

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

06, 16, 18, 20, 37

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 4, 2, 3

Evening picks: 2, 7, 9

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 02, Lucky Star

2nd Place: 06, Whirl Win

3rd Place: 09, Winning Spirit

Race time: 1:43.35



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

The Rent Stabilization Board of Berkeley, Calif., which regulates residential rates and fights landlord abuses but which is increasingly frustrated by the sky-high cost of local housing, adopted a tactic in February that could not be successful in many places besides Berkeley: It sponsored a "poetry slam" that invited local citizens to rant against the problems of tenants. The winner of the \$100 first prize attacked the "platonic master/slave relationship" and recalled how his last landlord so traumatized him that he "chose to be homeless for nine months just to escape the memory."



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"One doesn't have a sense of humor. It has you."

— Larry Gelbart



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John Wood/Daily Press

Santa Monica College President Piedad Robertson, SMC board trustee Carole Currey and SMC board chair Herb Roney listen to dozens of teachers, faculty and students about the school's faltering budget on Monday night.

SMC nearing D-day in budget cut decisions

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

Teachers and students at Santa Monica College accused school officials this week of being too rash in cutting entire programs and faculty positions from next year's roster.

They want the school administration to consider an alternative plan that would plug the anticipated \$15 million shortfall in state spending mostly by eliminating certain courses and instituting a series of pay cuts.

About 85 percent of SMC's \$115 million budget comes from the state.

The SMC Board of Trustees will vote May 15 on whether to finalize a March proposal to eliminate 10 academic programs, lay-off 13 full-time teachers and reassign about 13 administrators to the classroom.

About 150 students, faculty and community members converged on Monday's meeting of the Board of Trustees. More than 70 people spoke to the board, lambasting

members for considering cutting full-time faculty positions that would leave nearly 2,000 students without their courses of study.

"The administration has made up its mind that these program discontinuations are going to happen come hell or high water."

— WILLIAM HOGAN
Professor of architecture

"Once a program is eliminated, it will never come back," said Michael Schwartz, a substitute high school teacher and member of Save Our Schools, an organization that formed in response to the budget discus-

See CUTS, page 5

Merchants go for green

Local businesses push for environment, profits

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

Running a profitable business in Santa Monica doesn't require treading on the environment.

Just look at David Lackman, owner of the Library Alehouse on Main Street.

Lackman for years composted his customers' leftovers in back-

yard garden beds rather than throw them away.

When the city launched a program earlier this year enabling local merchants to recycle unused food, Lackman was first to jump on the bandwagon.

And while the "red wiggler" worms in his Ocean Park garden miss out on half-eaten mahi burgers and side orders of onion rings, Lackman has earned the praise of fellow businesses and city officials.

See MERCHANTS, page 6

Harbor patrol rescues man who jumped from SM pier

By Daily Press staff

A man was rescued from the frigid waters of the Pacific Ocean this past weekend after he jumped off the Santa Monica Pier on a dare from his friends.

At about 5:40 p.m. on Sunday the 25-year-old man jumped off the south side of the pier's fishing deck.

The current immediately swept him to the south underneath the pier. The unidentified man was able to cling onto a piece of PVC piping that hangs down from the pier.

Santa Monica Harbor Patrol officer Matt Anderson jumped in after him and "tubed him," mean-

ing the man was given a rescue to tube to hang on to. Within seconds, harbor patrol officer Eric Castellanos also jumped in to assist in the rescue.

The officers swam the victim to the 1600 block of the beach, where he suffered from hypothermia. He was treated and released. He was cited for jumping off the pier, an act that is illegal in Santa Monica.

Conditions in the ocean that afternoon were sketchy — 59 degrees, one- to three-foot waves and a heavy chop. Had the man not been able to cling onto the PVC piping and wait to be rescued, he might not have been able to survive, authorities said.

Wedding photographer in custody in LA County

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

A local wedding photographer who allegedly bilked 40 couples out of about \$2,000 each was arrested last week and is scheduled to go before a judge today.

Juli Anne Armitage was arrested and taken into custody in Ventura on April 28 for repeatedly failing to appear in court to answer to criminal charges levied by the Santa Monica City Attorney's Office nearly five months ago.

She was transferred to the Twin Towers Correctional Facility in downtown L.A. on May 2. Her bail is set at \$50,000.

Armitage faces 17 counts of fraud. She is accused of taking her clients' money and failing to come through with their wedding albums.

She has said that she simply got behind in dealing with her clients

and is guilty of bad bookkeeping but nothing more.

Armitage, who works a second job waiting tables in Ventura, blames the city for worsening the situation by seizing her property and said the charges were only filed after she demanded her negatives be returned so she could deliver finished albums to her clients.

Couples that have hired Armitage describe her as flaky but good-intentioned and wonder how she got tangled up in such a mess.

Armitage, who declared bankruptcy and cleared about \$100,000 in debt earlier this year, has a history of not showing up in court that stretches back to about a dozen small claims trials she's been involved in with clients, according to court documents.

After a series of no-shows and other delays in the criminal case

See ARMITAGE, page 5



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Pisces, take a midweek break



JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

★★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★★-Average
★★-So-so ★-Difficult

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, May 7, 2003:

Say what you mean and mean what you say. As a result, others will react very positively to your inquiries and efforts. A partnership could play a significant role in your life. If single, you need to be careful to avoid someone who might be emotionally unavailable. You might not be OK ultimately with this tie, though for some it might work. If attached, take more time alone together, getting more of what you want. You need to work on your relationship together. Your career will expand because of your ability to communicate. CANCER confides in you.

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Ideas pop. New beginnings establish themselves as a result. Take time to brainstorm about finances. Decisions made right now stick and will have positive outcomes. Start talking about what you want; don't overthink it. Make a gesture to a loved one. He or she finds you to be gracious. Tonight: Show off your stuff.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Use today to clear out excessive paperwork, return calls and handle as much interpersonal work as possible. Consider what someone says who often is a fountain of ideas. Brainstorm away with this person. Make anything possible. Tonight: Meet with a pal, but still count on an early night.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ You might think twice or even three times about information that comes forward. Good news will soon head your way. Use your sixth sense with a money matter, though you might choose not to act on it immediately. Get different ideas from others. Tonight: Make a team effort.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Aim high. A friend makes a suggestion to which the only answer is "yes." Brainstorm, network and work with good ideas. Your sense of possibilities opens up. Don't accept a "no"; make "yes" the only answer. Find your path. Tonight: Whatever makes you happy.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Continue to step back. Timing is such that you do not want to take an important action now. What might be significant is to start an information-gathering project. You know what is workable; keep searching for an answer. Someone you count on gives you a lot of suggestions. Tonight: Nap and then decide.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Information heads your way that might be too good to turn away from. Though you might want to verify your source, you know you're right-on. Head down the natural path, and you'll discover that you are going the right way. You don't have to push. Tonight: Celebrate.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ You might want to rethink a decision, especially if a partner doesn't agree. Check out what might be going on with this person and where he or she is headed. You might not want to push much harder than you already are. Pull back. Listen. Tonight: Make time for that special person.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Needless to say, you cannot change another's mind, but you need to think through a decision. Be more upbeat in how you approach a source of information. This person means a lot to you. Others offer different opinions. Listen. Tonight: Relax with a good book.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ An associate runs the show, but you have to come up with the answers. Request feedback from those in your workplace as well as in your day-to-day life. Interact with individuals rather than a group. Don't slack on work, if possible. Tonight: Save time for a favorite person.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Others find you and demand a lot. Realize more of what you want through an animated conversation. Intuitively you know how to please someone close. Why not do just that? You could make everyone's life much happier! Tonight: Go along for the ride.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Listen well to someone's suggestion. This person means business. Don't do anything halfway right now, and success will head your way. Though a meeting's agenda could change halfway through it, you don't need to get uptight. Think before you leap. Tonight: Relax first, then decide.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Your creativity emerges as you deal with the many different people in your life. Loosen up with a boss who can be controlling, and you'll come up with solutions. Your generosity of spirit emerges with a higher-up. You understand what this person means. Tonight: Take a midweek break.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite #202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401

PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa ross@smdp.com

EDITOR
Carolyn Sackariason sack@smdp.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Jason Auslander jason@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER
John Wood wood@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Del Pastrana del@smdp.com

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Alex Cantarero alex@smdp.com

CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE
Mitch Troy mitch@smdp.com

CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE
Angela Downen angela@smdp.com

CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE
Paula Christensen paula@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
William Patnosh william@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Rob Piubeni rob@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Keri Aroesty keri@smdp.com

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Robert Deamicis Rob@smdp.com

CIRCULATION
Kiutzu Cruz kiutzu@smdp.com

SPECIAL PROJECTS
Dave Danforth dave@smdp.com

STAFF MASCOT
Maya Furukawa ross@smdp.com

LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Dancers with disabilities perform at 'Unrecital'

By Daily Press staff

Dancers with disabilities will perform self-choreographed pieces at the Fourth annual Chance to Dance "Unrecital" at 1:30 p.m. on May 18 at the Memorial Park dance studio, located at 1401 Olympic Blvd.

The performance will include individual, collective and structured improvisational works performed by teens and adults.

The performance is a culmination of a year's worth of dancing work in two separate classes: Chance to Dance, a creative therapeutic dance class, and the Choreography and Production Workshop. The classes are offered in cooperation with the City of Santa Monica Division of Therapeutic Programs.

The performance is free, but a \$10 tax-deductible donation is encouraged. Donations help pay for scholarships, music, props and developing new programs.

Julian Earls to speak at SMC graduation

By Daily Press staff

Dr. Julian M. Earls, deputy director for operations at NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, will be the speaker at Santa Monica College's 73rd commencement ceremonies Tuesday, June 17.

About 700 students are expected to receive their Associate of Arts degrees at the graduation ceremony, scheduled for 6 p.m. at Corsair Field, 1900 Pico Blvd.

Described as a "Renaissance" man, Earls has had a long and distinguished career at NASA and as an author, educator and humanitarian. In his current post, he oversees the day-to-day operations of a center with a budget of approximately \$650 million and 3,500 employees.

He is the recipient of many awards and honors, including the Rank of Meritorious Executive in the Senior Executive Service conferred by President Clinton and Black College Graduate of Distinction by the National Urban League.

He is the author of 27 publications, both technical and educational, and has been a visiting professor at many universities, as well as an adjunct math professor at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland. He also lectures extensively nationwide.

Earls is involved in many organizations, including the President's Initiative on Race and the NAACP.

He received his bachelor's degree in physics from Norfolk State University, a master's in radiation physics from the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and a doctorate in radiation physics from the University of Michigan.

Carnival to benefit Grant Elementary School

By Daily Press staff

Grant Elementary School is holding a carnival on May 17 from 1 to 7 p.m. to raise money for the school.

The carnival will include a silent auction, raffle, rides, games, bouncers, a live jazz band and DJ and homemade tamales and other treats.

The Fiesta de Mayo Carnival is good entertainment for elementary school students, pre-schoolers and their families, organizers say. Admission is free and all proceeds from individual ticket sales go directly to the school.

Grant Elementary School is located at 2368 Pearl St. For more information, contact Kathleen at (310) 450-1329.

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No surf and persistent winds make Homer go crazy.

The southwest swell continues to make it in where it can, but it's shadowed and inconsistent — and what little is here will fade throughout the day.

Good news: The northwest wind swell will stick around in the background.

Bad news: The annoying southwest winds will stick around too. And before the week is over, some onshores from the south will probably hit us.

Outlook: Maybe summer will come after all. New south swells are expected later this week and early next week.

The Water Today Is:
60°

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

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The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District is in desperate need of money. It must find ways to make up \$13 million a year, which used to come from the State of California.

During last year's election, voters defeated Measure EE, which would have provided some relief for the beleaguered district.

Now, the district has come up with another solution: Measure S. If passed by voters in a special election on June 3, the measure would levy a \$225 tax on every parcel of land in Santa Monica

and Malibu, thereby providing \$6.5 million a year for six years to the district.

So, this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you plan to vote for Measure S? Why or why not? If not, what else could the district do to generate the much-needed money?"

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



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OPINION

LETTERS

SMC's hands tied when it comes to budget

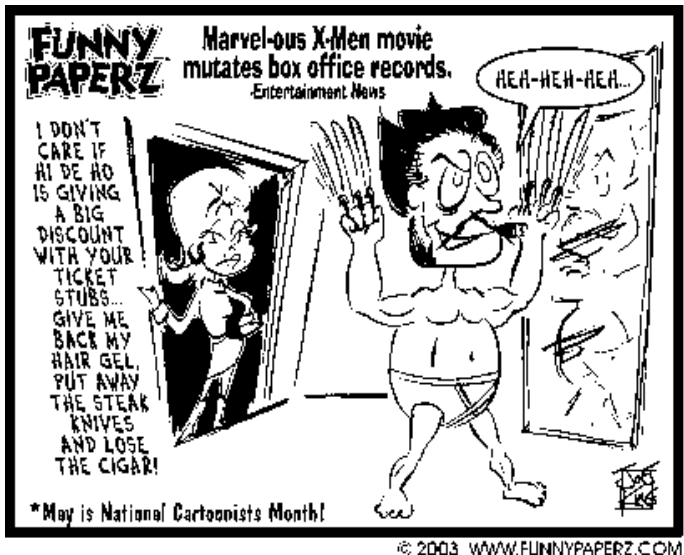
Editor:

There are several points in Eric Roth's letter (SMDP, May 6) that need to be addressed. First, using monetary measurements as a justification for firing SMC personnel is not wise. There are teachers at SMC that make over \$100,000 (and rightfully so). By Roth's own assertion, we should fire teachers that make too much money. Second, the Madison Theater will be built through private funding, coupled with state and federal grants, not from the general fund. Third, the idea of charging students more who have attained a bachelor's degree is out of SMC's jurisdiction. Most of the policies, including price adjustments, are fixed at the state level. Fourth, it is not a myth that Gov. Gray Davis is to blame. He is. The board of trustees certainly were not the ones who cut \$160 million to California's community colleges, or proposed over \$400 million in cuts the following year.

After all, something had to budge when Gray Davis gave salary hikes to the prison guards, and dedicated funds to build more prisons. Fifth, budget cuts last year used up SMC's reserve funds. There's nothing left.

Finally, two points about Eric Roth's assertions regarding Measure U. First, the implication that Measure U was not about the students and teachers is ludicrous. The modernization of new facilities are essential to the quality of education. That's why the Associated Student Body gave \$115,000 to the Measure U Committee, and the Faculty Association endorsed Measure U. Secondly, Measure U was passed under Proposition 39, which mandates that bond money cannot be used for operational expenses. Simply, diverting funds from Measure U would violate state law.

Joe Weichman
Santa Monica



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Government of the people, by the people, for the people?



INCITES

By Ed Silverstein

The Bush administration handed Haliburton a no-bid Iraq reconstruction contract worth up to \$7 billion, is deep-sixing FCC media ownership rules and is rushing to deploy a ridiculously expensive and highly questionable missile defense system. He has gutted environmental protections and is pushing a tax cut that has been lambasted by every respectable economist including Alan Greenspan.

The President peppered his administration with former Enron executives who in turn refused to intervene when Californians were being defrauded out of billions of dollars in a bogus energy crisis created by, among others, their former employer. And in a move akin to foxes providing security for the chicken coop, Bush directed Vice President Cheney to meet secretly with energy conglomerate executives to plot our national energy policy.

Gov. Gray Davis accepted more than \$250,000 in contributions from the prison guard's union, then gave them a \$500 million salary increase just prior to announcing that California would face a record \$35 billion deficit. And while in the midst of trying to trim back that deficit, he is again soliciting campaign contributions from lobbyists and big money supporters all anxious to insure that they retain their

piece of the diminishing pie. Is it any wonder the governor is fighting for a tax hike?

Then there's Mayor Hahn who awarded a \$33 million airport construction contract to Tutor-Saliba — a major financial backer — despite the fact that they had been found by a Superior Court judge to have previously falsified claims on MTA work. Now, by threatening a veto, Hahn has delayed and possibly scuttled 60 Los Angeles ethics rule changes that would have eliminated or minimized just such influence buying contributions. The City Council, under pressure from the plumbing and pipe-fitters union, is dragging its feet on a revolutionary no flush urinal that saves up to 40,000 gallons of water per unit per year. The union cites "safety concerns," rather than the lack of an (frequently repaired) flusher mechanism, as the reason for their objections.

Beverly Hills allowed oil companies to operate 18 well heads and a natural gas refining system beneath their high school, ignoring a report that admitted that the complex could cause health risks or even an explosion. In fact there was an explosion, but it was in the cancer rates of those who had attended the school.

The L.A. Unified School District is being investigated for allegedly overpaying for their headquarters site, which is owned, in part, by supporters of the current board. The building has a history of construction defects and will require tens of millions to refurbish and repair.

In Santa Monica, SMRR, the ruling political party, collects donations under the guise of keeping rents low then pursues agendas, such as the school parcel

tax, that will result in increases for renters. The heavily union financed SMMR had party councilpersons push a living wage bill that exempted union businesses from living wage increases.

All of this proves one thing. America has the best government money can buy. Contributions from corporations and special interests have hijacked our electoral system and corrupted it at every level. We pay higher income taxes to support corporate welfare. Our tax dollars support research and development of prescription drugs yet we pay the highest prices. Corporate corruption is running rampant, leaving employees without pensions, retirees without savings and Americans victimized by deadly or defective products even while CEOs collect record salaries and perks. And is there anyone who believes that we would have gone to war against Iraq if there were no oil?

Our political system has degraded to the point that every legislative decision is weighed against the contributions it will gain or lose rather than the benefits for Americans. We are being sucked dry by corporate greed and the message it sends will debase the morality of a generation.

So what can we do?

Campaign finance reform is crucial, but every bill faces nearly insurmountable hurdles. The McCain/Feingold bill is a prime example. In its original form it was groundbreaking and promising, but it had to pass through a gauntlet of, to paraphrase Arianna Huffington, "pigs at the corporate trough."

Though savaged by the Republican leadership, the bill still proved too onerous

for George Bush.

The President reneged on a promise to McCain and held up the appointment of a Democrat to the Federal Election Commission permitting the existing commissioners to approve numerous loopholes.

Finally passed into law, the bill was further victimized by constitutional court challenges. On Friday key provisions, including the ban on soft money, were struck down leaving McCain/Feingold barely clinging to life support. The only chance for meaningful reform is a campaign finance constitutional amendment that provides strict guidelines and broad regulatory powers over electoral financing, advertising and solicitation. But don't hold your breath.

What's left is for voters to ... vote. Tell your local, state and national representatives that you are sick and tired of a government of big money, by big money and for big money. If they're not willing to change (and that means more than lip service) vote against them and don't be afraid to cross party lines. Recalling Gov. Gray Davis would be a perfect place to start.

If we don't force our representatives off the corporate teat, then we will continue to relegate life-altering decisions on our health, education, environment, safety and war to those who make cigarettes, SUVs, asbestos and bombs.

(Ed Silverstein is a freelance writer living in Santa Monica. No contributions were accepted in the writing of this column. Comments can be e-mailed to: edsincites@aol.com).

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

DID YOU KNOW?: Recent studies show that 50% of the world's biodiversity is found on only 2% of its surface: one such species' hotspot exists within the continental United States: the Mediterranean region of California.

LOCAL



SMC faces budget deadline

CUTS, from page 1

sions. "You can't save a program by eliminating it."

The student group has thrown its weight behind a joint recommendation by the Academic Senate, a group of faculty members that oversees academic issues, the Faculty Association, the union that represents teachers, and the Budget Committee, which is made up of teachers, workers, students and administrators.

The alternative plan outlines different courses of action for the best-, mid- and worst-case budget scenarios that add up to a total of nearly \$14 million in savings and an additional \$4 million in accrued reserve funds.

Most of the savings under the best-case scenario come from pay cuts and early retirement incentives. Under the mid-case scenario, 10 percent of classes would be cut, along with weekend classes and some counseling. The worst-case scenario calls for an additional 20 percent cut in classes and further cuts in counseling.

But Gordon Dossett, president of the Academic Senate, said school officials don't seem to be interested in the proposal.

Dossett, who presented the recommendations to the board Monday night, said no one in the school's administration has acted on the proposals, which were presented to SMC president Piedad Robertson last week.

"We've come up with proposals that continue people's work here, continue the programs, so that students can continue on with their education and we've yet to hear specific criticisms of what is wrong with these three scenarios," he said.

"If it's such a good idea," he added, "And the board said, 'Yes, it's a good idea,' then the board could have acted yesterday. 'Instead they said, 'Thank you.' Period."

Herb Roney, the president of the Board of Trustees, said the board is currently considering a wide range of options to deal with the budget crisis, but added it is unrealistic to think that no positions or programs will be lost in the process.

"The bottom line is, I think, yes, we will eliminate some of those programs," he said. "Is the door closed? No. Is there discussion taking place? Sure."

"People think nothing is being looked at," he added. "Everything is being looked at. The board is still looking at every proposal, suggestion, everything."

Roney dismissed the charge by some students and faculty that the board is a rubber stamp for an overzealous administration set on cutting programs primarily geared towards working class students and low-income workers. They accuse SMC administrators of being more concerned about establishing the college as a

school for the elite and trying to position it to be a four-year university.

"It's a matter of money," Roney said. "By our discussions and working with Sacramento it appears that we will have a very difficult scenario to deal with, and it's just a very unfortunate situation."

While students, teachers and other school workers wait for the final word on lay-offs, a separate hearing that challenges the legality of the firings is expected to be resolved May 7.

"We've come up with proposals that continue people's work here, continue the programs ..."

— GORDON DOSSETT
President of the Academic Senate

William Hogan, faculty leader for the SMC Architecture Program, said his future at the school is up in the air. Hogan, who is pushing for the Academic Senate's recommendations, said he faces an uphill battle.

"The administration has made up its mind that these program discontinuations are going to happen come hell or high water," he said. "The faculty is upset. The classified employees are upset. The students are upset. And I think once the larger community in Santa Monica finds out what's going on, they're going to be upset too."

Hogan said the current budget talks have less to do with money than they do with power.

"This was done in the dark of night, behind closed doors and was really railroaded through," he said, adding that he didn't know his position was in jeopardy until three days before the proposal was passed. "I believe this is a move to intimidate tenured faculty and classified employees to say 'You might be next and you better watch out and listen to what we say.'"

But board members and administrators blame the state. They say all of California's 208 community colleges are being asked to shoulder their part of an estimated \$161 million cut in funding for next year. Though only a handful are eliminating full-time positions to deal with that shortfall, Roney said the board must keep all its options open.

"It is very difficult," Roney said. "The only reason we're here is because we have a real sense of dedication. We love this college, its staff and what it's done. We are caught in the middle. It's just unbelievable."

Photographer to face judge

ARMITAGE, from page 1

against her, Armitage pleaded innocent to the charges in March. She was reportedly offered a plea bargain by Deputy City Attorney Adam Radinsky that would have reduced the charges to four counts.

Armitage told the Daily Press she wouldn't accept the plea because she felt the case should be handled in civil court.

Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Bernard Kamins, who issued a bench warrant for Armitage in February,

refused to release Armitage on Monday without the \$50,000 bail.

If convicted, Armitage faces a maximum of up to one year in jail and \$2,700 in fines and penalties for each of the 17 counts. The city also will seek restitution for the remaining 23 couples who are not part of the criminal charges but who haven't allegedly been reimbursed by Armitage.

Cathy Pattinson, Armitage's public defender, has declined to comment throughout the case.

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The Library Alehouse
The Real Earth Environmental Company
ZJ Boarding House &
Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center



LOCAL

ZJ's employees praised for skateboarding to work

MERCHANTS, from page 1

The Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday announced four grand prize winners of the eighth annual Sustainable Quality Awards, recognizing successful businesses that are socially responsible and environmentally friendly.

The Alehouse took the top honors at the chamber's luncheon, with Lackman's commitment to recycling, water preservation and sponsorship of local clean-ups being at the forefront of his qualifications.

"Everything done at the Alehouse is done with a higher purpose in mind," said Deborah Davis, who emceed the event. Davis is a past winner of the award for her company Cleaner by Nature, a local business that offers alternatives to dry cleaning.

Lackman, who told attendees his restaurant has many more changes still to make, encouraged other merchants to contact the city about their sustainable business programs.

"It's the right thing to do," said Lackman, who opened his restaurant in 1995. "I care about the planet and I care about Santa Monica."

Zuma Jay Boardinghouse, Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and the Real Earth Environmental Company also took home grand prize awards for sustainability.

ZJ Boardinghouse, a surf, snow and skate shop, was recognized for using materials that aren't abrasive to the environment and for an electrical retrofit that has cut their energy costs by 45 percent.

Chamber officials also pointed to ZJ's employee relations. ZJ employees enjoy matching IRA plans and a profit-based bonus program.

What's more, 50 percent of ZJ's staff is local and commute to work exclusively on skateboards, Davis said.

Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center also took home an award. The 337-bed hospital employs more than 1,200 workers and was recognized for progressive benefit packages and employee feedback programs.

**"It's the right thing to do.
I care about the
planet and I care about
Santa Monica."**

— DAVID LACKMAN
Library Alehouse, owner

The hospital was praised for instituting a chemical waste reduction program that has reduced medical waste over the past two years by 45 percent.

The fourth winner of the award this year was a super small company.

With only three full-time employees, the Real Earth Environmental Company, which sells a wide variety of environmentally friendly business supplies, still manages to provide workers full health insurance and a profit sharing plan. They also use all environmentally products themselves.

Four companies received the Excellence Award for Stewardship of the Natural Environment at the event.

Real Food Daily, Vidiots, Mani's Bakery and Duke's of Malibu were honored for incorporating sustainable practices into their everyday efforts.

"These businesses ... are real leaders in our community," said Dean Kubani, the city's sustainability coordinator. "We as residents and business leaders in our community should be very proud."

Court rules Malibu can't vote on state imposed coastal plan

By The Associated Press

MALIBU — Residents in this seaside celebrity enclave lack the right to a popular vote on a state-imposed, land-use program, a court ruled Tuesday.

"We are disappointed with the court's decision," said Malibu City Attorney Christi Hogen. "Malibu is the only coastal community in California to have been completely robbed of its authority to adopt its own local coastal program."

Under state law, local governments must come up with a management plan for coastal areas that balances the public's right to beach access with protection of the environment and private property.

But after more than a decade, Malibu had failed to come up with a plan — bogging down the commission's meetings

with numerous local permit disputes.

As a result, the state Legislature ordered the commission to develop its own plan for Malibu, which the commission approved in September.

Opponents of the plan began to collect signatures to hold a referendum on it soon after.

Coastal Commissioner Pedro Nava said he was not surprised by the decision.

"I would hope that the citizens of Malibu would pull together and begin to accept the legitimacy of this local coastal plan," he said.

Hogen said the city has not decided whether it will appeal the Los Angeles County Superior Court ruling.

The city has a separate lawsuit challenging the commission's plan that will likely be heard by a judge in late summer.



STATE



Feds obtain guilty pleas in SoCal loan fraud scheme

BY PAUL CHAVEZ
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — The last of seven defendants charged in a mortgage fraud scheme that targeted first-time home buyers who spoke little or no English have pleaded guilty in federal court, officials said Tuesday.

The defendants were arrested in January after a 20-month investigation into the scheme that operated in Kern, Ventura, Los Angeles and San Diego counties. The scheme cost victims as much as \$1.6 million cumulatively and generated about \$13.4 million in fraudulently obtained loans, said Rosa Alvarado, an investigator with the Secret Service, which conducted the probe.

Elisa Lugo, 42; her daughter, Gabriela Orozco, 21; and Manuel Ponce, 56, all of Port Hueneme; and Margarita Zapico, 24, of Oxnard, pleaded guilty late Monday to charges related to the scheme and avoided a trial, said Mark Aveis, an assistant U.S. attorney in the terrorism and organized crime section.

Shari Dominguez, 44, of Mission Hills, and Francisco Astorga, 30, of Oxnard, pleaded guilty last week and Maria Gregoria Zavala, 36, of Covina, pleaded

guilty several weeks ago, Aveis said.

The seven were charged with various crimes ranging from identity theft and loan fraud to conspiracy to commit loan fraud.

Lugo has been in federal custody and will remain detained until her sentencing, Aveis said. Ponce also has been in custody, but was scheduled to be released Tuesday after having his bond modified. The other five defendants were already released on bond.

Aveis declined to comment on the recommended sentences. The government will seek restitution for the victims, he said.

Marc Wasserman, an attorney for Zavala, said that his client did not know the magnitude of the scheme. He declined further comment. Telephone calls made Tuesday to the remaining defendants' attorneys were not immediately returned.

Over a seven-year period, the conspirators used false documents to obtain bank loans and, in other instances, the identities of loan applicants were used to secure loans without their knowledge, officials said. Some of the victims who spoke little or no English made mortgage payments directly to the conspirators or invested the equity from their homes in fictitious investment plans.

'Welcome Back Kotter' actor Hilton-Jacobs arrested

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Actor Lawrence Hilton-Jacobs, who appeared in the "Welcome Back Kotter" television series, was arrested for investigation of misdemeanor domestic battery for allegedly pushing a woman friend to the ground during an argument, police said.

Hilton-Jacobs, 49, was roller-skating with the 42-year-old woman at Venice Beach when two officers heard a commotion about 2:30 p.m. Sunday, investigated and arrested the actor, said police spokes-

woman Officer Grace Brady.

Brady said there were no visible injuries to the alleged victim, whose name was not released.

The actor was booked, with bond set at \$20,000, and was released from custody late Monday.

Hilton-Jacobs did not immediately return a call for comment placed through his agent, Fran Tolstonog.

The actor played Freddie "Boom Boom" Washington on the high school problem-student TV series.

Man pleads guilty to fraud and money laundering charges

BY DON THOMPSON
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — A Canadian citizen has pleaded guilty to federal money laundering and fraud charges in Sacramento for running an Internet investment fraud scheme that netted more than \$60 million from more than 15,000 victims.

Alyn Richard Waage, 56, of Nisku, a town in the Canadian province of Alberta, was extradited from Costa Rica in December to face charges related to the Tri-West Investment Club.

Prosecutors allege Tri-West bilked investors by using new investor funds to make "dividend" payments to earlier investors who purchased "prime bank notes" that didn't exist.

Waage pleaded guilty Monday to mail and wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering charges, and faces a July 14 sentencing.

He's cooperating with prosecutors and promising to make restitution to the scam's victims.

Waage also promised in a 51-page plea agreement not to fight the government's seizure of millions of dollars worth of property in Costa Rica and Mexico, a yacht, a helicopter, motorcycles and more than a dozen cars. Federal authorities are also seeking millions of dollars in dozens of bank accounts in Latvia, Mexico and Costa Rica, and about \$243,000 in cash seized in Costa Rica in Sept. 2001.

Those assets were controlled by Waage through 33 companies, the plea agreement said.

In return, prosecutors agreed to recommend his sentence be at the low end of federal sentencing guidelines for his crimes, and to potentially seek an even shorter sentence if Waage fully cooperates.

With his full cooperation, they also agreed to consider recommending a reduction in the sentence of Waage's son, Cary Alyn Waage, 26, who pleaded guilty to related mail fraud and money laundering charges in April 2001, and to drop charges against Michelle Higgins, Alyn Waage's wife.

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STATE

Flurry of otter deaths could endanger species

BY DON THOMPSON
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — California sea otters' coastal environment may be so severely altered that the species could be in jeopardy, researchers at the University of California, Davis, said Tuesday.

The researchers found the sea otters are dying in geographic clusters and from newfound diseases — including a disease that makes them four times more likely to be killed by sharks.

The study came before 100 more southern sea otters washed up on California beaches this year, further reducing a population of about 2,000 that has been dwindling since 1995.

The otters were hunted to near extinction for their luxuriously soft pelts by early in the last century. Their range once extended the length of the West Coast, but now is limited to California's central coast.

In a normal population, the young and old are the most likely to die. But nearly half of the dead California otters — 47 percent — were in their adult prime, between the ages of 4 and 9 years old. Those otters also are in their prime breeding years, multiplying the impact of their loss.

The researchers and the California Department of Fish and Game studied 105 adult sea otters that died between February 1998 and June 2001.

Disease killed nearly two-thirds — 64 percent — of the animals. Of those, 38 percent died from parasites, including thorny-headed worms.

Otters infected with one type of protozoa were four times more likely to be killed by sharks, the study found for the first time. The parasite invades the otter's brain where it can cause seizures, or make the animals confused or disabled.

"They would be less able to evade sharks, more likely to swim to unprotected

ed offshore waters, and more likely to shake and twitch, which attracts sharks," said the study's lead analyst, Christine Kreuder, a veterinarian at the UC Davis Wildlife Health Center.

That parasite caused brain infections that killed half the otters found near Morro Bay. The shark attacks that can be a secondary cause of death, however, were clustered farther north, between Santa Cruz and Point Ano Nuevo.

The parasite is found in domestic cat feces, while a second parasite is found only in opossums' droppings. A separate UC Davis study is trying to track how those land-based parasites get into the water, though storm water runoff is suspected.

The study also found five of the six otters found along a 1 1/4-mile section of coastline in southern Monterey Bay died from eating a diet unusually high in sand crabs, which carry parasitic worms that can cause fatal abdominal infections.

Heart disease also is killing otters, the researchers discovered, though they're now looking for the virus or bacteria they think is causing the unusual heart problems.

The overall frequency of the disease deaths "indicates that the ecosystem is very unhealthy," said Jonna Mazet, who directs the university's Wildlife Health Center and leads its other research programs.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last month released a long-delayed recovery plan for the federally protected mammal that blames human activities, from fishing and boating to pollution and oil spills, for the species' decline.

Kreuder presents the findings Sunday at the International Association of Aquatic Animal Medicine annual meeting, and they are expected to be published in the Journal of Wildlife Disease. On Monday, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's annual spring otter count begins, with results expected next month.

Palo Alto City Council says that frowning is OK

By The Associated Press

PALO ALTO — Palo Alto City Council members have smiled on the idea of making faces at one another during public meetings.

The council had tried to do away with frowning as part of a proposed code of conduct. But on Monday, council members voted unanimously to adopt the code but remove language discouraging elected officials from using facial expressions that show "disagreement or disgust" at public meetings.

"It could have been so much simpler than we made it," council member Jim Burch said after the vote. "We complicated it beyond good civil behavior."

The broad proposal on body language, which critics said could be interpreted as infringing on the First Amendment's guarantee of free expression, made Palo Alto's council the butt of many jokes.

The intent, said council member Judy Kleinberg, was to eliminate intimidation that arises when colleagues act aggressively or rudely.

Council member Nancy Lytle wrote a memo suggesting the code be reworded to ask for "respectful silence and decorum, paying and showing signs of attention while colleagues, staff or public have the floor."

But council member Jack Morton said that wording won't work either.

"I don't think it's appropriate for a city council to limit any form of expression — or require a positive form of expression," he said.

DID YOU KNOW?: The first film animation was "Humorous Phases of Funny Faces" made in 1906 by American J. Stuart Blackton.

NATIONAL



Cable TV execs urge for consumer choices with lower prices

BY DAVID HO

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Cable TV executives told senators Tuesday that giving people more freedom to choose channels will help combat skyrocketing cable prices.

Cable bills have risen about 50 percent since 1996. Cable companies say the reason is higher programming costs passed along from networks, especially sports channels.

"Less than 20 percent of our customers are avid sports fans that regularly view sports on TV, but sports programming is disproportionately driving up cable prices for everyone," James Robbins, president and chief executive of Cox Communications Inc., told the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

Atlanta-based Cox, the fourth largest cable company with 6.3 million customers, says it pays \$2 per subscriber for the sports channel ESPN, and that price has increased in each of five consecutive years. Last week, ESPN, owned by Walt Disney Co., announced a 20 percent rate increase to cable operators.

Congress requires cable companies to offer a basic service package that includes local broadcast stations. The companies also offer expanded basic packages that typically include bundles of cable networks such as ESPN, CNN and USA. Premium services such as HBO and Showtime cost more.

Cable companies negotiate contracts with the networks to use the channels.

Robbins said one solution to rising rates would be to remove sports and other expensive channels from expanded basic lineups. Instead, consumers could buy the channels individually or in specialized packages.

Charles Dolan, chairman of Cablevision Systems Corp., which serves 3 million customers in the New York area, said he wants Congress to help make that happen by limiting the negotiating tactics of the network owners, who sometimes demand that a channel be placed in a basic package.

Dolan said lawmakers also should eliminate the requirement that consumers buy basic service before they can subscribe to other channels.

"Would the government insist that all customers entering a supermarket to buy a loaf of bread be required to buy a dozen eggs and a quart of milk?" he said.

ESPN and ABC Sports President George Bodenheimer said cable companies are asking for regulations to give them leverage in contract negotiations.

"Ripping ESPN and other popular networks out of basic cable and charging more for them is not pro-consumer," Bodenheimer said in a statement released at the hearing. He said that system would cost consumers more.

Consumer groups support giving people the ability to choose more channels but doubt the cable industry's explanations for rising rates, contending that revenue from advertising and new digital services more than

cover the costs.

"They're the ones who pull the trigger on prices for consumers," said Gene Kimmelman, director of public policy for Consumers Union, the publisher of Consumer Reports magazine. "Cable operators have been showing burgeoning profits to Wall Street, which runs at odds with what they have told their customers and policy-makers."

The cable television industry won deregulation of its rates and service 1984, was re-regulated in 1992, and won deregulation again in 1996.

Kimmelman said deregulation has failed to produce more competition, and a few companies dominate the

cable industry. That gives them the monopoly power to raise prices, he said.

Leo Hindery, chairman and chief executive of the YES Network, a sports channel with exclusive rights to most New York Yankees games, said lawmakers should pass legislation to protect independent programmers.

Cablevision's customers couldn't watch Yankee games during the last baseball season because of a dispute with YES, which insisted on being offered as a basic cable channel. Cablevision wanted customers to pay extra and the two sides reached a temporary truce in March to air the games this year.

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Rent hike voted for rent-stabilized apartments

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Already stretched by a rise in subway fares and water rates, one million city residents in rent-stabilized apartments are worried about the possibility of the largest rent hike in 14 years.

In a preliminary vote, the New York Rent Guidelines Board decided Tuesday on an 8.5 percent increase for two-year leases and 5.5 percent increase for one-year leases.

The increase, approved by a board largely made up of people appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, comes at a time when the city's economy remains sluggish and lawmakers are proposing to increase taxes.

Critics of the plan protested outside the meeting, with some shouting "Shame!" at the board.

A public hearing on the increases will take place on June 17. The final vote is scheduled for June 19 and increases will apply to leases signed between Oct. 1, 2003 and Sept. 30, 2004. Final votes rarely differ from the preliminary vote.

DID YOU KNOW?:

Every person has a unique tongue print.



INTERNATIONAL

S. Korean leader, Bush to discuss N. Korea, U.S. military presence

BY SANG-HUN CHOE
Associated Press Writer

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's president will fly to the United States this weekend to tackle two of his toughest hurdles: resolving the North Korean nuclear threat and reducing his country's decades-old reliance on the U.S. military.

Roh Moo-hyun's weeklong trip, which begins Sunday, comes amid heightened tensions over North Korea's suspected development of nuclear weapons and rising calls for the United States to cut its troops in South Korea.

Defusing the North Korean nuclear crisis will be the key topic of the May 14 White House summit between President Bush and Roh, both known for being plainspoken about their views on the government in Pyongyang.

At a meeting in Beijing in late April, North Korea gave U.S. negotiators a long wish list of political and economic benefits it wants to get in return for giving up its nuclear ambitions, according to U.S. officials. Washington is reviewing the proposal with its allies in Japan and South Korea.

"The outline of how we will respond will become clear after the South Korea-U.S. summit," Ra Jong-il, national security adviser for Roh, said Tuesday.

Since his election last December, Roh has tirelessly called for reconciliation with North Korea and a peaceful solution

to the North Korean nuclear crisis.

He bluntly criticized any possibility of U.S. military action against the North, saying such an attack would trigger a full-scale war on the Korean Peninsula that would devastate the South as well.

Bush says he seeks a peaceful solution too, but has not ruled out military action. Bush pulls no punches when criticizing North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, whom he accuses of "blackmailing" the world and starving his people while pursuing weapons of mass destruction.

The nuclear dispute flared in October when Washington said North Korea admitted running a secret nuclear weapons program in violation of a 1994 treaty.

During the Beijing talks, U.S. officials say, North Korea claimed it already has nuclear weapons and that it had reprocessed spent nuclear fuel for more weapons materials.

On Monday, Secretary of State Colin Powell said impoverished North Korea can count on support from other countries only if it curbs nuclear weapons programs and missile exports as well as other activities such as drug trafficking.

Roh's trip to Washington comes at a sensitive time in the U.S.-South Korea alliance, forged during the 1950-53 Korean War.

By October, the Pentagon is likely to decide on a major realignment — and perhaps a substantial withdrawal — of forces in South Korea.

Post-Saddam rail



Brennan Linsley/Associated Press

An American officer from the U.S. Army 101st Airborne Division sleeps on an Iraqi train, shortly before it was to depart on a 10-hour journey with soldiers for the northern town of Mosul, in Baghdad on Tuesday. The military paid the Iraqis for the use of the train, and its employees, in what was described as the first real post-Saddam test of the Iraqi rail system.

Several months ago, thousands of South Koreans held protests to demand more South Korean jurisdiction over U.S. troops after two girls were killed by a U.S. military vehicle.

Thousands of South Koreans, however, also have rallied in support of the U.S. military's presence as tensions have mounted over the nuclear crisis.

On a TV debate show Thursday, Roh said it was time for South Korea to reduce its dependence on the U.S. military.

"Some people seem to think, 'We will all die if we don't have the U.S. military.'"

This is simply not true," Roh said. "South Koreans are underestimating the self-defense capabilities of their own military."

But Roh complained that the United States and South Korea were "out of step" with each other over when to pull back U.S. troops deployed close to the border with North Korea.

U.S. officials want to redeploy those troops further south or elsewhere in the region or bring them home. South Korean officials believe that such a move would deprive the allies of a key bargaining chip in any talks with North Korea.

In leu of problems, Indonesians argue over pop star's dance

BY CHRIS BRUMMITT
Associated Press Writer

JAKARTA, Indonesia — The world's most populous Muslim nation is battling terrorism, economic despair and separatist guerrillas, but most Indonesians seem obsessed with something else: a

local pop star and her swerving hips.

Just as a gyrating young Elvis Presley tested the limits of American showbiz decency in the 1950s, the way 24-year-old singer Inul Daratista dances is hot news.

Religious conservatives want her banned from the stage. But, hundreds of

supporters have held rallies in her defense — and some even tried to dance like her en masse around the capital city's main traffic circle last week.

A former president, Abdurrahman Wahid, says her dance technique — known as "drilling" — should be defended as matter of free expression. And, Taufik Kiemas, the husband of the current head of state Megawati Sukarnoputri, is a fan.

Arguments for and against Inul's dancing got big coverage in newspapers on Sunday. The respected Koran Tempo devoted three-and-a-half pages to Inul, whose grinding moves to Indonesia's "Dangdut" folk music have made her a celebrity in a matter of weeks.

Dangdut is a throbbing mix of Arabic, Indian and Malay rhythms that became universally popular after evolving in impoverished rural villages and city slums.

As videos of Inul's performances sell fast, Islamic authorities say her dancing is an affront to morality and could lead to an increase in sex crimes.

Indonesia's self-styled "King of Dangdut" Rhoma Irama summoned Inul to his house last week and demanded she apologize for bringing the music genre into disrepute.

"I told her: 'Don't ruin our image, don't break Dangdut's morals with the eroticism and sensuality that you have been practicing up to now,'" Tempo quoted him as saying.

Angry Inul fans have accused Irama, whose music in recent years has embraced Islamic themes, of trying to hold back Inul because she's overtaking his popularity.

Her manager says he fields about 200 calls a day from journalists — and from television stations willing to pay her as much as \$6,000 an hour.

Inul herself appears bewildered by the attention and the controversy seems to be a welcome national diversion as Indonesia grapples with massive problems.

Millions have slipped into poverty as the economy wallows almost six years after Asia's financial crisis hit and led to the fall in 1998 of the dictator Suharto.

Also worrisome is the likely collapse of a peace deal between separatists and government troops in Aceh on the tip of Sumatra island, where 12,000 people have been killed since 1976.

In Jakarta, police are hunting for those who bombed the city's main airport last month, wounding 11. Meanwhile the government seems determined to crush Jemaah Islamiyah, an al-Qaida linked group blamed for last year's Bali bombings, which killed 202 people — mostly foreign tourists.

Suspects in the case are expected to go on trial soon.

The controversy over Inul's dancing comes at a time when Indonesians fret over the rise of Islamic extremism and the future of the nation's secular traditions. But at least one commentator has questioned the fuss.

"The national crisis is never ending ... there are several huge problems that we cannot overcome — and today I find myself writing about someone's posterior," wrote Emha Ainun Nadjib on the front-page of the newspaper Kompas on Sunday.

Appointed to Iraqi civil leader



J. Scott Applewhite/Associated Press

President Bush sits with longtime State Department official L. Paul Bremer, second from left, who is being appointed to be civil administrator in Iraq, in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington on Tuesday. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, just returned from a week-long visit with allies and American troops in the Middle East, sits on sofa at far left, while Secretary of State Colin Powell sits at far right.

SPORTS



San Antonio counts on bench to make things happen

BY T.A. BADGER
Associated Press Writer

SAN ANTONIO — They're San Antonio's second wave, the guys who come into the game cold and try to make things happen while the starters cool down and catch their breath.

And in Monday night's 87-82 playoff victory over Los Angeles, they made all the difference.

The Spurs' bench, led by rookie Manu Ginobili's 15 points, outscored the Lakers' reserves 28-4. They also had more rebounds, more assists and six of San Antonio's nine steals.

Spurs center David Robinson said the current batch of reserves is by far the best in his 14 years with the team, and that they will continue to play a key role as San Antonio strives to beat the three-time defending champion Lakers.

"We have four or five solid guys who come in and do a great job for us," said Robinson, who depends on Malik Rose and Kevin Willis to help him handle Shaquille O'Neal. "At times our bench plays better than our starters play — not many teams can say that."

Meanwhile, Los Angeles may have to look farther down their bench in Wednesday's Game 2 after small forward Devean George severely sprained an ankle late in Game 1 after getting tangled up with Ginobili under the basket.

George, a reserve during the regular season, was pressed into starting duty after Rick Fox was lost for the remainder of the playoffs because of a foot injury sustained in the opening round against Minnesota.

He said Tuesday that the ankle was still sore, but the swelling was down, giving him hope he might be able to play this postseason.

"I'm able to put a little pressure on it, but I'll stay on crutches for another day," George said Tuesday. "If I can continue to progress, I could be back before the series is over."

Kobe Bryant said the injury bug isn't anything the Lakers can't deal with.

"Every position in the triangle (offense) is interchangeable, so we'll be more than adept at moving Robert (Horry) to the three spot," said Bryant, who had 37 points in Game 1. "We'll get Devean back shortly, so for the time being, we'll do our best and move on without him."

O'Neal said the loss of George will be an opportunity for Stanislav Medvedenko, who didn't play at all in Game 1.

"I think Slava's going to be a big help — he can score, he can play," said O'Neal, who had 24 points and 21 rebounds before fouling out late in the game. "We don't need any offensive help, but he's that type of player. He's going to have to step up."

Ginobili had 14 points in the second half, among them a critical 3-pointer in

the fourth quarter. The basket stopped a Spurs freefall during which O'Neal almost single-handedly slashed a 10-point San Antonio lead to 69-68 with six minutes remaining.

The 6-foot-5 guard from Argentina, who made all three of his 3-pointers and had four steals, said he likes the late-game pressure.

"Your stomach feels tight, all the responsibility is on your shoulders," he said. "As far as I can remember, I've always enjoyed those kind of moments."

Pollin must decide whether Jordan is 'best for franchise'

BY JOSEPH WHITE
AP Sports Writer

WASHINGTON — Washington Wizards owner Abe Pollin wants to do what he believes is right for his team this time, even if that means saying goodbye to Michael Jordan.

At his state-of-the-union speech to Wizards employees last week, Pollin gave a hint of his mind-set heading into a crucial meeting with Jordan on Wednesday.

Pollin said while he has been always been a "league guy," he is now going to do "what's best for the franchise," according to two team sources familiar with the speech and speaking on condition of anonymity.

Pollin's clear implication was that he would not be swayed by anyone when he makes his decision about whether to continue his relationship with Jordan, who had planned to return to the Wizards' front office after his two seasons back on the court.

So, it's unclear if Pollin will welcome Jordan back as president of basketball operations next season. He held the job from January 2000 to September 2001, when he announced he would return as a player.

At Wednesday's meeting, Jordan will ask for the same authority he had before. Pollin will want to hear Jordan's plans.

"I'm just hoping that Michael and Mr. Pollin will be able to sit down together and get this resolved," coach Doug Collins said, "so we can move forward."

Despite reports of a rift within the franchise, Jordan said again this week that he wants to return.

"When I came down from the front office to play, I said at that time I wanted to play for two years then resume my duties running the basketball operation," Jordan told The Washington Post. "I always wanted to resume my responsibilities, always."

It's a difficult decision for Pollin, a 79-year-old owner looking for one more title. In the end, he must either turn away the world's most popular basketball personality and start from scratch or give control to someone whose management record is spotty at best.

The meeting comes amid a feeling of general discontent throughout the franchise. Players have been unhappy with Jordan and Collins.

Collins criticized players for being disrespectful. Jordan didn't like his teammates' effort. Pollin's sendoff for Jordan at the last home game was tepid, and his statements about the prospects of Jordan staying on have been surprisingly neutral.

The New York Times reported Sunday that unidentified team executives have concerns about Jordan's work ethic as an executive.

Robinson said he expects O'Neal to come out hard in Game 2, which will up the pressure on himself and Tim Duncan (28 points, eight rebounds Monday), as well as the big men off the bench.

"I'll get some help," said Robinson, who has been plagued with lower back and knee ailments this season. "You're not really going to stop him from getting his points — he's too good for that. But if you can slow him down and make him work a little bit harder, then I think you get your job done."

"If they've got a problem with me, I'd like to hear it from them," Jordan told the Post.

Working against Jordan is his record. The Wizards are 110-179 over 3 1/2 seasons since he became the top decision-maker — he still essentially ran the team while he was playing. He acquired every player on the current roster except Jahidi White, yet the Wizards just finished 37-45 for a second season.

"If they've got a problem with me, I'd like to hear it from them."

— MICHAEL JORDAN

Mighty Ducks' best season getting better and better

BY KEN PETERS
AP Sports Writer

ANAHEIM — The Mighty Ducks don't have to go far to find a kindred spirit as they make a run at their first Stanley Cup title. The World Series champion Angels play right up the street.

With the Ducks' game against Dallas tied in the third period Monday night, the video board at Anaheim Arena showed Scott Spiezio's dramatic three-run homer in Game 6 of the World Series. Next was a shot of the Angels first baseman sitting in a luxury suite holding his young son.

The caption read, "Game 6 karma."

A few minutes later, defenseman Sandis Ozolinsh knocked a rebound past Stars goaltender Marty Turco with 1:06 remaining to give Anaheim to a 4-3 victory. The Ducks clinched the series 4-2 and advanced to their first Western Conference finals.

The Ducks, who swept defending Stanley Cup champion Detroit in the first round then knocked off the top-seeded Stars in the second, seem to be benefiting from an Anaheim "halo" effect.

Steve Thomas, acquired by the Ducks from Chicago at the March 11 trading deadline, and teammate Rob Niedermayer recently visited the Angels' clubhouse.

"Spiezio was kind enough to spend a lot of time talking with me and Rob," said Thomas, who had a goal and three assists in the clinching win over Dallas. "He's a real hockey fan. We were walking around the locker room, and I got to talk to Tim Salmon and Mike Scioscia.

"They're a great bunch of guys, and they can appreciate what we're going through, just as we can appreciate exactly what they went through last year."

The Walt Disney Co. owns both the

Ducks and Angels, but has agreed in principle to sell the baseball team to Arizona businessman Arturo Moreno, and has the hockey team up for sale.

While the Ducks shocked the Red Wings in the opening round, the Angels' improbable run to their first World Series championship last fall included an opening series win over the defending AL champion New York Yankees.

As the Ducks have built up steam in the postseason, the scene at the arena more and more resembles an indoor version of the nearby baseball stadium that was rocking last October.

With fans banging their plastic "Pond Rockers" — white versions of the red "ThunderStix" used by Angels fans last October — and waving "Fowl Towels," the Ducks trailed early against the Stars.

They moved ahead only to see Dallas come back to tie twice, the final time on Brenden Morrow's goal with 5:11 remaining.

The crowd of 17,174 erupted when Ozolinsh scored, and the roar continued several minutes after the game ended.

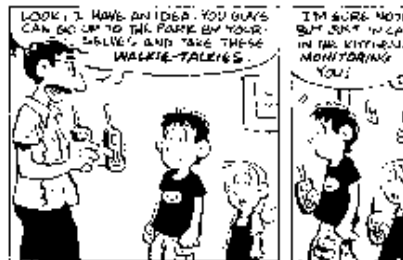
"Anytime you hear that and feel the building shaking, people are into it," said rookie coach Mike Babcock. "The crowd was deafening. We couldn't even communicate with each other."

The Ducks next face the winner of the Vancouver-Minnesota series. The Canucks lead 3-2 heading into Wednesday night's Game 6.

"I'm going to watch," Babcock said. He grinned and added, "I hope they play two more."

Game 7 in that series would be Thursday. Ducks general manager Bryan Murray said the Ducks' first game of the conference finals will be Saturday on the road.

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



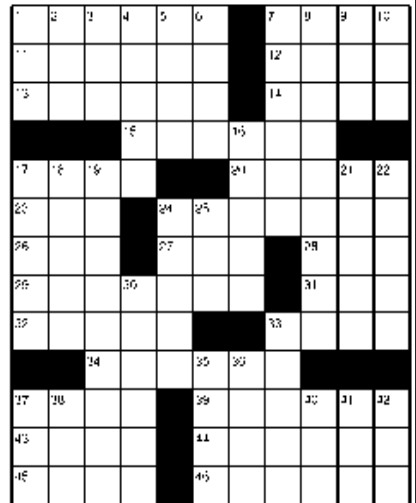
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minute!"	5 Seedy bar
12 Leslie	6 Hearty
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15 Word of	8 Pedro
warning	Almodovar
17 Tardy	movie
20 Jazz bits	9 Pub
23 Wing-like	order
24 Man's	10 Brooch
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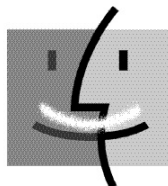
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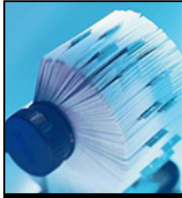
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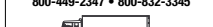
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BACK PAGE



The stresses of snow

By The Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Think you had a stressful day on the job?

Try staring into the landing lights of an airliner as you rush to clear an airport runway of snow. Or try getting through airport metal detectors in steel-toed boots.

At a kind of group-therapy session Monday, more than 500 managers and crewmen swapped stories of stress at the International Aviation Snow Symposium, an annual gathering of those responsible for keeping airports open in the worst of conditions.

A heavy storm can easily cost a big airport a quarter of a million dollars for snow- and ice-removal alone. Add in harder-to-measure costs like operating delays and lost time for travelers, and "it's a wonder we're not all alcoholics," said Dennis McNamee, lead operation engineer at Pittsburgh International Airport.

The headaches range from inaccurate weather reports to squeezing in bathroom breaks and meals for crews when shifts stretch into 24-hour marathons.

Forecasters are often right but sometimes a wind shift

will change the weather picture in a flash. "I bring a whole crew in and nothing happens," Red Givvin said, meaning overtime costs mount.

Horses get a hand wash

By The Associated Press

NORTH PLATTE, Neb. — Washing his horses at a car wash didn't seem like a bad idea to Jess Yager until it turned out to be illegal.

Yager took his four horses to the car wash Monday afternoon to clean them, saying it's hard to clip and trim horses when their hair is caked with mud.

Animal control officer John Pettit was ready to ticket Yager. Pettit told Yager it was against the law to wash his animals at the car wash and let him off with a warning.

Yager said that's news to him since he's been doing it for years. He said the horses love it and prefer the hot water of the car wash over the cold hose at home.

Yager took his animals home, after only two got the soapy treatment.

Thong pedaler gets noticed

By The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — San Antonio Park Police say they've received dozens of complaints about a man riding his bike in the park wearing only a black thong.

The 52-year-old man said he'll keep on pedaling because it's his legal right.

"We all claim to believe in the value of personal liberty, but we don't," Joseph Gottschalk said Monday.

"No one person has the right to outrank the law and tell me what to wear."

By law, Gottschalk is allowed to wear the thong as long as it covers the appropriate parts. Park Police Capt. Raymond Castro said, "He's within his civil rights and legal rights to wear his thong."

Gottschalk added: "It doesn't take much clothing to take care of the requirement."

A hefty library fine

By The Associated Press

VERNON, Conn. — The book Kelly Woodward recently returned to the Vernon Public Library was overdue — by about 94 years. It was due back on May 3, 1909.

At the 1909 rate of 2 cents per day, the late fine would have amounted to \$685. The library directors decided to waive the penalty.

Woodward said she found the 1904 edition of "100 Choice Selections No. 4" edited by Phineas Garrett in her parents' attic. The book is a collection of plays, prose, and poetry. She brought it back to the library in March.

Library spokeswoman Denise Stankovics said the library had no idea that the book was missing from the collection.

Though missing for nearly 94 years, the book won't return to the library shelves.

Instead, it's being kept in a display case in the adult department reading room with other library memorabilia and souvenirs from the 20th century.

"It's a pretty exciting find," Stankovics said. "We're happy the patron was conscientious enough to return the book, even after all these years."



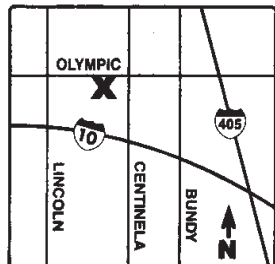
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