at Williams, Ariz. when the final section of road was replaced.

To protect the unique character of the Promenade, the board agreed to recommend limiting retailers to 50 feet of storefront and offer incentives to independently owned businesses.

Marketing efforts were deemed the fourth most important issue by Bayside board members.

Planning for the holiday shopping season already has begun and board members said they hope Santa Monica will have another successful year. Last year, the Promenade alone saw a 17 percent spike in fourth quarter sales over the previous year.

Cooperative campaigns with a number of newspapers and radio stations will be accompanied by the return of "Winterlit," an event that attracted thousands of visitors to the Promenade last year with celebrity appearances and artificial snow.

Though Winterlit cost \$500,000, officials said it was worth the price tag because of the amount of television and newspaper coverage it attracted.

The "Scrooge" campaign also will return to downtown this winter. This will be the third year for the Dr. Seuss-themed campaign, where a costumed Scrooge surprises shoppers and reluctantly hands over gift certificates.

Also on Bayside's top five list is building on its relationship with its neighbors, including Santa Monica Place and the Santa Monica Pier. By working cooperatively, board members said they hoped to solidify Santa Monica and make it an even more attractive destination.

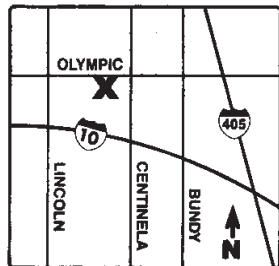
"We've got all these beautiful venues that people come to and we need to keep that connected," said Ruth Ewell, a board member and owner of the Ye Olde King's Head pub downtown.

"We don't want to lose track of these big issues," she added. "They will be at the forefront of what is our charge."

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STATE



Despite budget, lawmakers trying to deal with uninsured

BY STEVE LAWRENCE
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — On a bad day the waiting time in Dr. Brian Johnston's emergency room can run as long as seven or eight hours. It's a symptom of what Johnston and others see as a looming "melt-down" in California's health care system.

More and more Californians are being forced to go without health insurance and it's helping put an increasingly tight squeeze on hospital emergency rooms, the treatment centers of last resort for those without coverage.

"It's a serious problem," says Johnston, the emergency room director for a private hospital in East Los Angeles. "In our immediate service area, we've seen a 24 percent increase in volume in the last year and our waiting time has gone up correspondingly.

Johnston suspects some people are simply giving up and going home before they see a physician and may be dying because of it. The problem will get worse, particularly if there's an epidemic or a biological weapons attack, he says.

"Many, many responsible people in the health care industry ... are expecting a meltdown. We are expecting large numbers of people will die."

In an attempt to avoid that type of calamity and help curb skyrocketing health care costs, California legislators have introduced at least five bills designed to reduce the number of uninsured.

They range from a measure to increase the number of people covered by the state's Healthy Families program to a bill that would set up a state-run universal health care system with an elected commissioner.

In between are bills that would require all or most employers to offer their workers health coverage.

Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn, the author of one of the employer-mandate bills, says the Legislature can't afford to wait to act, despite the state's poor economy and lawmakers' preoccupation with a record budget deficit.

Nationally, the number of uninsured grew by about 1 million a year through most of the 1990s before leveling off and even dropping slightly in 1999 and 2000. Then it grew by 1.3 million between 2000 and 2001, according to a study released earlier this year by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

In California, the number of people without health coverage increased from 6.2 million in 2000 to 6.7 million in 2001, the last year for which figures are available.

"It seems clear that the number of uninsured is growing in the country and is growing in California," said Kathleen Stoll, associate director of health policy for Families USA, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit organization.

However, the percentage of California employers who offered workers health insurance in 2002 was slightly above the national average, 65 percent compared to 62 percent, a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Health Research & Educational Trust said.

E. Richard Brown, director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, says the poor economy and the rising cost of health insurance are to blame for the increase.

Lack of insurance can be devastating for a family hit with a serious illness, but it also raises rates for other patients to make up for the cost of treating the uninsured.

"There are (uninsured) people who will

send in payments every month — what they can afford — and then there are people who feel the system should pay for them," says Dr. Vicki Mazzorana, an emergency room physician in San Mateo County who says the waiting time there can be as long as four or five hours for patients without a life-threatening condition.

Allan Zaremborg, president of the California Chamber of Commerce, says more workers would have health insurance if the state allowed employers to provide a lower-cost "essential benefits" package without coverage for mental illnesses and other mandates adopted by lawmakers in recent years.

"We need to get a handle on controlling health care costs," Zaremborg says, so businesses that can afford providing insurance will be able to do it.

An employer mandate would amount to a tax and could run afoul of federal law that regulates self-insured companies, Zaremborg says.

The bill that seems to have the best chance of passing is a measure by Senate President Pro Tem John Burton, D-San Francisco, and Sen. Jackie Speier, D-Daly City, who chairs the Senate Insurance Committee.

Not only is it co-authored by Burton, who is generally considered to be the Legislature's most influential member, it has the support of labor leaders and the California Medical Association, a powerful physicians' group. Art Pulaski, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, predicts it will also win some business support.

A year in health insurance bills at a glance

By The Associated Press

A look at the health insurance bills introduced this year in the California Legislature:

■ SB2 by Senate President Pro Tem John Burton, D-San Francisco, and Sen. Jackie Speier, D-Daly City. Would require employers to pay for at least 80 percent of the cost of providing their employees with health insurance, either by buying policies themselves or paying into a state fund that would provide coverage. Employers with an as-yet unspecified number of employees would be exempt.

■ AB30 by Assemblyman Keith Richman, R-Chatsworth, which would add an estimated 300,000 adults to the state's Healthy Families health care program.

■ SB921 by Sen. Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, which would create a state-run universal health care program that would cover all Californians. The program would be headed by an elected commissioner and paid for through payroll taxes, levies on tobacco and alcoholic beverages and federal, state and county spending on current health care programs. Patients would have no copayments or deductibles for at least the first two years of the program.

■ AB1527 by Assemblyman Dario Frommer, D-Los Angeles, which is similar to the Burton-Speier plan. Frommer says it could include state subsidies to help small employers obtain insurance.

■ AB1528 by Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn, D-Saratoga, would also require employers to pay for health coverage for their workers. People who weren't covered by an employer's policy or a government health care program — for example, workers who opted to take higher pay rather than health insurance or said they couldn't afford their share of the coverage — would have to buy insurance on their own. Individuals and employers with no more than 200 employees could obtain coverage through a statewide "purchasing pool."

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STATE

L.A. County supervisors urge alcohol tax for health services

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Three members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors urged the Legislature to approve a measure that would allow California counties to ask voters to levy a local tax of up to 5 percent on alcoholic drinks to help fund dollar-starved health services.

"We're not asking the state to deplete its treasury," Supervisor Zev Yaroslavy told a press conference Tuesday. "We're not asking the state to impose a tax. We're asking the state to give the people of this county the right to decide for itself whether it wants to tax a vodka martini."

Yaroslavy was joined by Supervisors Gloria Molina and Yvonne Brathwaite Burke in backing SB 726 by state Sen.

Gloria Romero, D-Los Angeles. The bill would allow counties to ask voters to approve the tax on alcoholic drinks consumed on premises where they are sold, such as bars and restaurants.

The bill was expected to be taken up Wednesday in the Senate revenue and taxation committee.

"Our deficit is not of our making," Molina said. "Our deficit is because of the mandate, responsibility that we have — unfortunately without the dollars attached to it — to provide health care to all indigents."

Burke said it would be reasonable for restaurant and bar patrons to pay such a tax.

"It's not asking too much for them simply to help to pay for our hospital costs," she said.

California lawmakers fear new water deal will collapse

BY SETH HETTENA

Associated Press Writer

The chief executive of a giant Los Angeles-based water wholesaler told a California state Senate panel Tuesday that the agency may ultimately reject a revised deal to divvy up the state's share of Colorado River water.

Ron Gastelum of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which serves 18 million people, declined to say where the board of directors stood on the water deal.

"If it sounds like we're indefinite, it's true," Gastelum said. "We are still trying to make up our minds."

Negotiators for the MWD signed off on the deal March 12 and said they would recommend the revised agreement to their board when certain conditions are met. On Tuesday, Gastelum said it was no longer certain that the agreement would be recommended. The MWD board was not expected to vote on the deal before July.

However, under repeated questioning by senators, Gastelum conceded that a no vote was possible, noting that an earlier version of the deal collapsed in December after a water board in Imperial County rejected it.

"That's always possible at the Metropolitan Water District as well," Gastelum said.

That would doom what negotiators for Gov. Gray Davis called "a peace treaty" between four Southern California water agencies that share Colorado River water. The deal was unveiled last month to great fanfare, with Davis calling it a "major milestone in the history of California water."

The centerpiece of the four-party deal is the annual transfer of up to 200,000 acre-feet from the Imperial Valley — a desert farm region that is by far the state's biggest user of Colorado River water — to San Diego for as long as 75 years.

The revelation about the MWD's possible change of heart came before a skeptical Senate panel in Sacramento that demanded to know whether the latest version of the plan will collapse like similar agreements in the past.

"The question today is: Have we finally broken the cycle?" asked Sen. Michael Machado, D-Linden, chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources. "Or is this like the movie 'Groundhog Day,' where Bill Murray

lives the same day over and over and over until he finally gets it right?"

Machado said eight years of experience have taught him to take a "cynic's view of the process," even though people are patting themselves on the back for a deal that could ultimately unravel.

California missed a Dec. 31 deadline to sign a deal that was years in the making and aimed at reducing the state's historic over-dependence on the Colorado River.

In response, Interior Secretary Gale Norton cut the amount of water California can draw from the river this year by 600,000 acre-feet, enough water for 1.2 million people.

A revised agreement was forged after weeks of talks led by Davis' negotiators in Sacramento. It involves a variety of complex changes, including reducing the number of "outs" in the deal that would allow parties to walk away under certain conditions.

Before peace can be declared, however, nearly a dozen steps must be completed in less than six months. The California Legislature must authorize about \$200 million in funds from Proposition 50, a water quality bond measure, for water management projects.

The deal also must win final approval by the boards of the four water agencies, along with the U.S. Interior Department and the six Western states that share water from the Colorado River.

Representatives of the three other agencies involved in the water-sharing deal — the San Diego County Water Authority, Imperial Irrigation and the Coachella Valley Water District — said they were willing to meet the required conditions and ultimately approve the deal known as the Quantification Settlement Agreement, or QSA.

"We should run, not walk to the QSA," said Maureen Stapleton, general manager of the San Diego County Water Authority. "Time is water."

The deal remained a crucial part of the San Diego agency's effort to gain independence from the MWD, which now supplies San Diego with as much as 90 percent of its water.

Stapleton said the deal was also crucial for the future of Southern California. Without the QSA, Southern California would be forced to look to Northern California to make up the loss of Colorado River water.

NATIONAL



Treasury: U.S. may not be able to pay its bills in May

BY JEANNINE AVERSA
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Treasury Department says the United States could face the prospect of not being able to pay its bills in late May unless Congress raises the government's borrowing authority, now capped at \$6.4 trillion.

Treasury's debt managers have taken a number of steps since February to prevent the government from defaulting on the national debt, but "on current projections, the extraordinary measures taken since Feb. 20, 2003, will only be adequate to meet the government's needs until the latter half of May," said a statement released Tuesday.

After that — absent a boost in the government's borrowing authority by Congress — Treasury would breach the current \$6.4 trillion ceiling on the national debt.

"The Treasury will continue to work with Congress to ensure the government's ability to finance its operations," Treasury said.

Treasury has asked Congress to boost the government's borrowing authority, although it has not suggested a specific amount. A proposal is pending on Capitol Hill that would raise the debt ceiling to \$7.38 trillion.

Last year, Congress boosted the old debt limit by \$450 billion, from \$5.95 trillion to the current \$6.4 trillion.

At that time Treasury warned that

Congress would need to again increase the government's borrowing authority.

Boosting the debt limit is more a matter of politics than economics.

Economists doubt Congress will refuse to raise the limit. A federal default is considered unimaginable because it would rattle bond markets, force interest rates higher, weaken the world economy and deliver a political blow to President Bush.

Democrats point to the government's need to borrow more to ridicule President Bush's tax cuts, his handling of the economy and ballooning federal government budget deficits, which are expected to hit records this year and next.

Republicans blame the lingering effects of the 2001 recession and the costs of fighting terrorism for the need to extend the debt limit.

By Memorial Day, Republicans hope to have pushed through Congress a tax-cut bill with a price tag of between \$350 billion and \$550 billion through 2013.

If Congress must approve a debt-limit extension during the same period of time, it could play into Democrats' political argument that the new tax cut will only make the government's red ink worse.

The government had to borrow a record \$111 billion in the January-March quarter to cover the shortfall between expenses and tax revenue. It expects to borrow another \$79 billion in the current quarter.

British authorities arrest man known as 'Fluffi Bunni' hacker

BY TED BRIDIS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — British authorities arrested a man Tuesday believed to head a group of hackers known as "Fluffi Bunni," which used a stuffed pink rabbit to mark attacks that humiliated some of the world's premier computer security organizations.

Fluffi Bunni captured the attention of the FBI just days after the Sept. 11 terror attacks, when thousands of commercial Web sites were vandalized with a single break-in that included the message, "Fluffi Bunni Goes Jihad."

The FBI characterized the act in a November 2001 report as an anti-American cyberprotest against the war on terrorism.

Lynn Htun, 24, was arrested by Scotland Yard detectives on outstanding forgery charges while attending a prominent trade show in London for computer security professionals, InfoSecurity Europe 2003, authorities said.

British authorities did not mention of Htun's alleged hacking. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Htun is wanted in America in connection with a series of high-profile hacking cases blamed on Fluffi Bunni. Investigators believe Htun was the group's leader and referred to himself as Fluffi Bunni, the official said.

Authorities in London indicated they would release more information Wednesday about Htun's arrest, although the continuing investigation into Fluffi Bunni hackers was sensitive and other arrests could be possible.

Fluffi Bunni embarrassed leading Internet security organizations by breaking into their own computers and replacing Web pages with a message that "Fluffi

Bunni ownz you" and a digital photograph of a pink rabbit at a keyboard. The attacks, which began in June 2000, lasted about 18 months, then stopped mysteriously and created one of the Internet's most significant hacker whodunits in years.

"I thought he'd never be caught," said Jay Dyson, a consultant who formerly helped run one of the victim Web sites. "He was clever and had the patience of a saint. The targets he chose were ones that were really high profile, and ones you'd think would be above reproach when it comes to issues of security."

Victims have included the Washington-based SANS Institute, which offers security training for technology professionals; Security Focus, now owned by Symantec Corp.; and Attrition.org, a site run by experts who formerly tracked computer break-ins. Other victims included McDonald's Corp. and the online security department for Exodus Communications Inc., now part of London-based Cable & Wireless plc.

"The guy was playing a game of 'gotcha.' He wanted to prove that even firms that specialize in security can be hacked," said Mark Rasch, chief security counsel for Solutionary Inc. and a former Justice Department cybercrime prosecutor. "It's like someone who robs banks to prove that banks can be robbed."

Brian Martin, who ran the Attrition site with Dyson and others, said Fluffi Bunni quickly generated a fearsome reputation across the underground because of the group's choice of targets. Martin determined that a hacker broke into another user's computer, allowing him to assume that person's digital identity and briefly take over the Attrition site with a Fluffi Bunni message.

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For further information regarding the survivor's reception and lap, contact survivor chairperson Judy La Patka at (310) 579-7100 or judylapatka@aol.com Tracey Mayer at the American Cancer Society (310) 348-0356 option 3/ext. 246 or tracey.mayer@cancer.org.

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INTERNATIONAL

Iraqis in custody: Rashid and Basra's former governor

By The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Two Iraqis on the U.S.-led coalition's 55 most-wanted list — a weapons expert nicknamed the "Missile Man" and a provincial governor — have surrendered, the U.S. military and Iraqi opposition sources said Tuesday.

Former oil minister Amer Mohammed Rashid, who earned his moniker because he was Saddam Hussein's point-man on weapons delivery systems, turned himself in Monday and was in coalition custody, the U.S. Central Command said.

Walid Hamed Tawfiq al-Tikriti, the former governor of Iraq's southern Basra province and a member of Saddam's clan, surrendered to the opposition Iraqi National Congress in Baghdad, a spokesman for the group said.

Rashid is the 14th man on the most-wanted list to be captured and No. 47 on the list. He was denominated as the six of spades in the deck of cards issued to coalition forces

to help identify wanted Iraqi officials.

Central Command, in Qatar, could not confirm the surrender of Tawfiq al-Tikriti, No. 44 on the list and designated the eight of clubs.

Rashid, also a former Iraqi army general, was a member of the regime's Military Industrialization Organization, the group responsible for producing all of the country's most lethal weapons.

Others members included Lt. Gen. Hossam Mohammed Amin, Iraq's chief liaison with U.N. weapons inspectors, and Amir al-Saadi, Saddam's senior weapons adviser, both of whom are also in custody.

His wife is Dr. Rihab Taha, a microbiologist known as "Dr. Germ" who was in charge of the secret Iraqi facility that weaponized anthrax, botulinum toxin and aflatoxin. She is also sought by the United States — though not on the most-wanted list — and there was no word on her whereabouts.

Capturing Rashid could be a boon for

U.S. disarmament specialists, who are searching for any chemical, biological or nuclear weapons in Iraq.

"He was a player," Richard Fairbanks, a Middle East expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Tuesday.

Chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix said earlier this month that Rashid and Taha would be among "the most interesting persons" for the Americans to question.

In addition, human rights organizations in 1999 called for Rashid's arrest for war crimes for the gassing of Kurdish villages in the late 1980s.

The groups, including human rights organizations from the United States, Turkey, Central Asia and Europe, alleged that as head of the Iraqi military industries Rashid worked closely with Ali

"Chemical Ali" Hassan Al Majid, who was believed killed in a missile strike on his home in Basra.

The brief Central Command statement from Camp As Sayliyah in Qatar spelled the general's name as Amir Rashid Muhammad al-Ubaydi, a shift from its traditional spelling by Iraq's news agency.

Rashid retired last year at 65, the news agency reported.

Tawfiq al-Tikriti was being interrogated Tuesday night by U.S. forces and Iraqi National Congress representatives, according to Haidar al-Moussawi, a London-based spokesman for the anti-Saddam group.

"They will decide in the field" when to hand him over to U.S. custody, al-Moussawi said.

Close to 100 oil workers, including Americans, taken hostage aboard oil platforms

BY GLENN MCKENZIE

Associated Press Writer

LAGOS, Nigeria — Striking Nigerian oil workers have seized 97 hostages, including 21 Americans, on several offshore oil rigs, officials said Tuesday. Some captives said they feared armed rescue attempts would end in disaster.

There were conflicting reports about whether the hostages had been threatened. One wrote an e-mail that said the hostage-takers warned they would blow up the rigs if attacked, but oil officials dismissed reports that any oil workers had been threatened and said the strikers appeared willing to give up.

The rigs, owned by Houston-based Transocean, were drilling wells on behalf of oil multinationals Royal/Dutch Shell and TotalFinaElf.

"Make no mistake of the danger we're in," one hostage said in an e-mail message read by Jake Molloy, general secretary of the Offshore Industry Liaison Committee, an Aberdeen, Scotland-based labor union which has members among the hostages. "If they have lost everything, they will make sure we lose everything. And that means our lives." Western diplomats said the hostages included 21 Americans and 35 Britons.

A British hostage told his wife early Tuesday that the hostage-takers were threatening to blow up the rigs if anyone tried to storm them, Molloy said.

The woman, whom Molloy declined to identify for safety reasons, however said her husband did not believe the strikers had explosives. Molloy did not know if the strikers had guns, although he said some hostages said their captors were armed with the installations' firefighting axes.

Nigeria is one of the world's largest oil exporters and the fifth largest producer of U.S. oil imports. Sabotage and hostage takings by community activists, labor groups and thugs are relatively common in the Niger Delta, where nearly all of Nigeria's oil is drilled. Hostages rarely are harmed.

About 100 hostage takers, who work on the rigs, have been holding the workers since April 19. But it was not immediately clear why the hostage-takings were not

announced until Tuesday.

Transocean announced April 22 that a strike had begun but did not mention captive workers. Other oil companies in the past have preferred to deal with such crises out of the glare of media coverage.

The strikers were protesting a decision by Transocean to use boats instead of helicopters to ferry them from company rigs about 25 miles offshore the restive Niger Delta state of Rivers, said Joseph Akinlaja, secretary-general of Nigeria's largest oil workers' union.

The strikers also were angered by company threats to discipline five union members, Akinlaja said, adding his union did not support their strike.

Transocean chief executive officer Robert L. Long described the negotiations as "delicate," and expressed hopes the standoff would be peacefully resolved "within a week." He dismissed reports that any expatriates had been threatened.

"Right now the situation is very calm on all the rigs," Long said in a conference call with investors and journalists. "I know there has been some rumors of threats of violence ... but we've not had any threats of violence."

Thirty-four people were allowed to leave two rigs by boat Monday, Transocean spokesman Guy Cantwell said. Two were Transocean employees, while the others work for third-party service companies.

He could not confirm the nationalities of those who left. It was also unclear whether 97 hostages were originally taken — or if that was the number still held after Monday's release. The rigs are about 25 miles off the West African nation's coastline.

Many of the strikers had signaled they would be willing to end their standoff but wanted assurances first they wouldn't lose their jobs, Molloy said.

Cantwell said the 100 striking workers were being served court injunctions. Molloy feared the court papers could be used to justify a security force attack on the facilities, although Cantwell said the company hoped to resolve the impasse peacefully.

Iraqi ire



Takuro Yabe/Associated Press

Angry local Iraqis shout and wave clenched fists at a U.S. soldier posted on guard Tuesday in Fallujah, west of Baghdad, following a shooting incident Monday night. U.S. Army soldiers opened fire on Iraqis at a demonstration after people in the crowd shot at them with automatic rifles, American soldiers said. The director of the local hospital said 13 people were killed and 75 injured.

Prime minister faces challenges



Ricardo Mazalan/Associated Press

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat speaks as new Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, right, listens during the confidence vote session of the Palestinian Legislative Council at his headquarters in the West Bank town of Ramallah on Tuesday. The Palestinian parliament approved Abbas, removing the last remaining obstacle for the launch of a U.S.-backed peace plan. But the historic event was followed within 12 hours by a suicide attack on a Tel Aviv bar that killed three people.

SPORTS



Lakers dominate Timberwolves with 120-90 victory

BY DAVE CAMPBELL

AP Sports Writer

MINNEAPOLIS — The Los Angeles Lakers snapped back to life, with everyone from Kobe Bryant to Derek Fisher to Robert Horry to Shaquille O'Neal showing championship form.

Bryant had 16 of his 32 points in the third quarter, O'Neal added 27 points, Fisher had 24 and Horry 12 Tuesday night

to put the Minnesota Timberwolves on the brink of elimination with a 120-90 victory.

The Lakers lead the series 3-2. Game 6 is Thursday in Los Angeles, with Game 7 — if it's necessary — back in Minneapolis on Saturday.

If the Lakers play this way again, it won't be necessary.

Stretching a 10-point halftime lead to 21 by the end of the third quarter and to 30 late in the fourth, the three-time defending

champions rediscovered their shooting touch and their offensive flow.

Fisher had five 3-pointers, and the Lakers — who were 12-for-23 from beyond the arc — shot 54 percent from the field. Horry, who missed his first 11 3-point attempts in this series, finally made a pair to help the Lakers overcome the loss of starting forward Rick Fox.

The blowout was a big disappointment for Kevin Garnett, the rest of the Timberwolves and their 20,098 fans.

Target Center, sold out for the first time this series, was roaring in the game's opening stages. It was nearly empty at the end.

Garnett had 25 points and 16 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who are now one loss away from a seventh straight first-round exit.

The Lakers are tough to beat when they get more than just a token contribution from players other than O'Neal or Bryant.

Fisher, who's had a streaky series, helped the Lakers get comfortable well before Bryant warmed up. He had all of his points in the first three quarters and finished 8-for-10 from the floor.

With the Lakers starting to suck the life out of the crowd, Bryant took over.

He drove baseline midway through the third, soared above traffic, used the rim as a shield and threw down a marvelous one-handed reverse dunk that stunned everyone who saw it and put Los Angeles up 73-55.

Horry, who scored a total of just 18 points in the first four games, helped check a frustrated Garnett on defense.

As the Timberwolves took a timeout late in the third, Garnett — fearing a sub-

stitution — turned and screamed at the bench, "Don't get me! Don't get me!"

Rasho Nesterovic had 13 points and Kendall Gill 10 for the Timberwolves, who lost the defensive intensity they had in the last three games and committed 17 turnovers. The Lakers turned those miscues into 29 points.

With Fox's postseason over because of a torn tendon in his left foot suffered in Game 4, Minneapolis native Devean George had 12 points and eight rebounds in a starting role at small forward.

George picked up where Fox left off defensively on Wally Szczerbiak, who had twice as many turnovers (four) in the first half as attempted shots.

Szczerbiak finished with a series-low nine points on 3-for-7 shooting and got a few boos when he came out near the end of the game.

With Horry also in the starting five, the Lakers — who shot below 40 percent in each of the past three games — had more of an offensive-minded group.

Brian Shaw picked on Szczerbiak some, too, stealing the ball from him on a trap near midcourt and getting an easy layup on the other end that gave Los Angeles a 35-26 lead early in the second.

Troy Hudson, who scored 14 points on 5-for-11 shooting in the first half, was again silent late.

Hudson buried back-to-back 3-pointers during a 14-4 Wolves run that gave them a brief lead, 40-39 in the second quarter, but he was scoreless in the second half after coming up empty in the fourth quarter of Game 4.

Fred Couples rediscovers the fruits of his labor

BY DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

Fred Couples rediscovered his place in golf.

The search started almost three months ago on the practice range at Pebble Beach, when he beat balls for six hours with Butch Harmon at his side.

"He's never done that in his life," Harmon said.

It ended late Sunday afternoon at the Houston Open when Couples was flawless over the final five holes and wound up with a four-stroke victory, his first on the PGA Tour in five years and 87 tournaments.

He raised his putter in triumph. He smiled to an adoring legion of fans. He slapped hands with Mark Calcavecchia as if they had just won the Shark Shootout.

What followed made it clear there was nothing silly about this victory.

The happy-go-lucky Couples was so overwhelmed that he broke down on national TV, tugged the visor over his eyes and walked away.

"I haven't won in five years. I haven't played really well in five years," Couples said. "I worked hard on my game, and it meshed. I have a lot of people to thank. That's what was going through my mind. Didn't get it out very well."

The message was never more clear.

Players in his age bracket (43) with far less ability have been winning their share of tournaments over the last five years.

Hal Sutton, who turned 45 on Monday, has won six times since 1998, including a Tour Championship and an 18-hole duel with Tiger Woods at The Players Championship.

Scott Hoch, 47, has won three times in the last three years. Mark O'Meara was 41 when he won two major championships. Bernard Langer, 45, qualified for his 10th Ryder Cup team and didn't lose a match at The Belfry.

"I have been practicing," Couples said. "I never really thought I'd win this quickly, but I thought I could win again if I practiced and played."

Couples was looking for the easy way out last year when he got behind a failed proposal to start a Major Champions Tour — eight events on classic courses for players between the ages of 37 and 55 who had won a major.

"If I play like I did last year and keep deteriorating, and the PGA Tour is tough," Couples said at the time, "there's nowhere for me to play golf."

The solution wasn't a gimmick tour with guaranteed money.

The secret has always been in the dirt.

"He hadn't worked hard," Harmon said. "He had been fooling himself."

A desperate Couples hooked up with

Harmon during the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Couples told him how terrible he had been swinging, and Harmon didn't believe it until they got to the practice range the next day.

Couples hit a few 9-irons.

"It's worse than you said," Harmon told him.

Harmon's time already is cut thin. He still works occasionally with Woods, and his clientele includes Calcavecchia, Darren Clarke, Adam Scott, Justin Leonard, Stewart Cink, Jose Maria Olazabal and Ben Crane.

His deal with Couples: You put in the time, I'll make the time.

Not only did they spend six hours on the range, Couples went to Carlsbad, Calif., during the Match Play Championship — even though he wasn't playing — and worked with Harmon at the TaylorMade test center.

"That's when I knew he was serious," Harmon said. "He's worked his tail off ever since."

They essentially shortened his swing, taking undue pressure off Couples' already sensitive back.

"What I had him visualize was to feel like he was coming over the top to hit a pull hook," Harmon said. "He had to get his arms in front of his body coming down."

His victory in Houston moved him to No. 29 in the world ranking, which assures him of returning to the U.S. Open and likely will get him into the World Golf Championships for the first time in three years.

"A lot of people think Freddie doesn't care," Harmon said. "I think he showed how much it meant to him. Very seldom do you see him that emotional."

As one of golf's most renowned swing gurus, Harmon gets his share of perks.

He has written several books and made just as many videos. He has endorsement deals with Titleist and Buick, a TV gig with Sky Sport in Britain. He operates golf schools in Las Vegas and the Bahamas.

What happened Sunday ranks among his greatest rewards.

Harmon already was emotionally spent from a funeral service for his mother-in-law over the weekend. He got home and turned on the TV in time to watch the final three holes of the Houston Open, and the brief interview that followed.

Couples started to thank his wife, Thais, and Harmon when his voice cracked and his lips quivered, and before long, tears were flowing from Houston to Las Vegas.

"I had tears in my eyes when he holed out," Harmon said. "Because I know how hard Freddie has worked."

The answer was there all along.

Florida collectibles company sues Shaquille O'Neal

By The Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — A sports collectibles company has sued Shaquille O'Neal, claiming he violated their contract by providing an illegible autograph and refusing to sign souvenirs.

Dreams Inc., based in Plantation, Fla., requested the return of hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash and stock, plus compensatory damages for lost profits and sales, court documents say.

The company filed suit in Broward Circuit Court against O'Neal and Mine O'Mine, which has the rights to O'Neal's name. The suit alleges that the Los Angeles Lakers' center violated his agreement to autograph a specified number of souvenirs and serve on the company's advisory board.

O'Neal and Mine O'Mine denied breach of contract, requesting the case be dismissed along with claims that specifically mention O'Neal because the contract was with Mine O'Mine, not him.

The defendants also filed a counterclaim against Dreams Inc. breached the contract. The counterclaim says the company failed to schedule signings or present items for O'Neal to sign after December 2001, and it says Dreams owes O'Neal hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Last week, Broward Circuit Judge Jeffrey F. Streitfeld ruled the case could go forward. Dreams' attorneys have requested a jury trial in the suit, which was filed last May.

"It's a very unique situation for the company," said Leonard K. Samuels, an

attorney for Dreams. "They have excellent relations with all of their athletes. It took major problems from Shaquille O'Neal and his people for us to file a lawsuit."

Dreams has contracts with hundreds of current and former athletes, including Dan Marino, Vince Carter and Pete Rose.

Benjamin Reid, an attorney representing O'Neal and Mine O'Mine, said he didn't want to comment because the lawsuit is pending.

As president of Mine O'Mine, O'Neal signed a three-year contract with Dreams in December 2000, court documents say.

The agreement called for the company to pay O'Neal \$1.85 million and 500,000 shares of Dreams stock — then worth about \$1 a share. In exchange, he would make three appearances for the company, provide his autograph on 15,000 pieces of merchandise — 5,000 a year — and serve as a member of the company's advisory board.

According to the suit, O'Neal owed the company 1,800 autographed pieces after the first year of the agreement. Some of those he did autograph were illegible because he rushed the signature, the suit says.

O'Neal canceled signings, refused to promote the company and violated exclusivity provisions by signing memorabilia for others, the suit says. It says he also failed to provide promised Shaq-model shoes.

In a deposition, O'Neal said of Dreams that he "felt they were a good company." He said he didn't remember being told he would serve on the advisory board.

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 - 5 Optimal
 - 9 Suez sight
 - 11 Actor Sal
 - 12 Stand
 - 13 Church fixture
 - 14 Flight
 - 15 Friendly greeting
 - 17 Things to mind
 - 19 Loving sound
 - 20 Winter weather
 - 21 Decimal base
 - 22 Bowl
 - 24 That lady
 - 26 Splinter groups
 - 29 Jazz instrument
 - 30 Gateway city
 - 32 Casino worker
 - 34 Stroke
 - 35 Slipup
 - 36 Last letter
 - 38 Wise words
 - 39 Frasier's brother
 - 40 Noted seamstress
 - 41 Snack
- DOWN**
- 1 Sell for a big markup
 - 2 Pester
 - 3 Beast
 - 4 Used to be
 - 5 Cheat
 - 6 Lure
 - 7 Fall, for one
 - 8 Trunk
 - 10 Commander
 - 11 The Red Planet
 - 16 Monsa offerings
 - 18 Close
 - 21 Snack in a shell
 - 23 Mr. Mandela
 - 24 Bob, for one
 - 25 Crowd scene
 - 27 Elvis' birthplace
 - 28 Long attacks
 - 29 Harpoon
 - 30 Aching
 - 31 Secret supply
 - 33 Marshes
 - 37 Hr. part

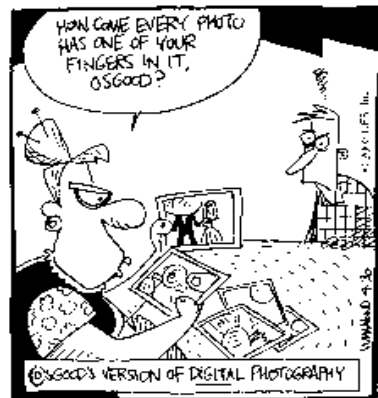


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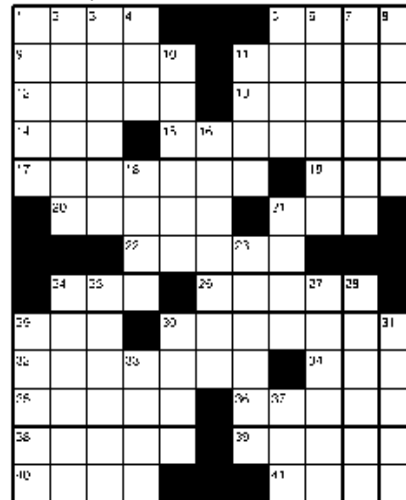
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HOLLYWOOD Starting @ \$1025.00 to \$1050.00 Contemporary 1bdm/1ba. Pet ok, living room, new carpet & paint. Jacuzzi, gated underground parking. Upper & lower units available, only some have fireplaces!

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HOLLYWOOD Starting @ \$1275.00 - \$1350.00. Contemporary 2bdm/2ba, pet ok, living room, new carpet & paint, jacuzzi, gated underground parking. Upper and lower units available, only some have fireplaces!

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LOS FELIZ \$1075.00 2+2. Courtyard sundeck, backyard w/lots of trees, exclusive professional building, A/C, carpets, D/W, fridge, stove, sauna, no eviction, bad credit OK.

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MAR VISTA \$595 Bachelor w/new paint, carpet and blinds. Walk in closet. Excellent location, close to freeway. 1 year lease, no pets, no smoking. (310)396-4443 ext.102.

Elly Nesis Company, Inc.
www.ellynesis.com

SANTA MONICA \$1150.00 2bdm/1ba. Upper, sunny, balcony, parking, near SMC. 2530 Kansas Ave. #C (310)450-3314

For Rent

MARINA DEL Rey Peninsula \$2,150.00 3bdm/2ba w/remodeled kitchen w/new appliances, w/d hookups, large private patio, new carpet, new vinyl, new paint and private 2 car garage. Fireplace, huge living room. 4 blocks to beach. 1 year lease, no pets, no smoking. (310)396-4443 ext.102

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MDR ADJACENT \$1375 2+2, gated building with gated, subterranean parking, AC, newer building w/ courtyard area, quiet neighborhood, laundry room, parking, 1 year lease, no pets, (310)578-9729

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MDR PENINSULA \$2150.00 2bdm/2ba w/2 car parking. Great location. 1 building from beach. Private rooftop patio w/ocean view. 1 year lease. Will consider small pet w/extra deposit. (310)396-4443 ext.102.

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MID-WILSHIRE \$675.00 Charming, 1bdm/1ba. Laundry facilities on premises. Gas range, hardwood, garbage disposal, stove, cable television.

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N. HOLLYWOOD \$985.00 2bdm/1ba, new carpet, new appliances, all new, gated parking, A/C, balcony, stove, large closets, pool, no pets, walk to shops.

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For Rent

PALMS \$925.00 2bdm/2ba Upper unit, beautiful tree lined street, quiet building, mint condition, light, carpet, covered parking.

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PASADENA \$700.00 Tranquil 1bdm/1ba, new carpet and kitchen flooring, laundry facilities on premises, air conditioning, balcony, carpets, refrig., stove.

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Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA \$1550.00 N. of Wilshire. Contemporary, spacious, 2bdm/2ba, stove, dishwasher, parking, pet OK, W/D in unit, mini-blinds, fridge.

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SANTA MONICA \$2650.00 Spacious 3 Bdrm/3 full bath. Top floor, high ceilings, sunny, bright, double patio, views of Santa Monica Mountains. Quiet neighborhood, North of Wilshire. Security parking available. (310)451-2178

SANTA MONICA \$575.00 Bachelor, new carpet, laundry, utilities incld.

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SANTA MONICA \$650.00 Immaculate Unit, new carpet, original ceramic tile in kitchen and bath separate kitchen, laundry, facility, refrigerator, stove, street parking pets OK.

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SANTA MONICA \$763.00 Studio, r/s, laundry, great location.

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Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA \$895 1bdm/1ba, appliances, no pets, gas paid. 2535 Kansas Ave. #211, Santa Monica, CA. Manager in #101.

SANTA MONICA \$895.00 1+1, charming, r/s, part util incld.

(310)395-7368
Westside Rentals



CLASSIFIEDS

For Rent

SANTA MONICA \$895.00
1+1, r/s, laundry, gated parking.

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SANTA MONICA CANYO
\$1700 Large single w/ocean
views, 1 block from beach, just
renovated, full kitchen, walk-in-
closet, bathroom. Parking & uti-
lities incld. (310)714-1609

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STUDIO CITY \$850.00 Con-
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ok, D/W, gorgeous building,
gated parking, patio, A/C, tiled
kitchen, new linoleum bath.

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VALLEY VILLAGE \$750.00
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tage type. Appliances, hard-
wood floors, bright. 2236 Pen-
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For Rent

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pool, gated parking, new paint,
new carpet, quiet neighbor-
hood, laundry room. 1 year
lease, no pets. (310)396-4443
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VENICE BEACH \$1150.00
Charming 1bdrm w/large balco-
ny. Great location, 1 block to
beach. New paint and carpet. 1
year lease, no pets. (310)396-
4443 x102.

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VENICE BEACH \$1995.00
1BDR/1BA + loft and private 2
car garage. Stunning ocean
view, new carpet, paint and
stove. 1 property from the
beach. 1 year lease, no pets.

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VENICE BEACH \$2,400.00
Residential loft, completely re-
novated. 1bdrm/2ba, oak wood
floors, high ceilings, private
rooftop patio, balcony, 2 car
parking, lots of windows, lots of
storage. Great looking unit. Ask
about lease incentives. 1 year
lease, no pets, no smoking.
(310)466-7896.

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VENICE BEACH \$695.00 Very
nice, studio w/fresh paint & car-
pet. 1/2 block from beach. First
showing is 4-29-03 at 1:00pm. 1
year lease, no pets. (310)396-
4437

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VENICE BEACH \$925.00.
Two singles availa-
ble in historic red brick building
on the beach. One unit is ocean
front. Recently remodeled
w/new kitchen and bathroom,
exposed brick walls, new carpet
and paint. 1 year lease, no pets,
no smoking. (310)450-1934

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For Rent

VENICE BEACH Single \$850
Great location, very sunny, 1
block from beach, 1 year lease,
no pets. (310)396-4443

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W. HOLLYWOOD \$1450.00
Townhouse 2bdrm/1.5ba. Front
unit, new paint, new blinds, lots
of kitchen cabinets. Off street
parking, laundry facilities on
premises, dishwasher, hard-
wood floors, refrigerator, stove.

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WeHo \$750.00 Character,
gas stove, fridge, carport, laun-
dry, secure entry, new carpet
new linoleum floors. Close to
the Grove.

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WeHo \$795.00 Spanish
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fridge, crown moldings, w/c, cat,
carpet.

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York style brick building hard-
wood floors, pet ok, stove, ceil-
ing fan, crown molding. Close to
shops and restaurants. Parking
available.

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of Wilshire Blvd., util., inc.,
amenities include Street park-
ing, Indry facilities, crpts, fur-
nished, refrig., stv, storage.

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WLA \$875 Furnished single.
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w/patio and pool. Hardwood
floors, new carpet, bright and
airy, kitchen has been recently
upgraded, 2 car garage. On a
quiet residential street. One
year lease, no smoking, no
pets. (310)396-4443 X102

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House, 2+1, hardwood floors,
w/d, quiet prkn.

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SANTA MONICA \$695.00
Triplex, walk to beach, yard.

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Westside Rentals

SANTA MONICA \$780.00
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utilities incld.

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VENICE: \$2100 2+1 Bungalow.
Short walk to beach/MdR. Ap-
pliances, garage, gardener, NO
pets. Lease (626)284-5725

Roommates

MDR: LRG 2+2 to share. View
of Marina. All amenities. Secu-
rity parking, fireplace. N/P female
preferred. \$825.00+utilities.
Refs reg. (310)823-5925

SANTA MONICA \$450.00
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month, utilities incld.

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near SMC.

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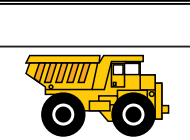
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SANTA MONICA °SCENE your guide to dining, entertainment and events

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2003

°EVENTS

ST JOSEPH'S AUCTION May 10, Sat., 5-11 p.m. Join Master of Ceremonies Stephen Collins, celebrities, community leaders, and other enthusiastic supporters for St. Joseph Center's "Building a New Tomorrow" Annual Dinner Dance and Auctions in the Crystal Ballroom of the Beverly Hills Hotel. Program features: cocktail reception, silent auction, awards, live auction, live music, and dancing. Proceeds support homeless and low-income men, women, and children on the Westside. Tickets: \$250/per person. (310) 396-6468 ext. 328.

ONGOING SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PEOPLE 55 AND OLDER. Current openings in, So, What Are You Going to Do With the Rest of your Life? Tuesdays, 10:00 to 11:30am. Center for Healthy Aging, 2125 Arizona Avenue. Sliding scale fee. Not drop-in groups. Phone interview required. Call Information and Referral. (310)576-2550.

SANTA MONICA PUBLIC LIBRARY presents Preschool Story Time, every Wednesday at 11:15am, 1343 Sixth Street. Stories for children between the ages of three and five who are ready to participate on their own. (310)458-8600

SENIOR SUPPERS - Discounted meals for people AGE 55 or older are served daily, from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., in the cafeteria at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, 1250 16th Street in Santa Monica. \$3.69 Info only: (310)319-4837.

FARMER'S MARKET every Wednesday, 9am to 2pm, Arizona between Second and Fourth Streets. Come and enjoy one of the largest and best farmer's markets in California!

FREE MEDITATION WORKSHOPS sponsored by Sahaja Yoga. Every Wednesday night at 7pm in the Community Room at the Wilshire Wild Oats, 500 Wilshire Blvd. At 5th St. Open to all. (310)395-6443.

°DINING

PATRICK'S ROADHOUSE - A fixture in Santa Monica Canyon for over 30 years, is now open for dinner Wednesday through Sunday (until 9pm) serving comfort food and a selection of low-carbohydrate baked goods, alongside the French toast and Boston Cream pie. Patrick's Roadhouse recently reopened after a fire that damaged the downstairs eating area in early December.

EL CHOLO - Famous for award-winning margaritas & green corn tamales. Enjoy our lively bar, comfy dining rooms or sunny patio for lunch and dinner daily. 1025 Wilshire Blvd., 310.889.1106

LIBRARY ALEHOUSE - A gathering place for great food, hand crafted beer and friendly service. Beautiful garden patio. Daily specials. 2911 Main St., 310.314.4855

THE LOBSTER - A legend redefined! A local favorite serving classic American seafood, specializing in live Maine Lobster. Open 7 days serving lunch & dinner. 1602 Ocean Ave., Reservations recommended. 310.458.9294

OMELETTE PARLOR - Best breakfast in L.A. This is where the locals go! 2732 Main St., 310.399.7892

PANINI GARDEN - "The Locals Favorite" for gourmet European breakfast, lunch & dinner. Featuring fresh crepe, panini grilled sandwiches and delightful salads. dine on our charming patio, or call for delivery. 2715

Main St., 310.399.9939.

THE SLICE - New York style pizzeria also serving pasta, salads, subs and wings. Voted best pizza in Los Angeles by AOL. Sit on our beautiful patio for great pizza and movie star sightings. 915 Wilshire Blvd, for fast delivery call 310.351.7542

WOLFGANG PUCK CAFE - Enjoy Wolfgang's favorite entrees, famous wood-fired pizzas, pastas, fresh salads, sandwiches, and of course, unforgettable desserts! Fun Happy Hour: 1323 Montana Ave., 310.393.0290

SONNY MCLEAN'S - A perfect Irish pub that attracts a variety of people. It's the hotspot to kick back, enjoy a beer and watch a ball game. Good Happy Hour specials. 2615 Wilshire Blvd., 310.828.9839.

ORIGINAL THAI DISHES - Best Thai food in Santa Monica! Family owned restaurant since 1980. A local favorite serving classic Pad Thai noodles, pineapple fried rice and seafood specialties. All dishes can be made vegetarian. 1910 Wilshire Blvd., 310.828.5634

EARTH, WIND & FLOUR - "Great Italian cooking. Just slightly west of Italy." This restaurant celebrates 22 years in the neighborhood for its friendliness and freshness. Pizza, pastas, salads, and more. Lunch and dinner specials and happy hour. 2222 Wilshire Blvd., 310.829.7829

ACADIE'S - Voila! Fresh from the south of France, Homemade Crepes have just arrived in Santa Monica! Located right off the 3rd St. Promenade, this authentic French storefront radiates charm and ambience with indoor seating and a quaint side patio for an outdoor experience. The menu offers a range of options to suit your individual mood. 213 Arizona Ave. (310)395-1120

MOVIE °GUIDE**LOEWS CINIPLEX BROADWAY CINEMA**

1441 Third St. at Broadway
Phone Booth (R) 12:00pm | 2:10pm | 4:20pm | 6:40pm | 9:00pm. A Mighty Wind (PG-13) 11:30am | 12:20pm | 1:10pm | 2:00pm | 2:50pm | 3:40pm | 4:30pm | 5:20pm | 6:10pm | 7:00pm | 7:50pm | 8:40pm | 9:30pm | 10:20pm.

MANN CRITERION

1313 Third St.
Bringing down the House (PG-13) 2:15pm | 7:50pm. Chasing Papi (PG) 12:15pm | 2:20pm | 4:40pm | 7:00pm | 9:15pm. A Man Apart (R) 11:35am | 5:05pm | 10:30pm. Malibu's Most Wanted (PG-13) 11:20am | 1:45pm | 4:15pm | 7:10pm | 9:40pm. The Real Cancun (R) 12:00pm | 2:30pm | 5:00pm | 7:30pm | 10:10pm. Better Luck Tomorrow (R) 11:40am | 2:10pm | 4:45pm | 7:20pm | 10:00pm. Confidence (R) 11:30am | 2:00pm | 4:30pm | 7:15pm | 9:50pm.

AMC THEATRE SM 7

1310 3rd Street
Anger Management (PG-13) 1:35pm | 4:15pm | 7:20pm | 10:00pm. Bulletproof Monk (PG-13) 2:00pm | 4:45pm | 7:40pm | 10:15pm. What a Girl Wants (PG) 1:25pm | 4:10pm | 7:00pm. The Pianist (R) 1:00pm | 4:00pm | 7:10pm | 10:15pm. Holes (PG) 1:50pm | 4:30pm | 7:15pm | 9:50pm. Identity (R) 1:05pm | 3:15pm | 5:30pm | 7:50pm | 9:30pm | 10:05pm. It Runs In The Family (PG-13) 1:15pm | 4:20pm | 7:25pm | 10:00pm.

LANDMARK NU-WILSHIRE

1314 Wilshire Blvd.
Laurel Canyon (R) 4:45pm | 7:15pm | 9:45pm. The Good Thief (R) 4:30pm | 7:00pm | 9:30pm.

LAEMMIE MONICA

1332 2nd St.
Bend It Like Beckham (PG-13) 12:00pm | 2:35pm | 5:10pm | 7:45pm | 10:20pm. Assassination Tango (R) 1:30pm | 4:15pm | 7:00pm | 9:45pm. City of Ghosts (R) 1:45pm | 4:30pm | 7:15pm | 10:00pm.



BACK PAGE



Welcome to Veggieburg

By The Associated Press

HAMBURG, Pa. — An animal rights group says it will donate \$15,000 worth of vegetarian patties to area schools if officials change the borough's name to Veggieburg.

But town officials say they're not biting.

"I don't care if they offer us \$1 million worth of veggie patties or \$2 million in cash, I don't think anyone in the community would want to sell their heritage," said Mayor Roy C. DelRosario.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals says the name Hamburg conjures up images of slaughtered cows and unhealthy meals.

The offer mirrors one PETA made this week to Hamburg, N.Y. Officials in the Buffalo suburb, which says it is the birthplace of the hamburger, have turned down the offer.

"This campaign is a bit tongue-in-cheek because we don't expect anybody to accept, but the offer is serious," PETA spokesman Joe Haptas said.

Hamburg was incorporated in 1837. Town officials said the borough is named after Hamburg, Germany. The mayor said the idea that people associate the borough with animal abuse is silly.

"We don't have slaughterhouses in town and we don't even have any animal farms," DelRosario said. "Our name is connected to our German history, not hamburgers."

Marriage on the road

By The Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa — An old-fashioned wedding it was not just a couple of bike enthusiasts taking their marriage vows in cycling gear and helmets.

Andrea Mugge rode on a tandem bike with her father down a pedestrian path on the University of Iowa campus. She met the groom, Lee Venteicher, under an arch made of bicycle tires.

"I've never been conventional," Mugge said. "I can't stand wearing dresses, so this was perfect."

Along with vows to be lovers, companions and friends, the couple promised to be each other's "water carrier" and "healer of road rash."

Rick Paulos, who has been a bicycle race official for 23 years, performed the ceremony during the 26th Annual Old Capitol Criterium & Chris Lillig Memorial Cup on Sunday. The event included eight bicycle races.

Mugge 26, a medical student at the university, participated in the Women's Open race before the ceremony and Venteicher raced in the Pro 1 & 2 race between the ceremony and reception.

During their reception at a pizza parlor, Mugge, and Venteicher, 26, a graduate student in philosophy, raised glasses of Gatorade to toast their union.

"This isn't one of your traditional weddings," Mugge said.

Later, alligator

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — New Yorkers enjoying an afternoon of sun and relaxation in the park found an unlikely companion — a 4-foot-long alligator.

Police took an emergency call from people who had seen the alligator strolling through a park in the New York borough of Queens on Monday. Police and city park rangers captured the animal with a noose and took it to a reptile specialist.

No one was injured by the reptile, which was captured peacefully, police said. Police didn't know if the animal was a pet or had been living in a pond in the park.

In June 2001, a 2-foot-long baby spectacled caiman, a member of the crocodile family, was captured in Central Park by an alligator wrestler from Florida and his wife.

City park officials said then that the Central Park reptile probably was a pet somebody dumped in the Harlem Meer after it got too big. The same thing happened four years earlier, when a pet alligator outgrew its owner's bathtub and was dumped in Kissena Lake in Queens.

Ring returns

By The Associated Press

ISLE OF PALMS, S.C. — A Colorado woman's \$7,000 ring she lost at the beach has been returned. And now she hopes for an opportunity to say thank you.

Toni Curran, 49, of Littleton, Colo., was visiting a friend when she went to the beach. She took off all her rings, including the one her husband gave her for their 16th anniversary, and left them on a beach chair. When she returned, the ring was gone.

"I was just sick. My husband and I both cried. I felt like someone had died," Curran, who filed a report with city police, said last week.

A few days later, the ring was returned to the police department wrapped in a letter written in green pencil in what appeared to be the penmanship of a child. The envelope had no return address, but the person signed his name "Tommy Smith."

He wrote he found the ring and gave it to his mother as a present.

"I am sorry for what I done was wrong," he said in the letter. "Mom says to ask you to help find the lady who lost her wedding ring... She must be really sad. I lost my ball one time and I feel bad."

Curran now hopes to find the person's identity and give them a reward.

"No-nonsense spot where the A-list goes to eat in peace."

-Vanity Fair, April 2002



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