

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

7 16 20 44 45
Meganumber: 18
Jackpot: \$58 Million

FANTASY 5

7 11 19 34 35

DAILY 3

Daytime: 8 1 3
Evening: 0 7 2

DAILY DERBY

1st: 06 Whirl Win
2nd: 05 California Classic
3rd: 10 Solid Gold
RACE TIME: 1:43.16

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

A jury in Nacogdoches, Texas, convicted Jerry Don Hartless in January of killing his former best friend, Billy Bob Wallace, during a group drinking bout one night along the Angelina River. According to testimony, Hartless believed that Wallace had stolen his boat motor but couldn't prove it. Then, that night, the group discussed a recent Jerry Springer show featuring a black man claiming to be a member of the Ku Klux Klan, and the alcohol-fueled Hartless insinuated that Wallace's girlfriend, who was there, craved sex with black men. (All the drinking group were white.) When Wallace objected, Hartless shot him. A witness to the shooting was Wallace's adult son, Wild Bill Wallace (which is his actual birth name).

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 126th day of 2005.
There are 239 days left in the year.

On May 6, 1937, the hydrogen-filled German dirigible "Hindenburg" burned and crashed in Lakehurst, N.J., killing 35 of the 97 people on board and a Navy crewman on the ground.
In 1996, the body of former CIA director William E. Colby was found washed up on a riverbank in southern Maryland, eight days after he'd disappeared.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

"Give me the luxuries of life and I will willingly do without the necessities."

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT
AMERICAN ARCHITECT (1869-1959)

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Taking the fifth



Fabian Lewkowicz/Special to the Daily Press

An Incan dancer performs a tribal dance at Santa Monica College's Cinco de Mayo Festival on Thursday.

Escaped inmate was considered 'low risk'

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN LA — The man suspected of kidnapping a Santa Monica woman twice last year remains at large after he escaped police custody on Tuesday.

Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputies are looking for Alfonzo Fitzgerald Taylor, 41, who walked away from the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center the day before his jury trial was set to begin on charges of receiving stolen property and unlawful driving or taking of a vehicle.



ALFONZO
FITZGERALD
TAYLOR

Taylor allegedly stole from and threatened an elderly woman who lives in the 1000 block of Bay Street with a syringe and screwdriver. He also allegedly threatened to burn down her house.

Taylor also was awaiting trial on seven felony counts relating to two separate kidnappings of a Sunset Park woman last fall. On two occasions — Oct. 18 and Nov. 4 —

Taylor appeared in court on Tuesday for a pre-trial conference for a jury trial that was set to begin on Wednesday for allegedly stealing a car in Las Vegas and resisting a police officer, among other charges.

Sheriff Lee Baca said employee slip-ups allowed Taylor to slip away from the criminal courts building.

Despite that Taylor had pending felony charges, and that he has attempted to escape custody before, the sheriff's department

See **ESCAPE**, page 5

Woman killed by Big Blue Bus is identified

By Daily Press staff

The woman killed after being run over by a Big Blue Bus a week ago has been identified.

Maria Carrera, 47, of Los Angeles, died Friday, April 29, of trauma as a result of the accident. Apparently, the bus' right rear wheel crushed Carrera as she attempted to cross Ocean Avenue

on foot.

At about 7:55 a.m. on April 29, the bus was driving westbound on Pico Boulevard and had stopped for a red light at Ocean Avenue. When the traffic signal for westbound traffic turned green, the bus waited for a pedestrian to cross Ocean Avenue to the west. After that pedestrian had crossed, the bus made a right turn and struck Carrera, also

attempting to cross Ocean Avenue.

Carrera was transported to a UCLA-Westwood Medical Center, where she later died. The driver was released at the scene and is currently taking time off, according to Big Blue Bus spokesman Joe Sticher. The bus company isn't releasing the name of the driver because the investigation is ongoing.

Officials keep eye on city planners

BY RYAN HYATT
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Elected officials reviewing Santa Monica's Civic Center plan are seeing to it promises are kept to the public for open space, affordable housing and moderate-sized buildings during the design process.

The Civic Center working group met on Tuesday to discuss the Civic Center specific plan, which in coming years, will shape the future of Santa Monica's government complex and some nearby mixed-use facilities. Topics of discussion included Second Street alignment, the appropriate placement and size of city service buildings, and the proportion and heights of housing units to be located along Ocean Avenue.

The Civic Center working group is being advised by Roma Designs, a San Francisco-based consultant assigned by the city to help with the plan, which will ultimately

See **CIVIC CENTER**, page 4



File Photo

Elected officials are keeping a wary eye on Civic Center site planners, ensuring promises to the public are kept.

Jacquie Banks

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Santa Monica Daily Press



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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Sometimes you have to repeat conversations, actions or decisions. At the moment, consider that you will have to repeat what you do today. You also might not want to get caught up in the middle of a discussion. Tonight: Do only what you want.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★ Slow down and say very little. Your ability to read between the lines could impact your decisions. A partner will help you out if you ask. Let this person take the lead. Know when to cut out and take some time off. Tonight: You get a second wind.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Follow through on meetings. Network to your heart's content. Nothing is carved in stone. You will discover that jovial chatter and laughter surround you. Don't make major decisions just yet. Tonight: Do your Friday night thing.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ Take into consideration that others might not be in the same head space as you. As a result, you could wind up finishing off what someone else leaves. Your follow-through, though an excellent quality, might not be all that is needed. Tonight: Where your friends are.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Take a broad view of what happens today. You still might not be able to read between the lines of a situation. Understand what needs to happen in order to loosen things up. Realize that often you don't have all the answers. Tonight: Expect to be out late.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Work with a family member or close associate. You might want to check out different investment strategies. Understand your limits with money-related matters. Know when to jump ship, but don't do so today. Tonight: Listen to great music.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Others dominate, and you see another side of people. Though you might not want to act or react to what goes down, you'll gain a new perspective. Review others' mandates carefully. You don't have all the answers. Tonight: Go along with others' requests.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Clear out as much of your to-do list as possible. You could be overwhelmed by what is going on with a money matter. Clearly, what you thought was happening isn't. Don't get upset. You will handle the situation later. Tonight: Go along with another's plans.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You have a lot more energy than many around you. Your ability to detach and not get plugged in makes a big difference. Visualize much more of what you desire, making this process the first step to what you want. Tonight: Out in the middle of the action.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Get down to basics. You will want to listen more often to a family member. He or she helps you get out of the doldrums and see situations more clearly. Finish up any projects or errands by late afternoon. Tonight: Let the kid in you out again.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Talk and get feedback, especially if you have a key project in mind. Not everything will work out as you think right now. Prioritize where you want to put your attention. A lot happens quickly. Tonight: Enjoy a quiet evening.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ Handle your finances before they handle you. You might want to be more cautious about spending. You don't have a preview of the near future. Remember, there are always rainy days. Prepare and think ahead. Tonight: Out and about.



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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Learn from the master

By Daily Press staff

Interested in mastering your voice?

Learn from the master: Arthur Lessac, one of the world’s foremost teachers of voice, speech, singing and movement, will give a master class at 7 p.m., Thursday, May 12 at the Hangar Stage, located at SMC’s Airport Campus, 2800 Airport Ave. Master classes are free and open to the public, and seating is on a first-arrival basis.

“The Use and Training of the Human Voice” is the fourth in the new Master Class Series sponsored by SMC’s theatre arts department and the SMC Associates, a private organization that funds speakers and special programs on campus.

Lessac is the author of such books as “The Use and Training of the Human Voice: A Bio Dynamic Approach to Vocal Life” and “Body Wisdom: The Use and Training of the Human Body.” For information, call (310) 434-4319.

Scholarly achievement at Crossroads

By Daily Press staff

Micah Levin, a graduating senior at Crossroads High School, is a semifinalist in the 2005 Presidential Scholars Program.

Levin is one of among approximately 550 semifinalists, selected from more than 2,700 candidates on the basis of superior achievements, leadership qualities, personal character, and involvement in community and school activities.

Final selection of the scholars will be made by the Commission on Presidential Scholars, a group appointed by the president. The winner will be announced this month. The commission will select one male and one female student from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and U.S. students living abroad.

Scholars will be invited to Washington, D.C. in June to receive the Presidential Scholars medallion at a recognition ceremony and to participate in various activities and events held in their honor.

The semifinalists were selected as candidates for their exceptional performance on the SAT or ACT assessment, as well as a review of their student essays, self-assessments, description of activities, school recommendations and school transcripts.

Make hearts beat

By Daily Press staff

Now is your chance to learn how to save a life. This month, Dr. Bernie Harris will be hosting a Red Cross approved CPR training class. The class and CPR certificate are free of charge. All those ages 16 and up are invited to attend. The class will be held at the Santa Monica Airport.

To find out more and make reservations, call (310) 393-7758.

A meal for those who feed many

By Daily Press staff

Hundreds of volunteers will be honored over breakfast for delivering 150,000 meals to area homes in the past year.

Meals on Wheels’ 400 volunteers will be fed breakfast at the Sheraton Delfina Hotel. Speakers at the breakfast will include Santa Monica City Council member Ken Genser, Santa Monica Police Chief James Butts, Jr. and Lauralee Asch from the SMPD’s community relations.

Meals on Wheels West has been in the business of delivering meals to people in Santa Monica, Malibu, Pacific Palisades and Topanga who are unable to leave their homes since 1974. Meals on Wheels West is dedicated to nourishing the lives of the homebound and other people in need by delivering services that promote independent living.

The breakfast will take place Monday, May 9, from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. The Sheraton Delfina Hotel is located at 530 W. Pico Blvd. For information, call (310) 394-7558 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



SURF REPORT

Afternoon onshores are expected to reach 8-12 mph, and then the weekend sees a wee bit stronger onshore flow, but without the southerly element.

Friday and on into Saturday is when our next SW swell is due. Friday will likely only see waist-high surf from this system as it builds along the coast, but then size increases on Saturday. Note that conditions are quite questionable on Friday as we recuperate from this passing storm.

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

**Today the
water is:**

61°

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	10:02	-0.4	9:27	3.1	1:48	5.1	5:43	3.5
SUNDAY	11:10	-0.4	11:20	2.6	3:24	4.7	6:23	4.0
MONDAY	N/A	N/A	12:05	-0.3	4:57	4.6	6:55	4.4
TUESDAY	12:32	1.8	12:49	-0.1	6:14	4.6	7:25	4.9
WEDNESDAY	1:28	1.1	1:28	0.1	7:17	4.5	7:54	5.4
THURSDAY	2:15	0.4	2:02	0.5	8:12	4.4	8:22	5.8
FRIDAY	2:40	0.6	2:32	0.8	8:40	4.7	8:42	5.4

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The Q Line

A national survey conducted last week asked Americans what they would discuss with President George W. Bush if they had 15 minutes to talk to him. The top issue was Iraq, followed by Social Security and health care.

This week, Q-Line asks, “**If you had 15 minutes with President Bush, what**

would you ask him, say to him and discuss with him?”

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

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Group looks to keep Civic Center on track

CIVIC CENTER, from page 1

mately be brought before the City Council for final approval.

The plan focuses on the area from Pico Boulevard north to Colorado Avenue, and from Ocean Avenue east to Fourth Street. While City Hall, the County Courthouse, Civic Center, the new RAND Corp. building and some existing structures along Ocean Avenue are to remain put, Main Street will eventually cut northwest where it intersects with Olympic Drive and connect to Second Street at Colorado Avenue.

In order to make this happen, a new, stronger bridge will be built across the Santa Monica Freeway, and the old Main Street bridge will remain as a pedestrian/bike path connecting some traffic toward the Third Street Promenade, according to design schemes. In addition, the old RAND building, adjacent to City Hall, will be demolished in the interests of achieving several acres of open space and views of the ocean.

Civic Center working groups members — comprised of City Councilmen and boards and commission members — agreed to the Second Street re-alignment on the conditions that a new bridge over the freeway was necessary, the trapezoidal curvature was aesthetically pleasing and more space was opened up in front of City Hall.

"Not all of London is at right angles, and it is one of the most amazing cities, architecturally speaking," said Kevin

McKeown, a Civic Center working group member, advocating that cutting Main Street at an angle would not necessarily have a displeasing effect.

Boris Dramov, leading the project for Roma, said that in order to provide City Hall with the additional 60,000 square feet of office space the city has requested, he recommended the placement of two new city service buildings in the Civic Center site. One would be a 35,000-square foot facility directly in front of City Hall, occupying some of the space of the old RAND building site. The other would be a 25,000-square foot building immediately northwest of City Hall.

Some members of the Civic Center working group said they were dismayed by the prospect of a city service building being placed in front of City Hall, since it would likely detract from the ocean view and park space planners hoped the new site would entail.

However, McKeown acknowledged that additional space for city staff was not only necessary, but would free up taxpayer money going towards rent to pay for city office space in Santa Monica, since the land for the proposed city service building site is owned by the city.

The Civic Center working group agreed to continue with plans for the 35,000-square foot building site, but urged designers to maximize use of the smaller and larger city services site to minimize the obstruction of views.

"We have been doing art here for a hundred years, and we want to still keep doing it here, but the real estate prices and dot.com boom have made it difficult for artists to find affordable space to live and work."

GREG SPOTTS

Civic Center working group member

The Civic Center working group members contested the height requirements for three housing sites to be located in the Civic Center's Village District, adjacent to the new RAND Corp. building along Ocean Avenue and part of Olympic.

Appropriate height limits for the site varied in the discussion. Group members discussed impacts to development and aesthetic potential for buildings between 56, 86 and 120 feet.

Group members decided to require the lowest height — 56 feet — for a majority of the buildings, while allowing buildings to be slightly higher than that near existing taller buildings, such as the Viceroy Hotel on Ocean Avenue, which was said to be 85 to 90 feet.

Group members urged the developers to be more creative in their approach to the housing units, asking they provide a maximum of 325 units, as per the plan, within the 56-foot limit.

While wanting to minimize the building heights for optimum views, some group members also wanted assurances from developers that they were aware there were to be an appropriate number of affordable family housing units and affordable living work areas for artists, both of which have also been requested in the Civic Center plan.

Civic Center working group member Greg Spotts emphasized the need for affordable housing and affordable living and working areas for artists, which are supposed to be addressed in the plan as the design scheme unfolds.

"We have been doing art here for a hundred years, and we want to still keep doing it here, but the real estate prices and dot.com boom have made it difficult for artists to find affordable space to live and work (in Santa Monica)," Spotts said. "I feel the time has come to take up this issue."



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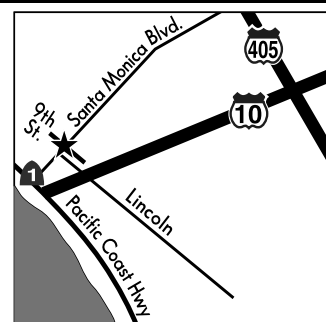
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LOCAL

Series of errors being blamed for allowing inmate to escape

ESCAPE, from page 1

had classified him as a low-risk security inmate at the Northern County Correctional Facility in Santa Clarita.

Taylor's classification allowed him to have "trustee" or "worker" status, which gave him more privileges to move around while in custody, said LA County Sheriff's spokesman Steve Whitmore.

"That was a mistake we made at the front end, but there was more than one mistake," he said. "Not only because he was a kidnapping suspect, but he previously tried to escape state prison."

Taylor — who is black, and is described as six feet, four inches tall, 215 pounds and has black hair and brown eyes — apparently had access to a room in the courthouse that stores prison-issued jumpsuits. Taylor appeared in the courtroom on Tuesday wearing a green jumpsuit — which indicates he was an inmate. He then apparently switched into a white jumpsuit, which signifies a released inmate.

"Then he walked out a back door," Whitmore said.

Authorities discovered Taylor missing at about 6 a.m. on Wednesday when he wasn't accounted for at the correctional facility, where he had been in custody awaiting his fate.

Sheriff's deputies failed to notice that Taylor was missing when he was supposed to board the bus to be transported back to the correctional facility. Inmates are scanned and counted each time they are transported to and from the courthouse.

"We are investigating exactly why he wasn't found missing at the original count," Whitmore said, adding a panel has convened to conduct an independent review of the incident. "It will come out exactly what happened

and we will fix it."

The Office of Independent Review is a group comprised of six civil rights attorneys that handles investigations for the sheriff department's internal affairs, Whitmore said.

"They are involved in this knee deep," Whitmore said.

Taylor, in February, was charged with one count of kidnapping to commit another crime; two counts of first-degree burglary; two counts of first-degree residential robbery and two counts of making criminal threats in relation to the kidnapping of the Sunset Park woman.

Taylor also faces one count of unlawful driving or taking of a vehicle; one count of receiving stolen property; one count of resisting a police officer and one count of driving as an unlicensed driver.

Taylor is a twice-convicted felon — he served two years in state prison for a 1991 conviction for burglary and he served 12 years in state prison for a 1994 conviction for burglary. Both crimes occurred in Torrance, said DA spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons.

A bench warrant was issued on Wednesday for Taylor, whose bail for the Santa Monica crimes had been set at more than \$2 million. A jury trial for the Santa Monica kidnapping and burglary charges was set to begin on June 14 at the LAX Courthouse.

Meanwhile, the elderly victim has left her Santa Monica home.

"The victim has been relocated to a safe house," Whitmore said, adding authorities don't believe Taylor, a Georgia native who's been homeless when he's not been in custody, will return to Santa Monica, but they are taking extra precautions anyway. "The good news is everyone is safe, but the bad news is that this guy is still at large."

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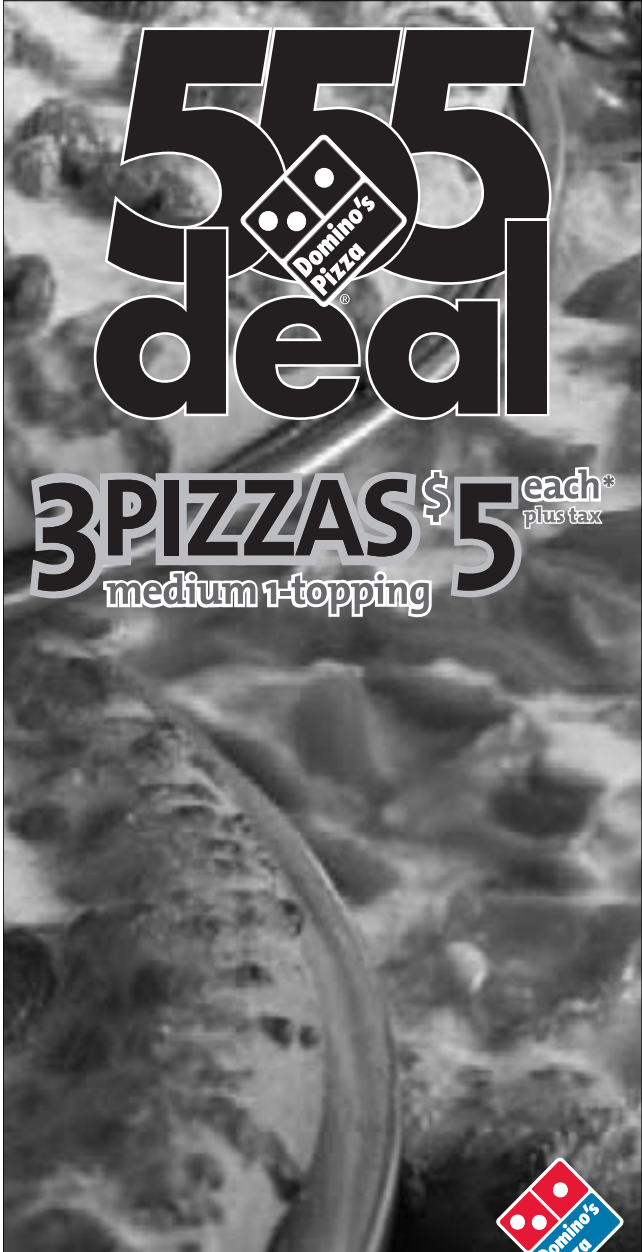
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Runaway bride is runaway media coverage

Editor:

The television media has done it once again — run with a story in the hopes they could be the first on the scene should it turn gory. Jennifer Wilbanks, the thinking man's Julia Roberts, simply got cold feet but forgot to inform the cable channels of her plans to go Greyhound.

This story had all the trappings of great drama — an all white cast, an all white wedding in a seemingly all white town. I might pitch this idea myself. Wait, it's been done before. What about a remake? Runaway Bride 2? Revenge of the Bridesmaids? Or better yet a reality series, which is exactly what the 24-hour news channels are slowly evolving into. This go around, I'd cast the cable news readers in the first installment. How about that Laurie Dhue from Fox? She's some looker. She'd make a great runaway bride/news reader. For the groom, my money would be on that fine Lester Holt/news reader/Today show. I know he's married in real life but let's face, it who needs reality when we've got cable. Let's mix it up a little. We are all, after all — “all God's children.”

The wedding would be scheduled to take place at Madison Square Garden (all faiths are welcome.) Wolf Blitzer (who will be ordained via the Internet) will be scheduled to perform the ceremony and Bill O'Reilly will be giving away the bride-to-be. All three cable networks will carry the event live.

Two days before the guests are to arrive at the garden, Laurie heads out for a late night latte and simply vanishes — without a trace. An Amber Alert is issued. As with the Schiavo case, a law was written especially for Dhue and only for Dhue. With Condie Rice and the First Lady on the guest list, desperate times are called for desperate measures.

The Commander-in-Chief had Rumsfeld form a Presidential Posse. The National Guard was called out. Within 24 hours, Ms. Dhue's photos were on milk cartons and billboards.

Forty-eight hours went by and Lester had already been polygraphed by the FBI, CIA, CNN, FOX and MSNBC. Lester was now the prime suspect and Larry King had assembled a panel to discuss this seemly all-American news guy. Nancy Grace glared into the camera and informed the viewers that “If it smell's like teen spirit ...”

The nation's security level had been raised to red and the nation held its collective breath. Where was Laurie? On the morning of the wedding — Valentine's Day — Rupert Murdoch received a call from Les Moonves, who informed him that Laurie Dhue had been named the new anchor of the CBS Evening News. CBS insisted on exclusive broadcast rights.

Valerie Scott
Santa Monica

Prevention through intervention

Editor:

I am a former Santa Monica gang member with a police record that dates back to 1989. I am a recovering alcoholic/drug addict and also was addicted to the gang lifestyle. I have been the victim of three drive-by shootings that occurred in the city of Santa Monica. It is only by the grace of God that I am here today able to write this letter. Many with my past are dead or incarcerated.

Currently, I am a father of three and a volunteer little league coach in my community. Today, I am free from a negative past and grateful that there are people like Steven Luciano and Oscar de la Torre, whom I believe and know in my heart that are committed to helping at-risk youth. Steven Luciano was one of the gentlemen who was demonized by the Santa Monica Police Department when he attempted to promote peace at the Santa Monica High School campus (SMDP, April 23-24, page 1). Steven Luciano has been a great influence, and support factor in my year and a half of sobriety. He also has been a messenger carrying the message of peace and change for a better way in my life. I believe he can do the same for others.

Oscar de la Torre was another gentleman who was publicly attacked for his efforts to promote peace. Oscar and I attended Santa Monica High School and grew up in the same neighborhood, and because of that he had the chance to see me deep in my addictions. When I came to the Pico Youth & Family Center with a year of sobriety and a “fine print” of what drugs and gangs really do to young men and women, Oscar made me feel important enough to help young men and women steer away from gangs and drugs. He asked me to share my life of struggle and change with today's youth in hopes that by sharing my story we could help prevent gang violence and drug addiction. I would like to thank Oscar de la Torre and Steven Luciano for their support in the changes I have made in my life. The city should also thank them. It is people like them that help individuals like me change and stay on the right path to keep our community safe. I pray that one day we will all work together as one (black, brown, white, police, ex gang members, old and young, etc.) to create a peaceful world that is based on principle and not personalities.

Arturo Arce
Santa Monica

Dollar-a-year man has support

Editor:

My hearty endorsement of Ken McCrae as Santa Monica's homeless liaison (SMDP, May 3, page 7.) I have personally known Ken for several years now and can attest that he would bring considerable life experience to that post. He has been both a manager of others in business and a homeless man. I believe he will be very effective in just such a post as homeless liaison.

See LETTERS, page 7

Lobbyists are paying for travel: Who cares?



HERE'S THE THING

BY LARA M. BROWN, Ph.D.

It's been an exciting few weeks on the congressional scandal front. Lobbyist Jack Abramoff appears to have paid for travel to the Northern Mariana Islands for not only Majority Leader Tom Delay (R-Tex.), but also for Reps. James Clyburn (D-SC.) and Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.). Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) got the Republican conference to help repeal the ethics reforms they passed four months ago (it wasn't a flip-flop, really). The House Ethics Committee met and decided to review Delay's questionable activities. Two members of the Ethics Committee (Reps. Lamar Smith of Texas and Tom Cole of Oklahoma) recused themselves from all matters that deal with Delay because both have contributed to his legal defense fund.

The public response is not surprising. A recent CNN/Gallup/USA Today public opinion poll shows that “82 percent believe lobbyist-funded trips are a serious ethical matter;” 46 percent say “very serious” and 36 percent say “moderately serious.”

Former Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.) suggested that there is only way around this: Ban all privately funded trips. Hamilton was not suggesting that congressional members stop traveling. He was only proposing that private entities stop paying. He wants government to pay for it. He also wants members to have to disclose their itineraries.

With all this activity, I decided to conduct my own focus group — with my introduction to American government class. I e-mailed them a copy of Hamilton's proposal, told them to look into the issues facing Majority Leader Tom Delay, and finish reading the chapter on interest groups. Tuesday I asked my students:

- Would Hamilton's proposal work?
- Would it alter special interest influence in any meaningful way?
- Should the public pay for congressional travel?
- How much are you willing to allocate to each member for it?

Should members travel, at all?

Before reporting what they said, a bit about the demographics of this class. There are 43 students in the class (most days about 38 show up) and it is a general education requirement, which means that the class contains students from every grade level (freshman to graduating senior).

On the first day of class, I administered a “politics and you” survey to get a sense

of where the students are in terms of political knowledge, interest, partisanship, and ideology. This class is about average in terms of interest and knowledge — over one quarter would like to understand how the Electoral College actually works, even though 80 percent voted in the 2004 presidential election). This class — unlike others I have taught — is evenly split between Republicans and Democrats (there are a few independents), and liberals and conservatives. Though after having taught them now for almost a full semester, it is clear that the majority tend to possess libertarian beliefs. “Live and let live” would sum up many of their governing philosophy.

So, when I asked about Hamilton's proposal, the response was fairly uniform. They didn't want to pay more for government. And they weren't altogether sure how valuable congressional travel really was, but most felt that if members were going to do it then “special interests might as well pay.” Their reasoning seemed to be that special interests pay for everything else, including campaigns, so why should this be any different?

When I asked if they believed that by making the public pay for travel, they might make elected officials more responsive to the public and less responsive to special interests? They said: “Yeah, but it isn't like that would make much of a difference. There is always someone who wants something.”

They came to consensus around the idea that disclosure requirements should be much higher than they are for members to report their itineraries: “The media will be all over that.”

Here's The Thing:

My students seem to have a better perspective on this topic than 82 percent of the American public. They understand that politicking occurs in politics, and that while some groups may get more access than others, they believe that the best way to curb unethical behavior is to make everyone report their activities to see if they withstand the media spotlight. They feel that vigorous competition and sunshine are better checks on their leaders than more regulations.

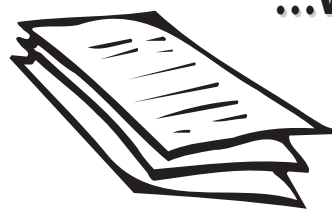
In this sense, these students have more in common with the framers of the Constitution than they do with either the generation of liberal political reformers from the 1960s, or some of their conservative parents who first became active with Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. The future may prove interesting indeed.

(Lara M. Brown, Ph.D., is a political scientist from Los Angeles, and is teaching this semester at California State University, Channel Islands. She can be reached at larambrown@aol.com)

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Santa Monica Daily Press



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS, from page 6

I also like his suggestion that he will be a “dollar-a-year man,” a tradition that I believe came about during FDR’s administration during which some extraordinarily competent men from business and industry worked “for the public good” for only one buck a year.
Go for it, Ken.

Rick Reutter
Santa Monica

Unleash that beach
Editor:

As avid beachgoers and lovers/owners of dogs rescued as puppies from both the West Los Angeles Shelter and a local Santa Monica animal rescue business, Mutts N Such, we are writing in support of “Unleashing the Beach” to allow those who own dogs or those who wish to share their beach with dogs in Santa Monica be allowed to enjoy the natural environs that clearly make living here for over 45 years even more special and inviting.

The Santa Monica dog beach that the organization “Unleash the Beach” proposes is one that would be very specialized and one-tenth smaller than the mile-long beach that has recently been passed by Dockweiler Beach in El Segundo — as a promoted pilot dog beach in the State Legislature — and unanimously approved by the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife and the Appropriations Committee. This ever vigilant special “boutique” dog beach would enforce certain requirements addressing any potential community-related concerns, such as having every dog on the beach be properly vaccinated and registered, as well as having every owner sign a waiver of liability and a fee-based use program. Not only would this special “boutique” dog beach enforce strict licensing and use requirements, but the “Unleash the Beach” organization would see to it, for the very first time, that consistent water quality testings be conducted to ensure that the water in this designated area remains healthy. In addition, this new program also will collaborate with the Marine Mammal Rescue to educate citizens and beachgoers as to how to handle encounters with beached marine mammals, as well as aid in the implementation of beach monitors.

As responsible dog owners, we are very committed to keeping our neighborhood clean, our parks clean, and would naturally keep our “dog beach” clean. We are not fearful people but can be understanding of those that may have fears of beaches becoming wildly popular and overrun. However, as other dog beaches in other cities, such as Huntington Beach, can attest to, this fear has been proven completely unfounded, and like most, the fear is somewhat an irrational one. While there are many community hiking trails, and parks that are not overrun with dogs and their owners, we support all efforts toward bringing another venue whereby dogs, their owners and those who love dogs but for whatever reason cannot be owners can enjoy one another’s company in the landscape of California’s most precious natural resources — its beaches.

Perhaps, this “boutique beach” may in the future also allow for the training of dog breeds who are natural water rescuers to accompany the lifeguards (as they do city police, at times) and assist in citizen water rescues and/or bring awareness to the community that dogs are more than just “our best friends.” They also have duties which they are naturally bred to perform and can further help in our society’s needs for future beach protection and safety. Let’s give them the opportunity to earn their keep.

While Santa Monica always shines in the best of the west’s sunlight, we seek to add another jewel in our unique community by becoming a city that is not fearful and willing to be inclusive for all people and animals. We actively support this dog beach pilot program and are here should you require responsible citizens to make this venture a successful one.

Cheryl B. Leader and Bhavin S. Barot
Mar Vista Hills

Manners in the loo
going the way of poo

PISTACHIO
PERSPECTIVE
BY SUSAN ANN CONNOR



This is a bit of a suppressed subject. Few are speaking out. And let me apologize ahead of time for the downright tawdriness of it all. But it doesn’t take your great aunt Lucille to tell you that the ladies room proprieties are vanishing.

Last week was probably the culmination of a series of experiences that has detonated restroom etiquette for me. It was never perfect, but there have always been certain civilities a girl can count on once she has entered the loo.

I was visiting the ladies room in a swanky building where I sometimes freelance. (Please don’t confuse swanky with classy. That would be an erroneous assumption.) As I was stepping into the place in question, sweet-faced Millie, who worked down the hall, was stepping out. We greeted each other with a smile and a wave. Millie also gave me the eyebrow lift, which I took as a sign. Uh oh.

I wasn’t sure what the sign represented, but in that mere moment I prepared myself for the worst.

Upon entering, I noticed the usually well-kept, three-stall facility had paper towels and toilet paper strewn about. Excess water slopped up the sink and areas surrounding it. Bad, but not bad enough for an eyebrow lift.

The first stall, to put it delicately, was out-of-order. The second was occupied. So I slipped into the third. Sheesh! Must have been Millie’s stall. Why was she lifting her eyebrow? To warn me she’d left a trail of drippings on the toilet seat? Ick, Millie! Don’t have to be a detective to know who the spray culprit was.

As I stood unamused in the stall, I heard laughter from next door. Followed by blaring yakkity yak. Either these bath-

room walls were quite the amplifier, or she was speaking at approximately seven octaves higher than normal.

Obviously, she was on her cell phone, unless there were two people in there. But as I looked down, I saw only one pair of legs. And she’d settled in, because her shoes were off and her feet were snuggling on top of them.

Did I mention cigarette smoke was rising from the chatterbox’s chamber?

Is nothing private anymore? Did she absolutely have to have this conversation now? And in a public restroom? Helllllooooo, ‘Miss Loud in the Loo,’ someone else is in here. She vexed me. I really didn’t care what her therapist told her about Andy yesterday. And if I were Andy, I’d change my locks or hightail it back to Mississippi.

Oh, dear. What was I going to do?

I wondered if the person she was speaking to knew she was on the throne. Then I wondered ... if I flushed Millie’s toilet, would it make her location more clear? Perhaps even interfere with her reception? Hmmmmmm. I decided to take action. Couldn’t help myself. I flushed. Not once, but thrice. Third time was with a smile.

Now here’s an option to consider. I recently read that at Amsterdam’s Kulturzentrum De Balie, a talking computer-run toilet is teaching proper bathroom behavior. If anyone uses too much toilet paper, leaves the toilet seat up, fails to flush or smokes, they are admonished by the computer in “Private Room 2.” A newfangled toilet/artwork designed by artist Leonard van Munster, the computer cautions the discourteous user with varying degrees of humor and sternness. If they fail to heed, a live monitor arrives.

Anyway, I left ‘Miss Loud in the Loo’ to her own improprieties and headed upstairs, hoping to find a necessary room Great Aunt Lucille would approve of. Lalalala ...

(Susan Ann Connor can be reached at pistachiocolumn@aol.com.)

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11 High Cost Home Inspection Traps You Should Know About Weeks Before Listing Your Home For Sale

WESTSIDE - According to industry experts, there are over 33 physical problems that you will come under scrutiny during a home inspection when your home is for sale. A new report has been prepared which identifies the eleven most common of these problems, and what you should know about them before you list your home for sale.

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To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your **FREE** copy of this report, call **1.888.465.4534** and enter **ID#1003**. You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call NOW to learn how to ensure a home inspection doesn't cost you the sale of your home.

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LOCAL □ STATE



CRIME WATCH

By Daily Press staff

At 4:22 a.m. on April 24, Santa Monica police responded to the 1500 block of Lincoln Boulevard, a Denny's Restaurant, for a report of defrauding. When officers arrived to the scene, the store employee said suspect ordered food which totaled \$10.22, and did not pay for it. The store was desirous of prosecution and the suspect was arrested. Daniel James Moretti, a 26-year old white male, was arrested for defrauding. Bail was set for \$1,000.

At 12:37 a.m. on April 29, Santa Monica police responded to the corner of 17th Street and Michigan avenue regarding an auto burglary that had just occurred. When officers arrived to the scene, they spoke to the reporting party who said they heard an alarm going off on a vehicle. They looked out the window and saw the suspect exiting the vehicle. The suspect fled on foot, and was later stopped in the 1800 block of 17th Street by officers. A field show-up was conducted and the suspect was positively identified. Namon Lavon Thompson, a 45-year-old male black transient, was arrested for auto burglary and parole violation. No bail was set.

At 3:25 a.m. on April 29, Santa Monica police responded to the 1400 block of Seventh Street regarding a burglary that just occurred. When officers arrived to the scene, they spoke to the reporting party, who said he heard something in the living room area and when he turned on the light he saw the suspect crouch down and crawl out of the location. The suspect fled and was later stopped in the 1500 block of Lincoln Boulevard. A field show-up was conducted and the suspect was identified as Steven Glen Buck, a 39-year-old male white transient who was arrested for trespassing. No bail was set.

At 8:30 p.m. on April 30, Santa Monica police vice detectives went to the 2200 block of Lincoln Boulevard to Jenny's Massage Parlor. While the undercover officer was inside, he asked for a massage and was told it would cost \$50. The undercover officer was taken into a back room at which time the suspect entered and asked the officer if he wanted additional sex for money. The officer gave a pre-arranged signal to the other officers, who entered the location and arrested the female. Helen Juhng, a 54-year-old female Asian from Rancho Palos Verdes, was booked for prostitution and exposing her breasts. Bail was set at \$2,000.

Governor turns in petitions; election showdown takes shape

BY TOM CHORNEAU
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Taking a big step toward a November special election, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Wednesday turned in the first of hundreds of thousands of petition signatures supporting ballot measures he wants to put before voters.

But even as he dropped off boxes of paperwork at a county office, Schwarzenegger said he is still interested in negotiating compromise solutions with Democratic leaders before a mid-June deadline for calling the election.

"Our doors are open for negotiation," the governor told reporters after braving dozens of vocal protesters in the parking lot. "The people of California have sent the legislators to do their job but if they don't — my preference is to work with them — but if they don't we'll go to the special election and ... let the people make the decision."

The move comes as Schwarzenegger's popularity has hit new lows and Democratic opposition to his proposals have grown in strength.

The governor and his supporters are pushing three constitutional amendments that would put new limits on state spending, lengthen the time it takes public school teachers to earn tenure and give authority for redrawing legislative and congressional districts to a panel of retired judges.

On Wednesday, Schwarzenegger — aided by a group of about 25 school children from local neighborhoods — turned in about 26,000 signatures for the teacher tenure initiative, a proposed statute that needs valid signatures of at least 373,816 registered voters to make the ballot. More signatures will be turned in by supporters around the state.

Supporters of his redistricting measure said they plan to hold a press conference in Los Angeles Thursday to mark the completion of their petition drive. Campaign officials said they have also gathered enough signatures to put the governor's spending cap on the ballot.

Both those measures are constitutional amendments that need valid signatures of at least 598,105 registered voters to qualify.

While the signatures are being counted and verified, Schwarzenegger has more than a month to decide whether to call the special election or allow the measures to be considered at the next regular election in June 2006. Even though he signaled a willingness to negotiate, Democratic leaders criticized Schwarzenegger Wednesday for pushing ahead with the petition drive.

"Where he is leading this state now is into political chaos," said Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles.

Nunez said he believes the governor's issues are not of great importance to most voters and that the \$70 million election is a waste of money.

STATE



UCSD unveils first laboratory blast simulator

BY SETH HETTENA
Associated Press Writer

SAN DIEGO — The University of California, San Diego showed off this week what it called the world’s first laboratory blast simulator by slamming a seven-ton concrete column with the same force as a car bomb.

The blast simulator, built at a cost of \$10 million, is the first machine of its kind that can mimic the effects of a blast without explosives. It will be used to develop ways of hardening buildings and bridges from terrorist bombs.

Heavy rubber pads driven by hydraulic pistons can pummel columns, beams, floors, ceilings and girders with the simulated force of the sort of car bomb blast seen on the streets of Baghdad, UCSD officials said.

On Wednesday, a reinforced concrete column found in many East Coast buildings was hit with the same force as a half-ton car bomb parked curbside. The impact, which occurred faster than the eye could see it, left the column looking as if someone had grabbed it at both ends and bent it.

If the column had been supporting a building, it could spell a catastrophic building collapse. More people can die from structural collapse in a terrorist attack than the pressure or shock wave of the blast itself, said Frieder Seible, dean of UCSD’s Jacobs School of Engineering. Most of the 168 people killed in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing were killed from the partial collapse of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, not the blast itself, Seible said.

Scientists have found that wrapping load-bearing columns with coats of carbon fibers or a steel jacket can prevent concrete columns from breaking apart in an explosion. A carbon-wrapped column hardly budged under the simulated impact of a car bomb blast during an earlier test, Seible said.

Until now, engineers have only been able to test these materials by plugging their ears, detonating an explosive in front of them and watching what happens. The explosions can wipe out the equipment researchers set up to record the blast. Cameras record the fireball, not the structure.

The blast simulator delivers the same punch as a car

bomb — minus the fireball — allowing high-speed cameras and instruments to record what happens.

The simulator is being funded with \$8.6 million from the Technical Support Working Group or TSWG, a federal interagency organization that develops technologies to combat terrorism. More than 40 tests will be conducted in the simulator over the next two years under a \$7.5 million contract from TSWG.

According to its annual report, TSWG is managed by the assistant secretary of defense for special operations. An agency representative declined comment on the blast simulator.

The simulator can mimic up to the equivalent of about a ton of TNT. Although that’s less than the 5,000 pounds of fertilizer Timothy McVeigh unleashed in Oklahoma City, Seible said it represents a more realistic scenario.

“There are always bigger bombs. In the end, you can take it all the way up to a nuke,” Seible said. “The question is what is the most realistic or the most probable scenario. Clearly, the probability that we have a car bomb, a sedan bomb vs. a huge truck is much higher.”

STATE BRIEFS

Pastor admits pushing porn
By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A Brea youth pastor pleaded guilty to sending child pornography over the Internet to an undercover FBI agent he met at a North American Man/Boy Love Association meeting.

Jeffrey Devore, 53, of Fullerton entered the plea Wednesday in federal court to distributing child pornography. He faces up to five years in prison when he’s sentenced July 20, Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer Corbet said.

Devore, a minister at the Brea Congregational Church, sent the images to an agent involved in a sting operation targeting men who sought to travel to Mexico to have sex with young boys, investigators said. Devore was not accused of planning to travel to Mexico.

Police shoot, kill kidnap suspect
By The Associated Press

SANTA ANA — Police shot and killed a kidnapping suspect in his getaway car after he collected a \$1,200 ransom payment from a woman’s family, investigators said.

The 23-year-old victim, who was kidnapped as she left work several hours earlier and was inside the car at the time, wasn’t hurt, police Sgt. Lorenzo Carillo said Wednesday.

"He came up to her with a gun and he wanted money. She didn’t have her ATM card and all she had was \$14. He said he needed \$1,200 and would hold her to get it from her family," said the woman’s aunt Delores Escamilla.

As the man drove away, officers tried to stop the vehicle and the man crashed the car. He was shot during a confrontation with officers, Carillo said.

The Police Department and Orange County district attorney’s office were investigating the shooting.

Smile, you’re on a city camera
By The Associated Press

LA QUINTA — Frustrated over graffiti, fires and other destruction at city parks, the City Council is considering installation of security cameras in the parks to thwart the surge in costly vandalism.

The council has commissioned a study to show how much cameras would cost to install and operate. The city has spent more than \$40,000 since September 2003 repairing and replacing park equipment damaged by graffiti, fires, theft and destruction, officials said.



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Entertainment

Forget Paris, skip the ‘Wax’

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

“House of Wax” is a fatally dumb slasher flick from tyro feature director Jaume Collet-Serra that bears little resemblance to the 1953 Goth-horror classic from which it draws its name. The original was filmed in 3-D and starred master of the macabre Vincent Price as a twisted curator who uses corpses to create eerily lifelike wax sculptures for his museum. This “update” features Paris Hilton and a cast of WB Network wannabes playing almost impossibly dimwitted teens trapped in a Louisiana ghost town with a pair of deranged twin brothers who try to whack and wax the lot of them. Scripted by brothers Chad and Carey Hayes, “House of Wax” is a bloody mess of lifeless dialogue, patent illogic and some of the worst screen acting of this or any other year.

Care to guess who leads the way on the last count? Just as some prefer the New York Times to Cosmo Girl magazine or

A&E over E!, opinions vary on Paris’ triumphant ascent to the top of Celebrity Hill. But with this, her first major movie role, the world’s most famous heiress has given us all something to agree upon: She can’t act. Strike a sexy pose, yes. Fit comfortably into a size two, sure. Convincingly portray another living, breathing human being? Unh-uh. Not this time, at least. Fortunately for Paris, her young co-stars — most notably Elisha Cuthbert (“24”) and Chad Michael Murray (“One Tree Hill”) — go to great lengths not to show her up, slogging through one dubious contrivance after another with all the brio of a depressed water buffalo. If this were a zombie film, the trio of Hilton, Murray and Cuthbert would be shoe-ins for Oscar nominations. Where you’re likely to find them sharing the bill next, however, is in the Worst Actor category at next year’s Razzie Awards.

(Rated R for horror violence, some sexual content and language. Running time: 116 minutes)



Indie flick gets under ‘Skin’

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Provocative indie filmmaker Greg Araki (“Splendor,” “The Doom Generation”) focuses his unflinching eye on pedophilia in “Mysterious Skin,” a dark, absorbing adaptation of the acclaimed novel of same name by Scott Heim. Rather than offer yet another blanket condemnation of child molestation or a lachrymose profile of its victims, Araki explores the radically different impact the trauma has on two boys from a rural Kansas burg whose innocence is stolen by a predatory little league coach (Bill Sage). Brian (Brady Corbet of “Thirteen”) is a nervous, virginal college freshman obsessed with unraveling the mystery of

“five hours lost, gone without a trace” when he was 10 years old. Unable or unwilling to recall what really happened, Brian indulges an alien abduction fantasy even as he increasingly experiences terrible physical reactions to mnemonic cues to the truth. Neil (Joseph Gordon-Levitt of “Third Rock from the Sun” in a star-making turn), on the other hand, has grown into a hyper-sexualized hustler who turns tricks, symbolically enough, with older men he meets at the local playground. His memories of the sexual encounters with the coach are vivid and unsettlingly romantic.

Through Neil, Araki dares to ruminate upon some particularly incendiary taboos such as young boys as sentient sexual beings and willing participants who hardly succumb to anger or devastation. This challenging subject material is handled



quite deftly throughout, especially at the emotional denouement when the two young men finally reunite and Neil helps Brian confront the past. Araki scores in giving his film, through the use of lighting, camerawork and music — an almost

buoyant aesthetic. It’s a twisted world where dark stuff happens, but the way the filmmaker sees it, there’s something quite gorgeous about it.

(Not rated. Running time: 99 minutes)



THE IMBIBER

BY DAN DUNN

Grolsch has new look, new attitude

The folks at Grolsch have been busy lately. There's the new amber ale, which is sure to be a hit with anyone who likes a light, drinkable brew with a little bit of attitude.

"The redesign of the packaging is more attractive and contemporary, which will appeal to both our current Grolsch drinkers and attract new consumers," said Peter Gyimesi, a guy Grolsch pays handsomely to say such rose-colored things. Like its predecessor, the new Grolsch bottle is green-colored, though a slightly different shade than before that Gyimesi assuredly describes as "eye-catching." I guess he's right, since your Imbiber caught sight of a six-pack in his 'fridge next to a Ziploc bag full of some nasty-looking brown stuff I pray is left-over meatloaf (the lesson here: Never walk your dog while intoxicated). The new logo isn't all that different from the old one, though I guess you could say it's a bit more "todayish" than it was yesterday. (Take that, Gyimesi!)

Oddly, the new amber ale comes in bottles bearing the old logo, but that curiosity aside, it's sure to be a hit with anyone who likes a light, drinkable brew with a little bit of attitude. It's a beer for those whose tastes lie somewhere in the vast golden mean between Guinness and Miller Lite. The Grolsch Amber Ale, which retails for about \$8 a six-pack, is triple cold-filtered and made with three different varieties of malt and a proprietary blend of hops from a recipe that dates back to the 17th Century. That's a long, long time in the business, and that tradition translates to great character and the sort of old soul the new beers on the block simply cannot imitate.

(E-mail questions, comments or suggestions for the Imbiber to ddunn@metro.us)

'Crash' puts intolerance front, center

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

There is but one film I've seen this year that merits an unconditional recommendation, and "Crash" is it. "Million Dollar Baby" scribe Paul Haggis comes out swinging and never drops his dukes in this, his directorial debut (co-written with Bobby Moresco). Haggis has crafted a movie about the shared consequences of racial intolerance in America, using vehicular collisions as a device for bringing together a tapestry of ethnically diverse strangers and exposing their anger and trepidation. The story plays out over a 36-hour period during an unusually chilly Christmas in Los Angeles, beginning with a car-jacking by two erudite young black men (Larenz Tate and the rapper Chris "Ludacris" Bridges, who is a revelation). The victims are the opportunistic LA District Attorney (Brendan Fraser) and his rich-bitch wife (Sandra Bullock), who we will soon discover are connected to their attackers in more ways than one. Several other storylines intersect throughout, none more gripping than one involving a racist cop (Matt Dillon) and an affluent African-American TV producer and his wife, played by Terrence Howard and Thandie Newton. Ryan Phillippe stands out as Dillon's disapproving partner, as does the always brilliant Don Cheadle as a detective who's seen too much to care about anything anymore. "Crash," while not preachy, challenges viewers to confront fears and prejudices and, ultimately, to embrace our shared humanity. It's a message movie, to be sure, and one worth heeding.

(Rated R for language, sexual content and some violence. Running time: 100 minutes)



This 'Kingdom' far from heaven

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Those hoping Ridley Scott's "Kingdom of Heaven" would match or, dare say, surpass his Academy Award-winning men-at-war epic "Gladiator" are in for a disappointment. For all its event-movie bombast (sweeping score, lush cinematography, large-scale set pieces populated with CGI-generated hordes) and apparent good intentions, the mega-budgeted, star-studded "Kingdom of Heaven" fails to truly excite, leaving far too many questions left frustratingly unanswered. Among them, why cast a genteel pretty boy like Orlando Bloom to play the hard-bitten Balian, a blacksmith-turned-Crusader who leads the Christians occupying medieval Jerusalem against an invading Muslim army? This is a role that begs a combination of red-blooded masculinity and smoldering valor (think O'Toole, McQueen or Crowe), not an adorable teeny-mag cover boy best known for playing a wispy elf and wannabe swashbuckler. Bloom is a decent actor who has acquitted himself admirably as a

second fiddle in this sort of grand fare before, but try as he might — he did buff up for the role and grew exotic facial hair — he simply can't cut it as a feared warrior and inspirational leader of men.

Another question is who, exactly, are we supposed to be rooting for here? Scott and screenwriter William Monahan are clearly trying to draw parallels between past and current conflicts in the Middle East while preaching tolerance. In so doing they offer equally sympathetic portraits of the Jews, Muslims and Christians and make compelling cases for all sides' claim to the Holy Land. As a result, the battle for the real estate that is the film's central conflict leaves us feeling conflicted. The primary antagonists — Brendan Gleason and Martin Csokas as a pair of blood-thirsty Knights Templar at odds with Balian and the righteous King Baldwin IV (Edward Norton) — register little screen time and never appear to pose a serious threat to an auspicious outcome. On a positive note, Jeremy Irons and Eva Green ("The Dreamers") impress in supporting turns.

(Rated R for strong violence and epic warfare. Running time: 145 minutes)

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The hybrid hype is driving customers crazy

BY ALICIA CHANG
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Sheila Catoira wanted a fuel-efficient Toyota Prius hybrid so badly, she found a used model online and paid \$1,000 more than the car would have cost new.

With the demand for a gas-electric Prius far outstripping supply, some buyers are plunking down a premium for cars that are thousands of miles old. The trade-off: They don't have to wait for months on dealers' waiting lists.

"I figured that if I can get it right away, it was well worth it," said Catoira, 31, a teacher and self-described environmentalist in San Diego.

Other desperate buyers offered more

than the \$27,000 Catoira paid, but seller Sev MacPete said he refused to fully exploit the frenzy.

"I could have sold it for a lot over list, but I didn't feel like I can do it in good conscience," said MacPete, who happens to be the president of the Prius Club of San Diego. He wanted to sell the 2004 model after only 5,000 miles because he had just paid sticker price for his second Prius, this one fully loaded with options.

Far from sticker shocked, buyers in the past year have paid private sellers and used car dealers \$1,000 to \$3,000 above the advertised price of a new 2004 or 2005 model, according to Irvine-based Kelley Blue Book, which tracks used car prices. Older Prius models are not seeing the same phenomenon.

"There are some people who want to be the first one on the block to own a Prius and to them, it's worth paying a couple of thousand dollars over sticker," said Jack Nerad, Kelley Blue Book's editorial director.

Rarely do second-hand cars sell for more than their new counterparts, since cars typically lose value almost immediately. The only other instances automotive experts cite are luxury vehicles such as the Ferrari and hot new releases. The Mazda Miata and Mini Cooper, for example, were so popular when they first came out that buyers paid a premium for used models.

The Prius, which lists for between \$21,000 and \$26,000, is the first economy car with a higher resale value, according to automotive experts. Its hybrid competitors, such as Honda's Insight and Civic, haven't seen the same resale boom because they aren't in such demand. The Prius, which underwent a makeover last year, is considered by many to be more better-looking and versatile than its competitors.

When the Prius first rolled out in the U.S. in 2000, buyers had to wait six months on average because Toyota underestimated demand. As Toyota increases its production schedule — the automaker plans to double to 100,000 the number of Prius cars for the North American market this year — the wait has dropped to an average of two months, depending on where a buyer lives.

Hybrids combine an electric motor with a gasoline engine to produce less pollution and better mileage. Volatile gas prices are a major impetus behind the rush

to buy high-mileage hybrids.

Although hybrids represented less than 1 percent of the 17 million new vehicles sold last year, the U.S. hybrid market has grown by more than 960 percent since 2000, when 7,781 were sold, according to data released last week by the Southfield, Mich.-based firm R.L. Polk & Co.

Toyota is the first automaker to commercially mass-produce and sell hybrid cars. Its Prius dominated nearly 65 percent of the U.S. hybrid vehicle market last year, with 53,761 new cars registered.

Most Prius owners keep their hybrids, but the few who will part with their cars may want an upgraded model or realize that a gas-electric vehicle doesn't suit their needs. Other sellers see the chance for a quick buck.

But there are some signs that the premium market for used Priuses may be cooling. There are more new Priuses on the market as Toyota ramps up production. Meanwhile, the Prius faces new competition from other hybrids coming out this year including the Lexus RX400h, Mercury Mariner and Toyota Highlander SUVs.

Data collected by Edmunds.com, which provides online vehicle buying information, show the resale price of a 2004 Prius in recent months is at or slightly below the sticker price of a new one. That is still a feat, given that most used cars depreciate on average about a quarter of their sticker value after a year, said Jesse Toprak, director of pricing and market analysis at Edmunds.com.

"It's unparalleled," Toprak said. "It has never happened before to this degree."

Electric slide: Team nixes attempt at speed record

BY PAUL FOY
Associated Press Writer

WEST WENDOVER, Nev. — A British team attempting to break the speed record for electric-powered cars called off its effort Thursday, blaming gusty winds and mechanical problems. They plan to try again Friday.

The team is trying to eclipse the record for an electric car weighing more than 2,200 pounds by using a vehicle with 52 batteries and no mechanical gears.

Nevada agreed to shut down a state highway for the torpedo-shaped car's attempt to top 300 mph — which would shatter the old mark of 245 mph, set by an American team in 1999 using a similarly streamlined car powered by thousands of "AA" batteries.

Britons Mark Newby and Colin Fallows already have accelerated their car to 146 mph in just 1,000 yards — the longest, safest distance available to them in England. They say the test showed they can easily beat the world record.

The car uses compact, industrial motors and drives made by Swiss engi-

neering company ABB Ltd.

Newby, 46, a pilot, drives the car. Fallows, 54, a retired Royal Air Force propulsion technician, designed it. They built the vehicle in a barn in the English countryside using money from home equity loans.

"We think that at some point in the future, all cars will be electric, and we want to show you can go fast in an electric car," Newby said.

The "emotion" car has no mechanical gears, which are useful for acceleration but limit torque at top speeds. The car is designed to top 300 mph on a pair of motors than can turn out as much horsepower as a new Chevrolet Corvette with 7-liter, V8 engine. Newby was to make two runs Thursday. His team is now looking to Friday.

After the first run, mechanics will replace the batteries and turn around the car for a second run. The speeds of each run will then be averaged by agents for the Federation Internationale de L'Automobile, the motor sports governing body that will impound the car for an inspection after the attempt.



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NATIONAL



Hatch proposes legislation that would fuel U.S. refineries

BY DEBBIE HUMMEL

Associated Press Writer

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch announced a plan Thursday to propose legislation that he says would reduce gasoline prices by increasing production at U.S. refineries.

The Gas Price Reduction Through Increased Refining Capacity Act of 2005 is part of a three-pronged approach Hatch says is a long-term solution to the country's soaring gas prices.

Last week, Hatch introduced legislation aimed at making alternative fuels and advanced technologies profitable. The third part of Hatch's plan would increase efforts to develop oil shale and tar sand deposits in Utah, Colorado and Wyoming.

"I wish there were something we could do to bring prices down immediately, but I can't promise that," Hatch said, standing feet away from pumps at a Salt Lake City Sinclair gas station charging \$2.25 for a gallon of unleaded gasoline.

"The legislation I'm proposing and policies that Congress is considering are long-term solutions," he said.

A new refinery has not been built in the United States since the 1970s, Hatch said. With the difficult economics of refining, nearly 200 refineries have been shut down since the last one was built leaving 149 overworked refineries, he said.

Refineries must invest in expensive new equipment to comply with regulations, which trump investments for equipment that would increase capacity. Rates of return

in refining are lower than others in the petroleum industry, according to a National Petroleum Council report.

Hatch hopes that providing financial incentives to increase refinery capacity would decrease the amount of refined petroleum products the country must rely on.

"It's extremely important that we do everything we can to increase domestic supply and we can do that by increasing refinery capacity," said Bob Slaughter, president of the National Petrochemical and Refiners Association.

American refineries are capable of producing about 17 million barrels a day, but demand is about 20 million barrels a day, Slaughter said. The value of petroleum and petrochemical products is increased during the refining process, and by decreasing the need to import refined gasoline, diesel and home heating oil prices would go down, he said.

Hatch's plan would focus mostly on encouraging investment in increasing production at existing refineries, although it doesn't exclude the building of new plants. Either way, it's unlikely that the country could produce all of the petroleum products used on a daily basis, Slaughter said.

Companies that produce gasoline may be losing money at their refineries, but the scarcity created by not performing at higher capacities ultimately benefits them in the money they make at the gas stations they own, said David Hamilton, a spokesman with the Sierra Club.

"Having more refining capacity is a good idea. Paying the companies to do it really presents a fairly sad picture of the corporate citizenship of the oil industry," Hamilton said.

Homeland Security: Securing border is about more than stopping illegals

BY ARTHUR H. ROTSTEIN

Associated Press Writer

DOUGLAS, Ariz. — Securing the U.S.-Mexico border is about more than trying to stop illegal immigrants, the head of the Department of Homeland Security said Thursday as he made his first visit to the border.

"The issue of securing the border is a homeland security issue, it's an immigration issue and it's also a humanitarian issue," Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said.

Chertoff said one of the obvious concerns facing his

department is worrying about efforts of potential terrorists to come into the country.

The Arizona border is considered the most vulnerable stretch of the 2,000-mile southern border. Of the 1.1 million illegal immigrants apprehended by the U.S. Border Patrol last year, more than half crossed into the country through Arizona.

U.S. Sens. Jon Kyl and John McCain, who accompanied Chertoff on his tour, noted that thousands of criminals are caught coming illegally into the United States every year, raising the potential of a terrorist attack to a higher level.

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Bush looks to open up forests to road building

BY JOHN HEILPRIN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration, in one of its biggest decisions on environmental issues, moved Thursday to open up nearly a third of all remote national forest lands to road building, logging and other commercial ventures.

The 58.5 million acres involved, mainly in Alaska and in western states, had been put off limits to development by former President Clinton, eight days before he left office in January 2001.

Under existing local forest management plans, some 34.3 million acres of these pristine woodlands could be opened to road construction. That would be the first step in allowing logging, mining and other industry and wider recreational uses of the land. Under proposed rules, new management plans have to be written for the other 24.2 million acres before road building can commence.

Governors have 18 months to submit petitions to the U.S. Forest Service, challenging either the old plan to stop development, or calling for new plans to allow it.

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns said in announcing the rule that his agency “is committed to working closely with the nation’s governors to meet the needs of our local communities while protecting and restoring the health and natural beauty of our national forests.”

The Agriculture Department, which includes the Forest Service, said governors can base their petitions on requests to

protect public health and safety; reduce wildfire risks to communities; conserve wildlife habitat; maintain dams, utilities or other infrastructure; or ensure that citizens have access to private property.

The Forest Service, which will review and have final say over the petitions, calls the new process voluntary and is setting up a national advisory committee on the rule. “If a governor does not want to propose changes ... then no petition need be submitted,” the agency says in briefing documents obtained by The Associated Press.

Roadless areas in national forests stretch among 38 states and Puerto Rico. But 97 percent, or 56.6 million acres, are found in 12 states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

Environmentalists say the new rule also would let the administration rewrite the forest management plans to lift restrictions against development on most of that forest land.

“Yesterday, nearly 60 million acres of national forests were protected and today as a result of deliberate action by the administration they are not,” said Robert Vandermark, director of the Heritage Forests Campaign, run by a coalition of environment groups. “The Bush administration plan is a ‘leave no tree behind’ policy that paves the way for increased logging, drilling and mining in some of our last wild areas.”

The Clinton-era rule has been much debated in federal court.

A federal court in Idaho had issued a preliminary injunction against the roadless rule in 2001, but the San Francisco-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit overturned the injunction based on an appeal by environmental groups.

Then in 2003, a federal court in Wyoming overturned the rule. Many of those same groups appealed to the Denver-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, which heard arguments Wednesday.

The Forest Service believes its new rule “helps us to move forward with a policy that is not clouded by legal uncertainty, as was the case with the 2001 rule,” says a current agency document entitled “National Key Messages & Talking Points.”

Jim Angell, an attorney with Earthjustice law firm in Denver, who argued the case, called that just an excuse for pushing through a new rule that represents “a huge step back for the protection of our most pristine lands.”

“Really, this is an effort to rush this rule through before the 10th Circuit can reverse that Wyoming judge, just like the 9th Circuit did before,” he said. “It’s incredibly cynical of them to use that judge’s ruling as an excuse.”

Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., also criticized the new rule.

“During times of skyrocketing federal budget deficits, and with a \$10 billion forest road repair backlog, it is fiscally irresponsible to start building new subsidized roads,” said Cantwell, a member of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee.

Bush move gives many road rash

By The Associated Press

Reaction across the West to the Bush administration’s decision Thursday to open up nearly a third of all remote national forest lands to road building, logging and other commercial ventures.

ALASKA: “It’s a hotly debated item, but what we’re going to see out of this, I think, is an effort by this administration to balance the areas that don’t have roads in them and allow other areas to have road access.” — Alaska Gov. Frank Murkowski.

ARIZONA: “It’s a shame and one of the most striking things about the whole process is how dishonest it’s been. ... The old plan helped to protect roadless areas in national forests. The new plan completely reverses protection for roadless areas. It’s a wholesale abandonment of protection for roadless areas. Putting a fancy name on it does not change the facts.” — Erik Ryberg, a Southwest forest advocate for the Tucson-based Center for Biological Diversity.

“The Bush administration is focused on harming the national forests. Arizona forest is public land, and they don’t belong to the timber industry or any one industry.” — Sandy Bahr, a spokeswoman for the Sierra Club.

CALIFORNIA: “We have no plans to build roads in the roadless areas of the national forests in California. ... Areas are roadless here for a reason.” — Matt Mathes, regional spokesman for the U.S. Forest Service.

“It’s a much more sane policy in dealing with our roadless areas.” — Phil

Aune, vice president, California Forestry Association.

“We think this is a tragic gutting of the roadless rule that had such popular support and would have done so much to protect California’s roadless areas.” — Ryan Henson, policy director, California Wilderness Coalition.

COLORADO: “We’re disappointed the way it’s turned out, but we look forward to working with Gov. (Bill) Owens to save as much roadless land in Colorado as possible.” — David Petersen, head of the roadless land program for Colorado’s chapter of Trout Unlimited.

“Trees, wildlife, and fish don’t respect state boundaries, and I don’t think decisions about management of roadless areas — or other parts of the national forests — should be based on those lines, either,” — Rep. Mark Udall, D-Colo., who also called the rules “a significant step backward.”

“There is not one single Western state that’s not been asking the federal government for more power to determine these kinds of decisions.” — Jim Sims, executive director of the Denver-based Western Business Roundtable.

IDAHO: “We congratulate the Bush Administration for taking such a positive step toward resolving the roadless debate. This rule recognizes that a broad dictate over 60 million acres is simply unacceptable. By empowering states to offer suggestions on the management of roadless area in their states, the Forest Service can craft management plans to local conditions, reflecting local priorities while maintaining the lands for everyone.” — Statement issued by Idaho’s congressional delegation.

“We are extremely disappointed that the new Bush plan fails to provide adequate protection for the last roadless areas in the country. These areas are some of the most important areas for fish and wildlife. They provide far and away the best hunting and fishing opportunities in the country.” — Jonathan Oppenheimer of the Boise-based Idaho Conservation League.

MONTANA: “It’s a complete betrayal of the trust, the promises the Forest Service and the Department of Agriculture made to keep our backcountry lands intact. ... Our hope is that the governor will prevent this senseless assault on Montana’s heritage.” — John Gatchell, conservation director with the Montana Wilderness Association

“The Bush administration has put subsidizing timber companies ahead of clean drinking water and wildlife habitat.” — Michael Garrity, executive director of the Alliance for the Wild Rockies.

“We welcome our opportunity to provide input and we won’t be shy about providing it.” — Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer.

NEVADA: “While this has been a volatile issue nationally, I’m in favor of this policy change because I strongly believe in state’s rights. I look forward to seeing the details of the new roadless designation rule which sounds like a more reasonable and measured approach than the one it’s replacing.” — Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn.

NEW MEXICO: “The Bush Administration has provided a way to deal with the roadless issue that empowers states. I was deeply disappointed with the

On the road

By The Associated Press

The Forest Service’s inventory of so-called roadless areas in national forests includes lands within 38 states and the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico:

Alabama, 13,000 acres.
Alaska, 14.7 million acres.
Arizona, 1.1 million acres.
Arkansas, 95,000 acres.
California, 4.4 million acres.
Colorado, 4.4 million acres.
Florida, 50,000 acres.
Georgia, 63,000 acres.
Idaho, 9.3 million acres.
Illinois, 11,000 acres.
Indiana, 8,000 acres.
Kentucky, 3,000 acres.
Louisiana, 7,000 acres.
Maine, 6,000 acres.
Michigan, 16,000 acres.
Minnesota, 62,000 acres.
Mississippi, 3,000 acres.
Missouri, 25,000 acres.
Montana, 6.3 million acres.
Nevada, 3.1 million acres.
New Hampshire, 235,000 acres.
New Mexico, 1.5 million acres.
North Carolina, 172,000 acres.
North Dakota, 266,000 acres.
Oklahoma, 13,000 acres.
Oregon, 1.9 million acres.
Pennsylvania, 25,000 acres.
Puerto Rico, 24,000 acres.
South Carolina, 8,000 acres.
South Dakota, 80,000 acres.
Tennessee, 85,000 acres.
Texas, 4,000 acres.
Utah, 4 million acres.
Vermont, 25,000 acres.
Virginia, 394,000 acres.
Washington, 2 million acres.
West Virginia, 202,000 acres.
Wisconsin, 69,000 acres.
Wyoming, 3.2 million acres.

TOTAL: 58.5 million acres.

Clinton Administration’s attempt to shut out state and local voices in the management of federal roadless land.” — Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

“This is a classic example of the Bush administration trashing our democracy and trashing our forests. Today, the clean drinking water, wildlife and recreational opportunities of our wild forests are severely damaged.” — Bryan Bird, forest program coordinator for Forest Guardians, a Santa Fe, N.M.-based environmental group.

OREGON: “This administration is not replacing or doing away with the Clinton rule. They’re coming up with a process to protect and manage these important areas, because for the last couple years there has been no rule.” — Chris West with Portland, Ore.-based American Forest Resource Council, who noted that in 2003 a federal judge ruled that the Clinton rule was illegal.

UTAH: “I can’t say that we’re shocked given this administration, but this is really a travesty of a policy. In the course of the process that led to the roadless rule, about four million comments were collected and they were overwhelmingly in favor of protecting the land.” — Heidi McIntosh, conservation director for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.

NATIONAL



Meeting takes umbrage with religious right

BY RICHARD N. OSTLING

AP Religion Writer

NEW YORK — A video screen showed President Bush boarding a plane for Washington. His purpose: To get to the White House and sign Congress' bill asking federal courts to review the removal of Terri Schiavo's feeding tube.

Joan Bokaer of TheocracyWatch.org offered her take on the action. "There's something strange about the folks running our country," she quipped. The audience of 500 people responded with some appreciative chuckles.

Bokaer, from a social action center affiliated with Cornell University, was speaking at a conference last weekend that denounced conservative Republicans on matters like mercy-killing, abortion, gay marriage, research using human embryos, broadcast indecency, Israel, Iraq, faith-based charity funding, judicial nominations and church-state relations. The book table sold assorted Bush-bashing titles.

But the gathering wasn't a Democratic Party caucus.

It was an academic conference at the City University of New York on "the real agenda of the religious far right" — and it offered a fresh example of just how venomous America's conservative-liberal religious split has become and how entangled faith is with politics.

The meeting came as debate about religion's role in politics and government has reached incendiary heights with the Schiavo case, followed by the dispute

over Republican judicial nominees and Democratic Senate filibusters.

At the CUNY conference, the central threat speakers raised was "theocracy" — a label often heard from politicians and liberal pundits in recent days that conservatives consider extremely insulting. The word's dictionary meaning is a regime where clergy monopolize power and impose divine dictates.

Though one speaker lamented Roman Catholicism's new "fundamentalist pope," the weekend's chief targets were evangelical Protestants — whose tactics were compared with those of Machiavelli, Hitler, Stalin and Jim Jones of mass suicide fame.

One speaker described even the Rev. Billy Graham as a theocratic fellow traveler because he wants more Christians involved in public life.

While conservatives would certainly take offense to some of the comments, evangelicals have shown in recent weeks that they also have a touch for remarks guaranteed to irritate or frighten fellow Americans.

Talking about candidates for federal judgeships, Southern Baptist seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. said, "We are not asking for persons merely to be moral. We want them to be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ."

And on ABC's "This Week," Pat Robertson reaffirmed his beliefs that liberal judges are more dangerous to America than anything for centuries, al-Qaida included, that he's dubious about Muslims as judges and that if he were

president he'd allow only Christians and Jews in his cabinet.

The speakers at CUNY offered fierce language, too. Historian Hugh Urban of Ohio State University charged Christian hard-liners with exploiting the "otherwise vacuous figure of George W. Bush" as they plot against democracy.

Charles Strozier, director of a CUNY terrorism center, said the religious right, "emboldened in ways never seen before in American history," is promoting the "basically neo-Fascist schemes of the new Republicans."

No speaker representing religious conservatives was invited to offer a rebuttal. Nor did conferees clarify what religious lobbying is proper or improper.

The Rev. Bob Edgar, a former Democratic congressman and general secretary of the National Council of Churches, strongly favors religious politicking but said in an interview that he draws the line when groups say "we are right and everyone else is evil" or claim that "another point of view is illegitimate." Edgar accuses the religious right of such attitudes. "This may be the darkest time in our history," he told the CUNY conference. "Our very liberties are at stake."

His church council supported the CUNY meeting along with Americans United for Separation of Church and State, People For the American Way and others. The New York Open Center and CUNY were the co-sponsors.

Responding to the meeting, conservatives said their political activism merely

expresses their rights as citizens to advocate, vote and participate in government — the same rights liberals and secularists exercise.

Theocracy labeling is "a very subtle attempt to smear evangelical Christians with what we see happening in the Mideast," said Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council.

Tom Minnery, public policy vice president with Focus on the Family, called the charge "ludicrous." He said the conference indicates the left "is vaporizing in a hysteria of ignorance and vindictiveness. We've never seen anything like it."

Mostly, CUNY conferees backed the theocracy charge by associating the religious right with an extremist movement known as "reconstructionism," "theonomy" or "dominionism." Proponents such as Rousas J. Rushdoony of California's Chalcedon Foundation, who died in 2001, advocated imposition of Old Testament laws.

Evangelical activists deny that this small group influences their thinking.

One nonpartisan expert who wasn't present at CUNY, Rice University sociologist William Martin, agrees that reconstructionists are a tiny fringe, though he does worry that some activists are being tempted toward theocratic thinking.

"Of course religious people have a right to be involved in politics, and we can't expect them to leave their values behind," he said. "The proper response from those who disagree is not to proclaim them as un-American but to try to oppose them in the political arena."

Aloha, California! Mainland buyers heading to Kauai

BY JEANNETTE J. LEE

Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU — The proximity to Hawaii and a large number of wealthy baby boomers looking to retire in the islands are among the reasons Californians top the list of out-of-state property buyers on Kauai, according to real estate agents on the Garden Island.

"There's a strong California influence," said Lou Dubuque, a real estate agent with Century 21 All Islands. "It's easier for them to buy because the flight is pretty short and there's so many Californians here already, they feel very much at home."

Since January 2004, 521 single family homes and condominiums on Kauai have

been purchased by buyers based in California, according to Debbie Evans, a statistician with Honolulu-based Hawaii Information Service, which tracks real estate data. New Yorkers came in second with 196 purchases.

Many real estate agents said sales of Kauai real estate to mainlanders increased dramatically after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks because many no longer felt as comfortable traveling outside the country.

"By flying off the continental U.S. to come to Hawaii, they get the satisfaction of leaving the continent, but remaining in the U.S.," said Jim Pycha, owner and principal broker of REMAX Kauai.

The five- to six-hour flight from California to Hawaii isn't too daunting and many baby boomers from the Golden State

are laying the groundwork for retirement.

"They've made money and want to get their piece of paradise," Pycha said.

In lockstep with the rest of the state, home prices on Kauai have risen in recent years as second-home buyers, investors and current and soon-to-be retirees have stormed the market.

According to Hawaii Information Service, the average price of a single-family house on Kauai was \$627,000 in February, up from \$425,000, or about 48 percent from February 2004. The median price of a condo fell slightly from \$435,000 to \$431,650 for the same period. In Waimea and Koloa, the average residential property price rose from \$275,000 and \$465,000 respectively in 2004 to more than \$1.2 million in each area in

February of this year.

The increase is good for real estate businesses and investors, but has pushed many residents out of Kauai's housing market. The availability of rental housing has dropped as homeowners cash in on now hugely valuable properties, forcing renters to buy a home or leave the island.

"I have a handful of first-time homebuyers, generally younger, and they are forced to have these huge mortgages," said Carol Andrews, a real estate agent with Na Pali Properties.

"We're seeing quite an exodus of residents, a lot are leaving the state for the mainland or Oahu," Pycha said.

In-state purchases of residences and condominiums on Kauai since January 2004 numbered 947, Evans said.

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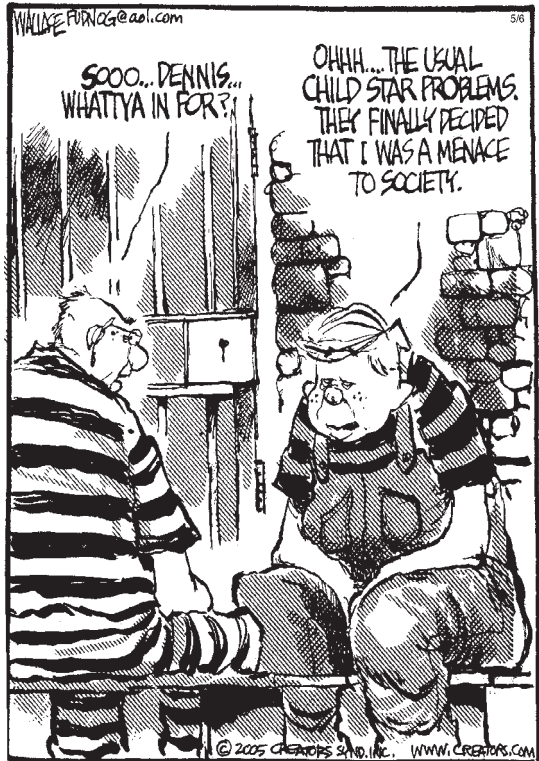


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 - 25 Shirt part
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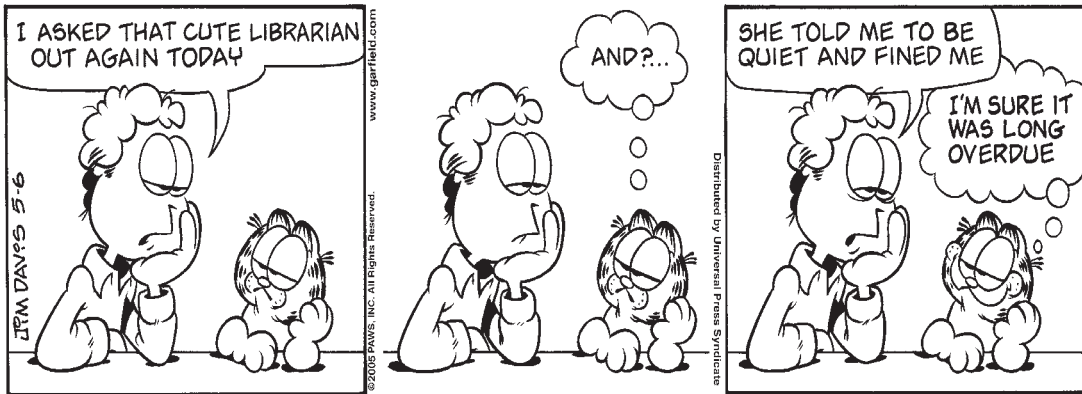
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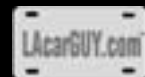
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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 05 0805135 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as JNH Designs, 1777 Westwood Blvd., #200, Los Angeles, CA 90024. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Jerod Helt, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021 This Business is being conducted by, an individual. Signed: The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed on (Date)4/1/2005. /s/: Jerod Helt This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 4/1/2005. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 5/6/2005, 5/13/2005, 5/20/2005, 5/27/2005

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 05 0795292 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as The Abbott Group, 1271 Stoner Ave, #303, Los Angeles, CA 90025. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Loronjac, Inc., 1271 Stoner Ave., #303, Los Angeles, CA 90025 This Business is being conducted by, a corpora-

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tion. Signed: The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed on (Date)10/8/1996. /s/- Loronjac, Inc., President, Jack Brown This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 10/8/1996. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 5/6/2005, 5/13/2005, 5/20/2005, 5/27/2005

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