REAL ESTATE & BUSINESS
THE REAL DEAL

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REAL ESTATE
HOUSING MARKET CONTINUES SLUMP PAGE 7

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2008

Volume 7 Issue 150



Santa Monica Daily Press

JUDGE STOPS TRAFFIC PLAN
SEE PAGE 3

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE FOLLOWING UP ISSUE

Charges filed against teacher

Beltran faces life in prison for allegedly molesting five students

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

AIRPORT COURTHOUSE Sexual molestation charges were filed on Tuesday against a veteran Lincoln Middle School teacher accused of inappropriate conduct with five female students.

The day after school officials met with parents in a near-capacity auditorium at Lincoln, Thomas Arthur Beltran, 60, was arraigned at the Airport Courthouse on 14 counts of sexual molestation, including eight counts of a lewd act on a child, three counts of continuous sexual abuse and three counts of sexual penetration with a foreign object on a child under 14. His bail was set at $3.3 million.

The married, long-time school teacher, a member of Lincoln Middle School's staff for 20 of his 30 years in the district, was arrested on Saturday in Culver City, a day after investigators interviewed a 12-year-old student who claimed she was sexually abused. During the interview, detectives concluded that there could possibly be other victims, according to the Santa Monica Police Department.

At least one of the five victims was allegedly molested for more than a year, according to authorities.

Beltran, a Los Angeles resident, teaches English as a second language at the National Blue Ribbon School. If convicted, Beltran could face life in prison.

The scene at Lincoln Middle School appeared closer to normalcy on Tuesday, the news cameras that swarmed the campus the day before now gone.

SEE TEACHER PAGE 8


BELTRAN



ON THE WAY OUT

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Workers disassemble the famous Santa Monica Pier Ferris wheel on Tuesday. The Ferris wheel will be replaced in the coming days with a $1.5 million contemporary model that will feature over 160,000 LED lights that use 75 percent less electricity than the old wheel's lighting.

Landlords may raise local rents

BY CHIARA CANZI
Special to the Daily Press

CITYWIDE As residents struggle to fill up their gas tanks and put food on the table, they also have to be leery of rising rents.

In the coming months, landlords may increase rents by as much as 2.7 percent, the recommended annual adjustment set by the Santa Monica Rent Control Board, which looked at the level of inflation for the Los Angeles-Anaheim-Riverside area over the last year.

According to the board's memorandum released on May 1, the increase stems from a rise in the cost of utilities and maintenance.

"I know the figure that the department is recommending, but I haven't given it much thought right now" said Joel Koury, chair of the Rent Control Board, which will consider the increase this Thursday during a meeting at City Hall. "I want to evaluate it and I want to spend the next month or so to try to figure out if it's the best thing for the city."

Some landlords feel that the increase does not truly reflect the cost of maintaining their

SEE RENT PAGE 11


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WHAT'S UP
WESTSIDE
OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Kiwanis Club Meeting
Santa Monica YMCA, Noon — 1:30 p.m.
Come and join the Santa Monica Kiwanis Club — an organization made up of volunteers that provides community support through grants, volunteer hours and much more — for their weekly club luncheon at the Santa Monica YMCA. Members use these meetings to increase fundraising efforts and spread the word on support committees and community events. Special guest speakers will be attending the luncheon. For more information, call (310) 613-1249.

12 Steps For Everybody
16370 Bollinger Dr., Pacific Palisades, 7 p.m. — 8 p.m.
12 Steps for Everybody's one-hour 12-Step Writing Meeting hosts a more intensive practice to the traditional 12-Step program — reading literature, going to meetings, finding a sponsor and then working the 12 Steps. This program is for anyone who would like to join, or anyone with a habitual problem or illness. For more information, call (310) 454-5138, or e-mail info@12stepsforeverybody.org.

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Talking books
1600 Ocean Front Walk, 6:30 p.m. — 8 p.m.
Trained volunteer facilitators lead free public book discussions featuring the Santa Monica Citywide Reads selection "The Highest Tide," by Jim Lynch. No registration is required.

Laugh your chakras off
717 Broadway, 11 a.m.
Led by Kim Selbert, a certified laughter yoga leader, this class utilizes simple and fun laughter exercises to promote better health. Bet you didn't know that you could change your life through the simple act of laughing. This class takes place at Shakti's Elements in Downtown.

The Meathands have it
4455 Overland Ave. Culver City, 8 p.m.
The "Magic Meathands" perform an hour of fully improvised hilarity based on audience suggestions and participation. The show is presented by director Bill Johnson, in a great cafe that offers delicious coffee, food, drinks and comfortable couches. What sets this improv group apart is their personal connection with the audience and community, so their best material comes directly from the people around them. For information, call (310) 559-8868.

What's new this week
2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 1 p.m. — 2:30 p.m.
A free-wheeling review and discussion of the week's key news stories at home and abroad.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.

Judge halts one-way proposal

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

WEST L.A. Westside homeowners and businesses are celebrating after a Los Angeles Superior Court judge temporarily derailed a traffic proposal by L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa for heavily congested Pico and Olympic boulevards.

Judge John Torribio ruled on Monday that the Pico/Olympic Plan would have to fully comply with provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act and undergo an environmental impact study, a victory for homeowners groups and businesses that filed a lawsuit alleging that the mayor was trying to circumvent the public process in pushing the project forward.

The project, endorsed by the mayor and Councilman Jack Weiss, is designed to speed traffic by eliminating nearly all existing street parking along roughly 6 miles of Olympic and Pico during peak morning and afternoon rush hour traffic. Traffic signalization would also be altered to favor a one-way flow, each one in a different direction, creating a one-way type street. The project would stop at the West L.A. border with Santa Monica.

"We are looking closely at the decision, and I'm inclined to move forward with the environmental review to get it done as quickly as possible to relieve traffic in West LA," Weiss said in a statement on Tuesday.

The mayor's office declined to comment on the judge's decision.

Homeowners groups and business organizations came out against the project, fearing impacts to residents who might suffer from cut-through traffic and effects on the small mom and pops that rely on the street parking spaces.

David Anderson, who owns Imprint Revolution, a custom-made T-shirt shop on Pico and Overland Avenue, said that businesses that have on-site parking could also suffer from the loss of street parking, especially since many of the stores have spaces available in the back, away from public view.

"It's the perceived accessibility of the business," Anderson, who opposed the project, said on Tuesday. "If they have to figure out whether there is parking in the back, people might not be likely to go."

The Greater West Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and the Westwood South of Santa Monica Homeowners Association both filed separate lawsuits against L.A. City Hall. The judge merged both of the suits.

SEE STREETS PAGE 12



Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

STUCK IN NEUTRAL: **A Los Angeles Superior Court Judge ruled Monday that a proposal to convert Pico and Olympic boulevards into one-way streets in the city of Los Angeles must fully comply with provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act before it can be implemented.**

Santa Monica in the running to be the most sparkling city

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

DOWNTOWN Santa Monica is in the running to be named America's most sparkling city by [yellow tail] wines. Now it is up to online voters to determine the winner.

"The inaugural 'Search for America's Most Sparkling City' is designed to uncover the most animated, brilliant, lively and vivacious city in the United States," said Mark Lyle, vice president of marketing for [yellow tail] wines. "We thought honoring the cities across the United States that make Americans feel the most 'switched on' would be a fun way to remind them to 'always sparkle.'"

The winner will be unveiled during an event in the winning city the week of July 4. The contest coincides with the launch of a new line of sparkling wines by [yellowtail].

The top 10 nominees were ranked by the highest percentage of respondents as being "sparkling" cities, according to a survey of 900 adults ages 21 and older conducted by Greenfield Online.

More than half of survey respondents said that what makes a city sparkle is "breathtaking scenery" (61 percent) and "great night life" (53 percent), as well as quality restaurants. Americans are encouraged to cast their votes until June 15 at www.yellowtailwineusa.com.

Las Vegas is in the lead, voters feeling that the "entertainment capital of the world" has 68 percent of the qualities that make a sparkling city. New York is in second with 64 percent. The Big Apple, also known as the "city that never sleeps," is home to national treasures including the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, Central Park, Broadway, and Rockefeller Center. Orlando is close behind with 63 percent. San Francisco is in fourth place, followed by New Orleans, South Beach in Miami, San Diego, Santa Monica, Los Angeles and Martha's Vineyard.

"Located along the sultry Pacific Ocean coastline and filled with glamorous urban walkways, gourmet cuisine, and upscale couture fashion boutiques — what's not to love?" one voter said of Santa Monica.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Lack of leadership at Lincoln

Editor:

As a concerned Lincoln [Middle School] parent, I attended the parent information night [Monday] night at Lincoln to get more information on the alleged teacher molestations that reportedly occurred on campus. I was so sad and then shocked to hear Lincoln Principal Komlos focus exclusively on what the students and parents should do. Apparently, it all falls on the victim(s) in this case. And then the counselors can step in after to help. Where are the school's preventative steps and procedures?

Except for her "encouragement" of Lincoln teachers to keep their classroom doors open, she and her staff did not offer any suggestions on what they would do to protect the nearly 1,300 students entrusted under their care. "Keep the door open" sounds like "keep one foot on the floor' – not effective and totally antiquated advice that will not protect our children. There is a clear lack of leadership at Lincoln Middle School.

Dr. Lisette Bauersachs
Santa Monica

More tree talk

Editor:

It is good to see readers write about local happenings with which they agree or disagree; it is a keystone of our democracy.

But, when we take the words and actions of our leaders and their staff at face value; we tend to get into trouble both locally and nationally. It would be even better if we questioned those in authority more, before allowing actions to be taken that are not reversible.

This is what Treesavers and NOMA are doing regarding the 30 plus ficus trees downtown and the 300 plus carob trees in the residential areas north of Montana [Avenue].

We are questioning the background of the so-called "science and analysis" that we are told has gone into declaring all of these trees ... a risk to potentially injuring people. If the risk can be proven, not by just city paid consultants, but outside experts as well; then the trees should be removed. If trees can be saved by proper trimming and support then that should be done to prolong their useful lives, while replacement trees are raised to a decent size. At present, this is not even an option in the city's plans.

Santa Monica pride's itself on being a green city. Just talking the talk though does not get it done.

Our City Council members need to expand their horizons and take better care of our inherited valuable assets. Perhaps we need a tree council like San Francisco that can assist the city where it seems to need help. Listen to your citizens; over 8,000 people have signed petitions to save the ficus trees downtown, thousands more will be working to save viable carob trees.

Our city government should not close its eyes and ears to the people as has been done in our federal government in Washington for the past seven years.

Bob Wolff
Santa Monica





Going Postal

Steve "the Mailman" Breen — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Commonality in all people

I WAS VACATIONING WITH MY FIANCÉE in idyllic Catalina when Hurricane Wright bloviated all over Obama's campaign trailer park. I was harbored in Avalon's senescent quietude during the torrential verbal diarrheic deluge of Uncle Jerry's neo-racialist confabulations and only discovered the ensuing O-brouhaha upon my return.

Nothing was funnier than watching Obamessiah, during a squeamishly terse press conference, kick his aberrant uncle under the wheels of the Political Expediency Express along side his typically white grandmother.

In the subsequent curbing of his parental surrogate, Obama intoned this keynote phrase, "the commonality in all people." Hmmm.

This is one of the most laughably laborious sentiments ever uttered this side of "Is our children learning?" And if Barry wants to "bridge gaps," how much will it cost common taxpayers at the tollbooth?

According to opensecrets.org, Exxon executives gave Barry over $313,000 in campaign cash-ola to take the legislative Diamond Lane at rush hour while the rest of us commoners limp along on the shoulder with a flat.

Let's get this straight … how much "commonality" do you think you share with the embittered millionaire Obamas? Madama Obama says they really "struggle" with that $500,000/yr salary while getting the kidlets "off to summer camp and ballet lessons."

Waitresses and cab drivers can all relate to the Bermuda Triangle of Columbia/Princeton/Harvard from whence the New Couple of Camelot descended and how they share our bitter plight while sipping Pinot Grigio from the balcony of their $1.2 million dollar mansion next door to the Rezkos.

I reject Barry's back pedaling condescension about my "commonality" in order to save his sophomoric political career. Despite the indisputable fact that Barry and I are Oreo cookies of miscegenation, therein the resemblance ends.

For an effete Ivy League intellectual seeking to distill the extraordinary "me" into the simplistic vapidity of the hoi polloi is a backhand insult at best and a flaming dog poop bomb on the front porch of my life experience at worst.

I worked really hard to be this screwed up and I don't need a helping hand from Mr. Clean's neo-Commie cupboard of dishpan panacea, thank you very much.

It's our acquired life inflicted differences that makes us interesting yet it is clear that Barry's preening endeavor is to flush those socially intemperate differences down into the miasma of his welfare water closet while anaesthetizing us on dump truck doses of black liberation Obama-holism gruesomely administered during Clockwork Orange inspired episodes of Oprah.

Me? I like extraordinary people. Among my personal extraordinary heroes and heroines are: Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Teddy Roosevelt, Barry Goldwater, Edison, Ford, Einstein, Condi Rice, Sandra Day O'Connor, Ron Reagan, Bill Cosby and Walt Whitman. Mom, dad and my son in Iraq do top the list, however.

These are big shoes. Obama doesn't have big enough feet. They do fit perfectly behind his wisdom teeth, however.

We all have our quirks and faults yet those flaws and fractures are what differentiate us from paramecia. I choose not to be cuckolded to Obama's cult of commonality.

I REJECT BARRY'S BACK PEDALING CONDESCENSION ABOUT MY 'COMMONALITY' IN ORDER TO SAVE HIS SOPHOMORIC POLITICAL CAREER.

I play jazz piano, sing opera, aided in the fight to defeat communism during the Reagan Revolution and can linguistically mangle food menus in five languages. I am uncommon; I like it that way.

America's foundations were dog piled by the immigrant refuse of every "respectable" country on the planet. We are a nation of extraordinarily talented global junkyard dogs that built the new Rome without a single governmental social welfare program in sight.

Recently, however, it was reported in the NY Times that there are now psychotherapy treatments for people who incessantly worry about their own carbon emissions being responsible for global warming. Americans once had their souls nailed to their spine; it seems that some of you left both items at the shrink's office.

And please recall that the last time everybody had "something in common" was in Nazi Germany and that didn't really work out so well.

On a lesser note, to Bubblemeister Tim Dillenbeck: The haircut challenge is as I stated. The representative loser, on the Tuesday after the November general election, gets their dome peeled. I don't tell you how to blow bubbles, do I? Take it or leave it, Bub. Additionally, Barack's mother, classmates and Time magazine called him "Barry."

STEVE BREEN is a mixed breed conservative mutt for McCain and the "best looking mailman with hair at the U.S. Post Office." He can be reached at dulcamarax@yahoo.com

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Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Truth is stranger than make believe

FIVE YEARS AGO, PRESIDENT BUSH STOOD on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln under a banner reading "Mission Accomplished" and said, "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed."

Though he now says it should have read, "mission accomplished for these sailors who are on this ship on their mission," the truth is the banner was accurate and the president's real mission, to get us into Iraq by any means necessary, was accomplished. I can handle the truth, I'm just sick of being lied to about the mission.

The lie was that we had to invade Iraq because Saddam might give a nuclear weapon to Al Qaeda, and in a 9/12 world, the risk was too great. The truth is Saddam Hussein was about as likely to have a nuclear weapon as the Lakers are to see Andrew Bynum in this year's playoffs. And he was about as likely to give one to Osama Bin Laden as Kobe Bryant was to happily share a locker room with Shaquille O'Neal.

The truth is the president and the vice president knew that once we went into Iraq, it would be almost impossible to get out. Cheney (who oversaw the first Gulf War as secretary of defense) said, "Once you got to Iraq and took it over, took down Saddam Hussein's government, then what are you going to put in its place? That's a very volatile part of the world. And if you take down the central government of Iraq, you can easily end up seeing parts of Iraq fly off. It's a quagmire … If you go that far, and try to take over Iraq." He went on to say, "The question for the president in terms of whether or not we went on to Baghdad and took additional casualties in an effort to get Saddam was how many additional dead Americans was Saddam worth, and our judgment was not very many. And I think we got it right."

What changed? As secretary of defense, Dick Cheney discovered there are some duties (like laundry, cooking, and cleaning) the U.S. military believed our soldiers, as professionally trained killers, shouldn't be doing. He also discovered that "troop morale" could be boosted by providing soldiers with reminders of home. So when he became chairman and CEO of Halliburton, he basically created the military services industry. Through his connections inside the Pentagon, Halliburton and it's subsidiaries have won billions of dollars in no-bid contracts to provide our soldiers with clean clothes, clean barracks, and all the same fast food they would find at the food court in their local mall.

All of this stuff gets to our soldiers via convoys of trucks which have to be guarded and protected by our soldiers themselves. Meanwhile, the bulk of the casualties (those "additional dead Americans" that Saddam wasn't worth back in 1991) haven't come in combat, but from cars and trucks randomly exploding. I'll bet that our soldiers in Iraq would happily give up these tastes of home if it meant they didn't have to risk their lives guarding the convoys that bring them Pizza Hut, Taco Bell, and Baskin-Robbins ice cream. Meanwhile, the vice president's former business associates get richer and richer.

In the president's case, all we have to do is look at what he did for work before he got into government: He was an oil man, and not a very good one. He has made a lot of money failing to find oil in Texas. I won't say he was trading on his name and family connections, but just about every company he worked for was eventually bailed out of financial ruin by someone with ties to his father or his grandfather. The point is that he took office owing favors to big oil, and his disastrous experiment in Iraq has proven to be a nice payback for the industry. Look at the numbers: When he took office, oil was about $30 per barrel (now $120) and gas was about $1.50 per gallon (now $4). Does anyone believe it's a coincidence that during the oiliest administration in American history, prices for crude and gas have gone up 400 percent?

I'm not trying to get all "Manchurian Candidate," but forget all the reasons we've been told we're in Iraq (from WMD, to the "Freedom Agenda," to checking Iran's influence) and just follow the money. You'll find the people who have benefited the most from the Bush Administration's Iraq policy are people who did business with the president and the vice president long before they took office. Then ask yourself if you can handle the truth.

KENNY MACK is a writer and comedian living in Santa Monica who doesn't subscribe to conspiracy theories (much). He can be reached at kennymack@gmail.com

The Q Line

Through the roof

With the price for seemingly everything on the rise, people are having to make tough decisions to cut corners and save pennies.

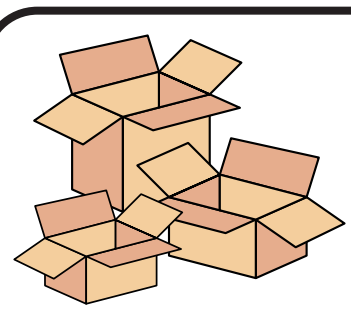
So this week's Q-Line question asks:
What are you doing to offset the cost for everyday goods and services?

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STATE BRIEFS

SANTA ANA

Another OC Jail lockdown lifted after a week

A seven-day lockdown at Orange County's Men's Central Jail was lifted Tuesday.

Brawls between Hispanic and black inmates have forced jailhouse commanders to impose lockdowns twice in recent weeks. During lockdowns, inmates are fed in their cells, outdoor recreation and day-room activities are suspended and no visitors are allowed.

Sheriff's Capt. Roland Chacon says the latest lockdown April 29 was a chow line fight carried over from the first brawl April 18, which also led to a weeklong lockdown. There are more than 1,300 inmates in the jail.

The captain says the lockdown was lifted Tuesday morning and "we started opening up some things." But he says "the mood is very tense." ASSOCIATED PRESS

MORENO VALLEY

March Air Reserve Base gets tentative OK

A tentative deal has been struck to open the March Air Reserve Base to general aviation.

March Joint Powers Authority executive director Lori Stone says Riverside County's longtime military base — it was once March Air Force Base — would be open to private aircraft under the agreement.

Currently, only air-cargo giant DHL shares the runway with military and public safety operations at the base between Moreno Valley and Riverside.

The March Joint Powers Commission, which oversees civilian operations at the joint-use air base, is expected to consider the tentative agreement May 21. AP

LOS ANGELES

Assistant fire chief allegedly tried to cover up hit-run

A Los Angeles fire assistant chief and his family have been charged with trying to cover up a hit-and-run crash in San Pedro.

Robert Franco, his wife Gerri and their 19-year-old son Richard are charged with misdemeanors, including conspiracy, stemming from the November crash.

The teenager allegedly hit two parked cars and flipped his vehicle. Prosecutors say the teen immediately called his mother and his parents arrived moments later.

Investigators say the 48-year-old woman then drove her son away from the crash scene and 52-year-old Robert Franco stayed behind, telling police and paramedics his wife was behind the wheel at the time of the crash. AP

LONG BEACH

Manhole covers latest target of metal thieves

Dozens of 150-pound manhole covers stolen in Long Beach are apparently being taken to recyclers by metal thieves.

About 50 of the cast-iron lids have been stolen in the past eight months, 17 of them last week.

Long Beach Water Department spokesman Ryan Alsop says the thefts are apparently the work of a team. The 20- to 24-inch wide manhole covers fetch about $10 apiece when sold to metal recycling companies.

Two motorists whose cars were damaged when they hit an open manhole have filed claims with the city. AP

SANTA CRUZ

Cops bust pot gardens in Big Basin State Park

More than 6,000 marijuana seedlings have been uprooted by authorities who found a pair of clandestine pot gardens in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The Big Basin State Park site is the same spot where a large marijuana grow was found three years ago.

Santa Cruz sheriff's deputies and State Parks rangers descended on the location Monday and removed the seedlings.

Sgt. Steve Carney says no one has been arrested, but deputies believe they saw a grower racing into the wilderness as officers approached the makeshift camp.

Carney says most of the marijuana-growing operations his team uproots are controlled by Mexican drug cartels who pay caretakers to watch the crops. AP

CHULA VISTA

Humanitarian group at odds over honor for leader

The humanitarian group that puts water barrels in the desert for illegal immigrants says its former leader shouldn't be getting honors from a Chula Vista college.

The group Water Station says activist Enrique Morones, who was the humanitarian organization's president six years ago, is taking credit for its work.

Southwestern College is giving Morones an honorary degree when he speaks at the school's May 23 commencement.

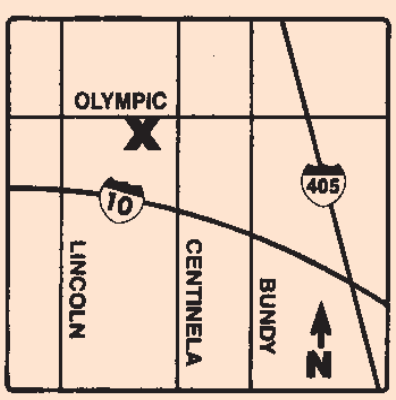
Laura Hunter, the wife of Water Station founder John Hunter, says the 340 water stations Morones claims on his Web page are the same ones that Water Station had prior to and after he was removed from the organization.

In a letter to college trustees she says six years have passed since Morones left the group and, "I think it's time he stopped claiming credit for our work."

Morones concedes the Web site posting is incorrect. AP

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REAL ESTATE

Housing market continues slump

BY MARCY GORDON
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON The outlook for the housing market darkened further Tuesday as the nation's largest buyer of home mortgages said it racked up more than $2 billion in quarterly losses and forecast a steeper drop in home prices this year.

If Fannie Mae's prediction proves true, the real estate woes could further shake the confidence of consumers already stung by rising food and fuel prices, and an anemic job market.

Home foreclosures are accelerating around the country, adding to the glut of unsold properties and further depressing prices. As a result, a growing number of homeowners are saddled with loans that outstrip the value of their houses.

"I think that right now we are in the belly of the cycle," Fannie Mae's president and CEO, Daniel Mudd, said during a conference call with analysts.

Mudd said home prices fell in the first quarter "faster than anyone anticipated" and that the company foresees a decline of 7 percent to 9 percent for the year, compared with earlier forecasts of a 5 percent to 7 percent drop.

Still, investors pushed Fannie's shares sharply higher as federal regulators loosened the company's capital requirements so it can play a bigger role in the mortgage market and help stabilize housing. Fannie shares jumped nearly 9 percent, or $2.52, to $30.81 in trading Tuesday.

Nevertheless, the rising tide of delinquencies and foreclosures poses considerable dangers to the broader economy, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke warned on Monday as he urged Congress to take additional steps to alleviate the problems.

> **"I THINK THAT RIGHT NOW WE ARE IN THE BELLY OF THE CYCLE."**
>
> **Daniel Mudd,**
> Fannie Mae president and CEO

When businesses see consumer confidence buckling under the housing slump, they too start to cut back, noted Michael Gregory, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets in Toronto.

The tax rebate checks arriving in Americans' mailboxes may mitigate the chill for a while, but eventually the weakness in the housing market "will continue to drag down consumer spending," he said.

"Is the average American prepared to step up and take out a loan and buy a house? Probably not," Gregory said.

Economists say the stricken housing market is souring the mood of consumers, the most powerful force in the economy. Also squeezing family budgets are higher prices for food and fuel.

The average price of gas on Tuesday was $3.61 a gallon nationwide, an increase of 20 percent from a year earlier, and relief does not appear to be coming anytime soon, with some experts predicting an average price of $4 in the weeks ahead.

Crude oil futures leapt to a new record near $123 a barrel Tuesday as supply fears dominate the market psychology. What's more, a Goldman Sachs analyst predicted Tuesday that oil prices could rise to $150 to $200 a barrel within two years.

Filling up family members' stomachs has also become costlier.

Amid rising prices for grains and feedstock, Americans are paying higher prices at the grocery store. Egg prices have jumped 40 percent in the last year and flour prices have risen 50 percent since January, raising the price of bread, cereal and other groceries.

To help stabilize housing and the overall economy, which many economists say is on the precipice of its first recession since 2001, the Federal Reserve embarked last fall on an interest rate-cutting campaign — its most aggressive in decades.

Fannie, meanwhile, has been encouraged by the government to step up its purchases of mortgages as a way to provide some relief to the housing market. In recent months, Fannie and its smaller government-chartered sibling Freddie Mac have bought up hundreds of billions of dollars in additional mortgages and three-quarters of mortgage-backed securities are now issued by the two companies.

Fannie's federal regulator, the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight, on Tuesday said it will reduce the capital cushion the company has to maintain. After it raises an anticipated $6 billion in a stock sale, Fannie will be required to keep surplus capital of 15 percent of their total mortgage debt, down from the current 20 percent.

But analysts worry Fannie and Freddie may be taking on too much financial risk at a time when foreclosures continue to mount. Some critics have said that allowing the companies to take on more debt could threaten the global financial system.

Fannie lost $2.2 billion, or $2.57 a share, in the January-March period, compared with a profit of $961 million, or 85 cents, in the first quarter of 2007. Analysts polled by Thomson Financial had expected a loss of 81 cents in the latest period.

The Washington-based company announced plans to raise $6 billion in capital with sales of new stock and to cut its dividend.

Its losses from soured home loans were greatest in California, Florida, Michigan and Ohio.

Further housing slump news came Tuesday from Dallas-based D.R. Horton Inc., the country's biggest homebuilder. D.R. Horton reported that hefty charges and property write-downs swung it to a second-quarter loss of $1.31 billion, or $4.14 a share, from a year-earlier profit of $51.7 million, or 16 cents a share.

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Parents vow to stick together

FROM **TEACHER** PAGE 1

"It was a very good day," Assistant Principal Carl Hobkirk said. "The energy of the day was very positive."

Counseling was available on Monday and Tuesday for students experiencing emotional distress. District officials also deployed additional counselors fluent in the prevalent second languages at the school.

Hobkirk said he was pleasantly surprised by the progress at the school during the second day of the aftermath, expecting the reality of the situation to finally set in for the teachers and students.

"I talked to a lot of teachers who said they felt supported yesterday," Hobkirk said.



Kevin Herrera *kevinh@smdp.com*

STAYING UNIFIED: **Parents speak with reporters outside Lincoln Middle School on Monday night following a meeting with district officials to discuss the arrest of Thomas Arthur Beltran, 60, a 20-year-educator at the school who was charged Tuesday with molesting five of his female students.**

COMMUNITY VOWS TO PERSEVERE

Parents filed into the Lincoln auditorium on Monday evening for their first meeting with district and law enforcement officials since Beltran's arrest. The intent of the gathering was to learn more about the situation, or at least what could legally be divulged, a result of the sensitivity of the case.

Imprinted high above the heads of the parents and administrator were the words of the school's namesake, to "teach hope to all, despair to none."

It seemed apt to the reaction of the community.

"This has touched each and every one of us in our community in some way," Principal Tristan Komlos said in her address to the parents. "We're here tonight to come together as a group, as a community, as stakeholders in the Lincoln community."

Officials explained the response plan instituted following the arrest, which included keeping the school open and holding state assessment tests as scheduled, a move that was criticized by some parents who felt the students would be distracted.

Superintendent Dianne Talarico explained that she wanted to keep the day as normal as possible for students.

"We did what we thought was in the best interest of students at the time," she said.

The questions submitted by parents ran the gamut, from inquiries about background checks on employees to advice on how parents should discuss the situation to their children. Some parents asked for more specifics in the case, such as whether any teachers might have known about the alleged abuses. Specifics could not be disclosed because it is a personnel matter, district officials said.

The district runs a live scan of fingerprints for all potential employees before they are hired, according to Mike Matthews, the assistant superintendent for human resources.

Ray Doktor, a therapist in Santa Monica who specializes in sexual abuse recovery, said that girls at the middle-school age could develop trust issues when they see that an adult whom they were supposed to trust takes advantage of another student.

"What has to be clear is in whatever process takes place with support groups is the girls are able to express themselves and realize it was just this one adult," Doktor said. "It's not everyone."

Don and Yeshi Farber, who attended the meeting on Tuesday, said their daughter, who was not a student of Beltran's, has dealt with the situation well. The couple said they have talked to their daughter about being careful in any encounter, whether it's a boy or an adult.

"The kids seem to be in a safe situation at school," Don Farber said. "They're able to focus on studying."

Many parents expressed their confidence in the school, keeping their perception of Lincoln intact.

"This school is the shining star of the district," Rose Nelson, a parent of an eighth grader, said. "This news is devastating, but it will not destroy this community."

Doktor said that traumatic situations can often serve as a wake-up call.

"I feel as though a lot of people are somewhat asleep until things like this happen," Doktor said. "I think it makes them want to talk to their kids a lot more and figure out what is going on."

Lynn Leavitt, the PTA president at Lincoln, said she hasn't lost faith in the school that one of her children attends.

She said she had met Beltran in the past, describing the teacher as knowledgeable and kind, suffering a great loss when his daughter died a few years ago. Her children were not in Beltran's classes.

"My son is very successful at Samohi and I feel that is very much because of (Lincoln)," Leavitt said.

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Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

SIGN OF THE TIMES: **The Rent Control Board is considering an annual rent increase of 2.7 percent because of the prices landlords are forced to pay for utilities and maintenance of their units.**

Rents may be on the rise in Santa Monica

FROM **RENT** PAGE 1

properties.

"The number is pretty low," Carl Lambert, president of Action Apartment Owners Association said. "The rising cost of labor and supplies for repairs just outstripped inflation rates and when the city gives us, the landlords, only one third of the compensation, it's just not fair."

The report followed a detailed methodology: The total dollar amount for the rent is divided into expense categories such as "hard expenses" that include taxes, utilities and city services, and "calculated expenses," which include management costs and maintenance services.

"I was talking to a landlord today, a local landlord," Koury said . "He indicated that the number was definitely in the ballpark."

Lambert thinks otherwise.

"In the range of five or six percent would be more realistic in order to maintain our buildings properly," Lambert said.

The Santa Monica Rent Control Law has been in effect since April 10, 1979. Its main purpose has been to control the amount that may be changed for a rental unit within the city. For Koury, the percentage of the increase isn't at odds with renters' rights.

"The number didn't shock me or surprise me," Koury said. "The formula that we have here in Santa Monica for rent control is more transparent" to that of Los Angeles County and most other jurisdictions.

"If someone on the board sees something out of the ordinary, like water rates rising out of control, the department takes that into account," Koury said.

Lambert said the board has designed the formula to stem rising cost rents and protect renters, forgetting about the rights of the people who own the units. As president of Action Apartment Owners Association, Lambert's goal is to protect owners' rights and achieve fairness in the application of rent control.

"Because of the strict rent control laws, rents on decontrolled units have been rising an amazing amount," to compensate for the loss in revenue needed to make repairs and upgrades he said.

The rent control board was debating changing the formula to match similar laws on the county level, which solely takes a percentage of the consumer price index into account, Koury said .

"I personally don't think it's good," said Koury. "If it's not broken, why fix it?"

In recent years, landlords have not petitioned for rent increases higher than those recommended by the board because they feel the board doesn't care about them as much as they do renters and protecting renter's rights.

"People need to see the abuses landlords are faced with," said Lambert. "When new tenants will recognize that they are subsidizing the old tenants then changes can be made."

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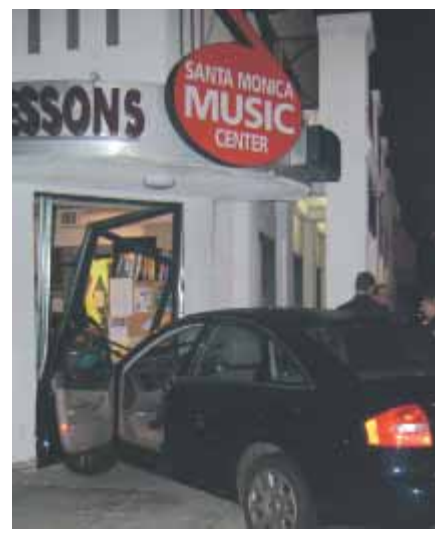
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L.A. judge orders one-way proposal to undergo review

FROM **STREETS** PAGE 3

"We hope that today's ruling will encourage the mayor and Jack Weiss to start listening to and working with their constituents," Jay Handal, the chairman of the chamber, said in a statement on Monday.

Brandon Silverman, the founder of Pico-Olympic Solutions, which formed under the auspices of the Greater West LA Chamber of Commerce, said there are people in the community who still want to try and come up with a resolution to the traffic problems in the congested boulevards.

The group represents several neighborhood organizations on the Westside.

"We're really happy at the way the communities came together and got involved because if it wasn't for them doing so, we wouldn't be here today with this outcome," Silverman said.

Anderson said he believes that even if the plan is instituted, it would only be a matter of time before the traffic from the I-10 freeway moves over to Pico and Olympic, congesting the boulevards once again. He said that city officials should focus on fixing the traffic problem on the I-10 freeway.

"They're using Pico and Olympic into an alternative Interstate 10," Anderson said.

Those on the opposition to the project said that the mayor was trying to speed the project by bypassing the City Council and suspending Transportation Committee meetings on the proposal.

> **"IF THEY HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER THERE IS PARKING IN THE BACK, PEOPLE MIGHT NOT BE LIKELY TO GO."**
>
> **David Anderson,**
> Owner, Imprint Revolution

Councilmember Bill Rosendahl, who serves on the Transportation Committee and whose district includes portions of Pico and Olympic, said the court validates the community's concerns.

"I'm hopeful the time allotted in the judge's ruling will allow us to have this open process and bring in my community," Rosendahl said.

melodyh@smdp.com



NBA

Lakers look to up rebounding against Utah

BY JOHN NADEL
AP Sports Writer

EL SEGUNDO Pau Gasol had a simple explanation for Utah's staggering 58-41 rebounding advantage over the Los Angeles Lakers in Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinals.

"We were a little slow reacting to the ball," the Lakers' center said Monday.

Kobe Bryant's reaction?

"It was either that or the two hands in the back," he said.

Despite the disparity, the Lakers beat the Jazz 109-98 Sunday to begin the best-of-seven series, thanks mainly to a 16-point advantage at the free throw line and Utah's 37.9 percent field goal percentage.

The Lakers realize there's no guarantee they'll shoot as many foul shots or the Jazz will misfire so often Wednesday night in Game 2.

"I think we'll do a better job (reacting to the ball) next game," Gasol said. "The way their offense is set up, they always have two or three guys in the paint. We didn't have our best game. At the same time, we're satisfied by the win."

The Lakers led by as many as 19 points in the third quarter before the Jazz rallied to get within four with nearly five minutes left. But they would get no closer, and the Lakers made eight free throws without a miss in the final 44 seconds to win going away. They finished with 38 free throws in 46 attempts, while Utah went 20-of-32 at the line.

While Bryant made it clear he wasn't being critical of the Jazz, calling them a typical Jerry Sloan-coached team, he did say he expects the series to get more physical.

"I'm sure it will, it's playoff basketball," he said. "Utah plays physical anyway. Those guys, they play hard. They're not talking, they just play hard. We've just got to do a better job getting to their bodies."

Lakers coach Phil Jackson said much the same thing.

"They play a very physical game, let the referees make a decision on what's a foul and what isn't," he said. "They scrum, they get in the lane, they're after the ball, they're pushing and shoving.

"It's not our style. We are going to play the kind of game we have to play. Just be more resilient, that's all."

Jackson also said he didn't believe Bryant will have the opportunity to go 21-of-23 from the foul line again, as he did in the opener.

"But they'll throw a lot of bodies at him, make the referees make a decision, contest his shots," Jackson said.

Utah's Carlos Boozer made it sound as if the Jazz intend to rely more on their strength.

> **"THEY PLAY A VERY PHYSICAL GAME, LET THE REFEREES MAKE A DECISION ON WHAT'S A FOUL AND WHAT ISN'T. THEY SCRUM, THEY GET IN THE LANE, THEY'RE AFTER THE BALL, THEY'RE PUSHING AND SHOVING."**
>
> **Phil Jackson,**
> Lakers head coach

"I think we can do a good job of getting the ball inside a little bit more," he said in Salt Lake City. "I think we settled for jump shots at times. We're stronger than them. They're longer than we are, but we have some guys that like to get in there and bang around a little big and move some bodies and try to get the ball, which is going to be the key for us in this series. We need to continue to go inside and make them work inside."

While the Lakers entered Game 1 having had five full days off, the Jazz had a quick turnaround, completing their first-round series Friday night, practicing and traveling to Los Angeles on Saturday, and playing on Sunday.

"Now things are squared up, they've gotten a couple days rest before the next game," Jackson said.

The Lakers are the only unbeaten team in the postseason, having swept Denver before getting the jump on Utah.

"Every game is Game 7. That's been our approach," Bryant said. "I think with each win, we get more confident. Utah is a much bigger challenge for us than the first round. I think Game 3 in Denver, we played well. Other than that, we've been playing in spurts. We haven't put together a complete game. I think that's good news."

Utah's Deron Williams, who shot 5-of-18 in the opener, said there was no reason for the Jazz to panic.

"It's a seven-game series," he said. "We've lost one game. We've just got to stay poised and try to get this next one. We want to try to get back to where we were. We don't want to go back to Salt Lake down 0-2. We've been in that situation before and it's not pretty."

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SURF REPORT



Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 59°

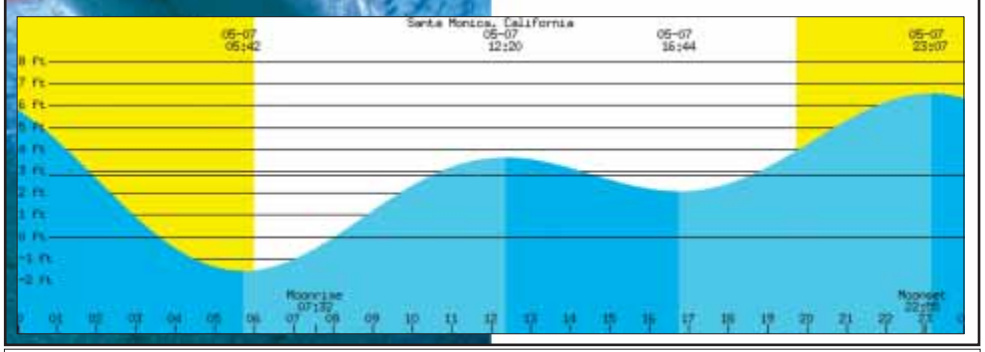
Swell Forecast (2-4 FT)

We should see waist high size at south facing spots, and waist high waves at west facing breaks as NW wind swell picks up a bit. Eddy texture is likely in the AM with afternoon onshores pushing 15 mph. Tide will be extremely low in the early morning hours.

Long Range Synopsis

NW wind swell during second half of week...

Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica



SEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of: **April 29, 2008**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - www.healthebay.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 1
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 3
- Number of wet days -- 8
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 37 / ns
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 9 / ns

The Beach Report Card is made possible by a grant from Ford

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Los Cerrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth	C	ns
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachusa and Los Alisos creeks	A+	ns
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	ns
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A	ns
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	ns
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	ns
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	F	ns
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	F	ns
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	B	ns
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach	F	ns
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth	F	ns
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	F	ns
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	ns
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily	F	ns
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A+	ns
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A	ns
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	B	ns
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	A	ns
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	ns
Tuna Canyon	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	F	ns
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	A+	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	A	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	ns

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain	A	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua)	A	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	A+	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	A+	ns
Santa Monica Municipal Pier	F	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain	A	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms)	A+	ns
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain	A+	ns
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	ns
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain	A+	ns
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	A+	ns
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	ns
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St.	A	ns
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain	A+	ns
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach	A+	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty)	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain	A+	ns
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain	A+	ns

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone
WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days
ns -- no sample taken

Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

Heal the Bay

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Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card® is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles' Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A–F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

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Promenade
Santa Monica, CA 90401
(310) 458-6232

Deal (PG-13) 1hr 26min
2:15, 4:35, 6:50, 9:10
Prom Night (PG-13) 1hr 28min
2:30, 4:45, 7:10, 9:20
Nim's Island (PG) 1hr, 35 min
2:05, 4:20, 6:35, 9:00
The Bank Job (R) 1hr 50min
2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30

AMC 7 SANTA MONICA
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

21 (PG-13) 2hrs 03min
1, 4, 7:10, 9:55
Deception (R) 1hr 48min
1:30, 4:10, 7, 9:45
Baby Mama (PG-13) 1hr 36min
2:10, 4:40, 7:15, 9:40
Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay (R) 1hr 42min
2:30, 5, 7:30, 10:05
The Forbidden Kingdom (PG-13) 1hr 53min
1:35, 4:10, 7, 9:50
Forgetting Sarah Marshall (R) 1hr 51min
2, 4:45, 7:20, 10

LAEMMLE'S MONICA FOURPLEX
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

Then She Found Me (R) 1hr 40min
1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 9:55
The Visitor (ZPG-13) 1hr 48min
1:30, 4:20, 7:25, 10
Smart People (R) 1hr 33min
1:55, 4:40, 7:35, 10:00
Young@Heart (PG) 1hr 47min
1:20, 4:00, 7:00, 9:40

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88 Minutes (R) 1hr 48min
11:50 a.m., 2:30, 5:10, 7:40, 10:20
Iron Man (PG-13) 2hrs 06min
11:00 a.m., Noon, 1, 2, 3, 4:05, 5, 6, 7:10, 8, 9, 10:10
Made of Honor (PG-13) 1hr 41min
11:10 a.m., 12:10, 1:50, 2:50, 4:20, 5:20, 7, 7:50, 9:30, 10:30

For more information, e-mail news@smdp.com

Read between the lines, Libra

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ Stay on top of your work. If you want to do something differently, now is a good time. Move on a project. You could discover that you will see a situation differently if you just listen. A friend points to a better idea. Tonight: Hang out.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ An unexpected demand or request could create more pressure than in the past. Are you judging your need to meet this demand? If so, rethink this idea. Put 100 percent into a job. A boss will notice your high performance. Tonight: Your treat.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Someone who has more impact than you would like him or her to might be tense. Do your best with this erratic personality. Answers come forward with ease. Your ability to see past the obvious and comes up with a solution come forward. Tonight: Say yes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ Share more of yourself. If you think someone is subversive or creating a problem where there is none, step back. You don't need to be involved. Give a trusted loved one the benefit of the doubt. Think through a decision. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ If you could choose whatever you want, what would that be? Focus on what can happen or what you would like to evolve. A partner joins in on a project. Tonight: Emphasize what you can do.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Defer to a boss, even if you don't agree. You observe that others have different opinions. No one seems to agree with you. Listen to advice, keeping in mind your loyalties. A strong stand might not be necessary, but it could be important. Tonight: A must appearance.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Your mind calls the shots. You know what you want and what is important. Ideas simply become actions, and what you thought was impossible could evolve. Be open and don't hold yourself back, if possible. Tonight: Read between the lines.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Work with one other person, and you'll succeed. Your ability to understand what motivates someone comes through. You become this person's natural cheerleader, and he or she yours. Enjoy what is happening around you. Tonight: Dinner for two.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Defer to someone you really care about. If you think before you take action, you might not follow through. Realize the role of your instincts in your life. Your popularity soars, but don't avoid looking at an upset. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ You might be too focused on getting the job done. Know that you might do better if you relax. Sometimes simply going with the flow is the right way to go. Tonight: Spearhead fun.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Just being yourself works with your interpersonal relationships. The only area to keep your eye on is your finances. Extra care goes a long way if you relax and understand. Tonight: Let the fun times roll.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★ The unexpected forces you to stop and sit back. Sometimes a little soul-searching helps, especially when dealing with family or a domestic matter. Tonight: At home.

Happy birthday

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

The unexpected occurs when you least expect it this year. You might get what you want, and what you are about to lasso in could vanish out of the blue. You learn that you can count on the unpredictable. Stability comes through perpetual change this year. If you are single, you have a lot of animal magnetism. Others see you as poised and together. Curb a tendency to want to possess others. If you are attached, the two of you need to express more of your instinctual, raw feelings — i.e., turn up the heat. GEMINI helps you spend and also make money.

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Difficulty
GOLD

			1	6	9		7	
3		1						4
		8				6		
				3	1		8	
2		3				1		7
	8		6	5				
		9		4		7		
4						9		8
	3		2	9	7			

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GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

2	9	1	8	3	7	4	6	5
7	5	8	4	9	6	1	2	3
3	6	4	5	2	1	7	9	8
8	1	2	3	6	9	5	7	4
4	3	9	2	7	5	6	8	1
6	7	5	1	4	8	9	3	2
9	8	3	7	5	4	2	1	6
1	4	6	9	8	2	3	5	7
5	2	7	6	1	3	8	4	9

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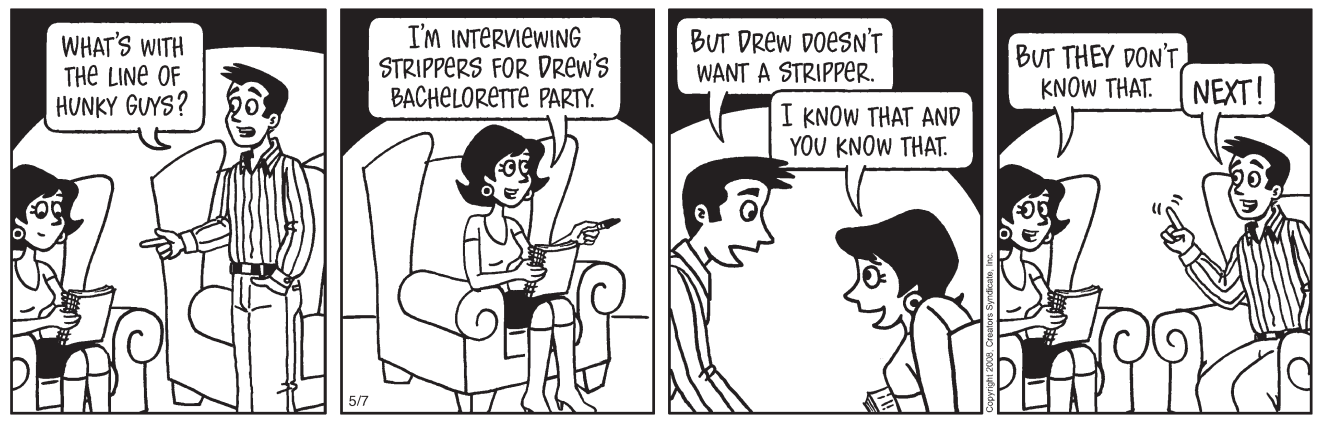
Girls and Sports

By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



The Other Coast

By Adrian Raeside



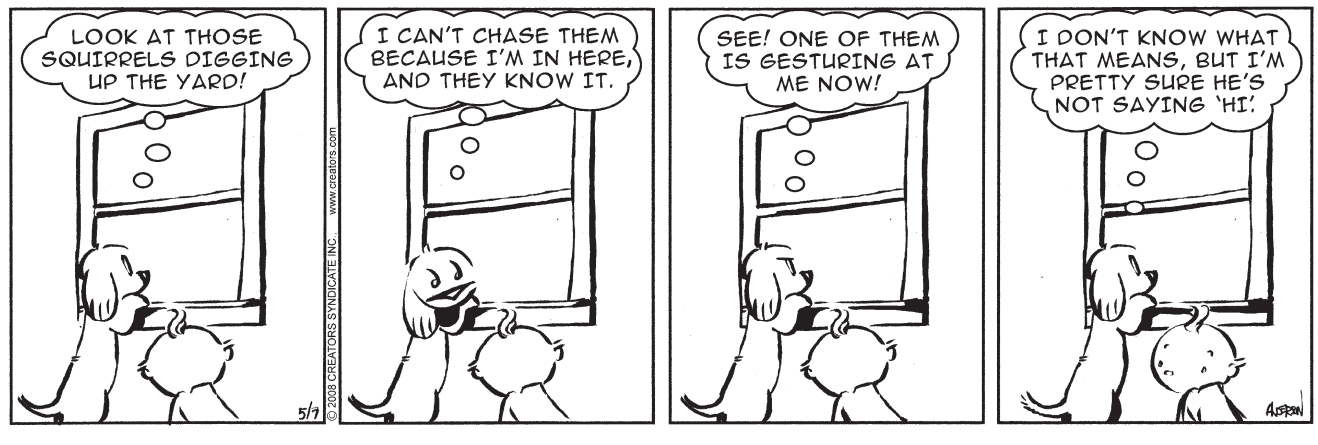
Garfield

By Jim Davis

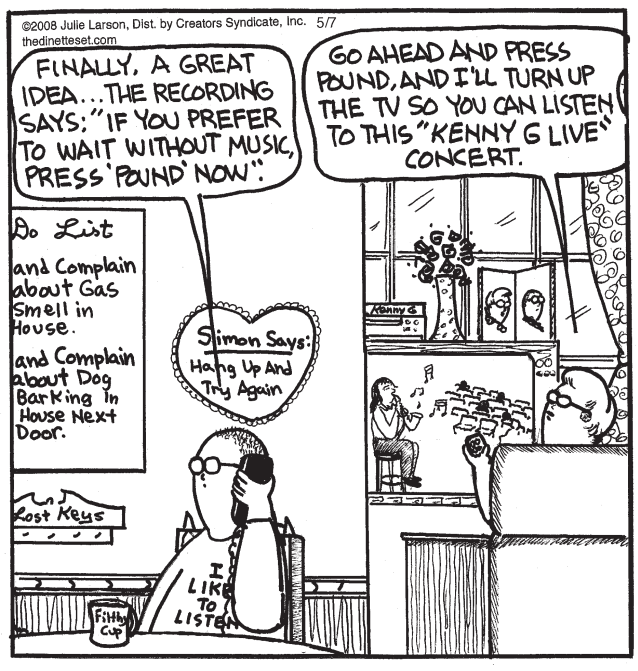


Dog eat Doug

By Brian Anderson



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Strange Brew

By John Deering



Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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1 Intent look
6 Beach crawler
10 Flynn of film
11 English county
12 Flipper's choice
13 Turning point
14 Tag datum
15 Neighbor of Colombia
16 First número
17 Mayo buy
18 — Vegas
19 Necklace features
22 April forecast
23 Monkey's uncles
26 Small flags
29 Put on the line
32 Dawn goddess
33 Tatter
34 Writer Waugh
36 Vaulter's need
37 Less strict
38 Fry lightly
39 Wise words
40 Joined the cast
41 Itches
42 Hoe targets

DOWN

1 Establishes
2 Boxer's aide
3 Hopi home
4 Audition goal
5 Golf's Ernie
6 Goatee setting
7 Competitor
8 Kitchen output
9 Test programs
11 "300" group
15 Scathing review
17 Brontë novel
20 Brief drop
21 Relaxing retreat
24 Between travel points
25 Contrived
27 French denial
28 Ignores the limit
29 Hold, at sea
30 Steer clear of
31 El Paso native
35 Staying power
36 Clip
38 Carpenter's tool

S	P	O	O	F	■	T	E	A	M	S
T	O	T	A	L	■	A	L	L	O	W
A	S	T	R	A	L	P	L	A	N	E
T	I	E	■	P	I	E	■	M	O	E
S	T	R	I	P	E	S	■	O	C	T
■	■	■	T	E	D	■	I	D	L	E
T	I	L	E	D	■	G	R	E	E	N
A	D	A	M	■	P	R	O	■	■	■
R	I	M	■	M	E	A	N	T	T	O
T	O	O	■	C	A	P	■	H	O	P
A	T	T	A	C	K	P	L	A	N	E
N	I	T	R	O	■	L	E	N	I	N
S	C	A	R	Y	■	E	X	E	C	S

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	9	
10					■	11				
12					■	13				
14				■	15					
16			■	17			■	18		
19			20				21	■	■	■
■	22				■	23		24	25	■
■	■	■	26		27					28
29	30	31	■	32			■	33		
34			35			■	36			
37					■	38				
39					■	40				
41				■	■	42				

5-7

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FANTASY 5: 4 10 24 27 33

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 0 5 6 EVENING: 9 9 8

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 06 WHIRL WIN
2nd: 08 GORGEOUS GEORGE
3rd: 11 MONEY BAGS
RACE TIME: 1.42.74

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ World's Greatest Lawyer: Oregon public defender Ethan Levi agreed to represent Eric Kincaid, 29, who had been identified by DNA as the man (in a miniskirt, wig and fishnet stockings) who one night last year had hidden in the closet of a woman he did not know before fleeing. Kincaid denied that he meant the woman any harm, maintaining that he had been invited by a mysterious second woman, whom he also did not know, to have sex but had realized after seeing the first woman that he was in the wrong apartment, and he left. In April, Levi convinced the jury to accept Kincaid's explanation and acquit him of all charges.

■ Well, That Explains That!: (1) Gene Morrill, 57, hoping for a shorter sentence after his conviction for soliciting sex from teenage boys over the Internet, told a court in Fredericksburg, Va., in March about his rough life as a child, beginning with the time he was sexually molested by Bigfoot. (2) A 26-year-old driver was arrested in Bay County, Fla., in April after being spotted on the side of a road masturbating. According to the police report, the man said "he had just left work and explained that he needed some personal time with himself that he could not have at home."

TODAY IN HISTORY

1789 the first inaugural ball was held in New York in honor of President and Mrs. Washington.

1812 poet Robert Browning was born in London.

1833 composer Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany.

1840 composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Votkinsk, Russia.

1945 Germany signed an unconditional surrender at Allied headquarters in Rheims, France.

1954 the 55-day Battle of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam ended with Vietnamese insurgents overrunning French forces.

1960 Leonid Brezhnev replaced Marshal Kliment Voroshilov as president of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

1975 President Ford formally declared an end to the "Vietnam era." In Ho Chi Minh City — formerly Saigon — the Viet Cong celebrated its takeover.

WORD UP!

amalgam \uh-MAL-guhm\, *noun*:
1. An alloy of mercury with another metal or metals; used especially (with silver) as a dental filling.

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Telephone inquiries please leave a voicemail at 509 356-3100.

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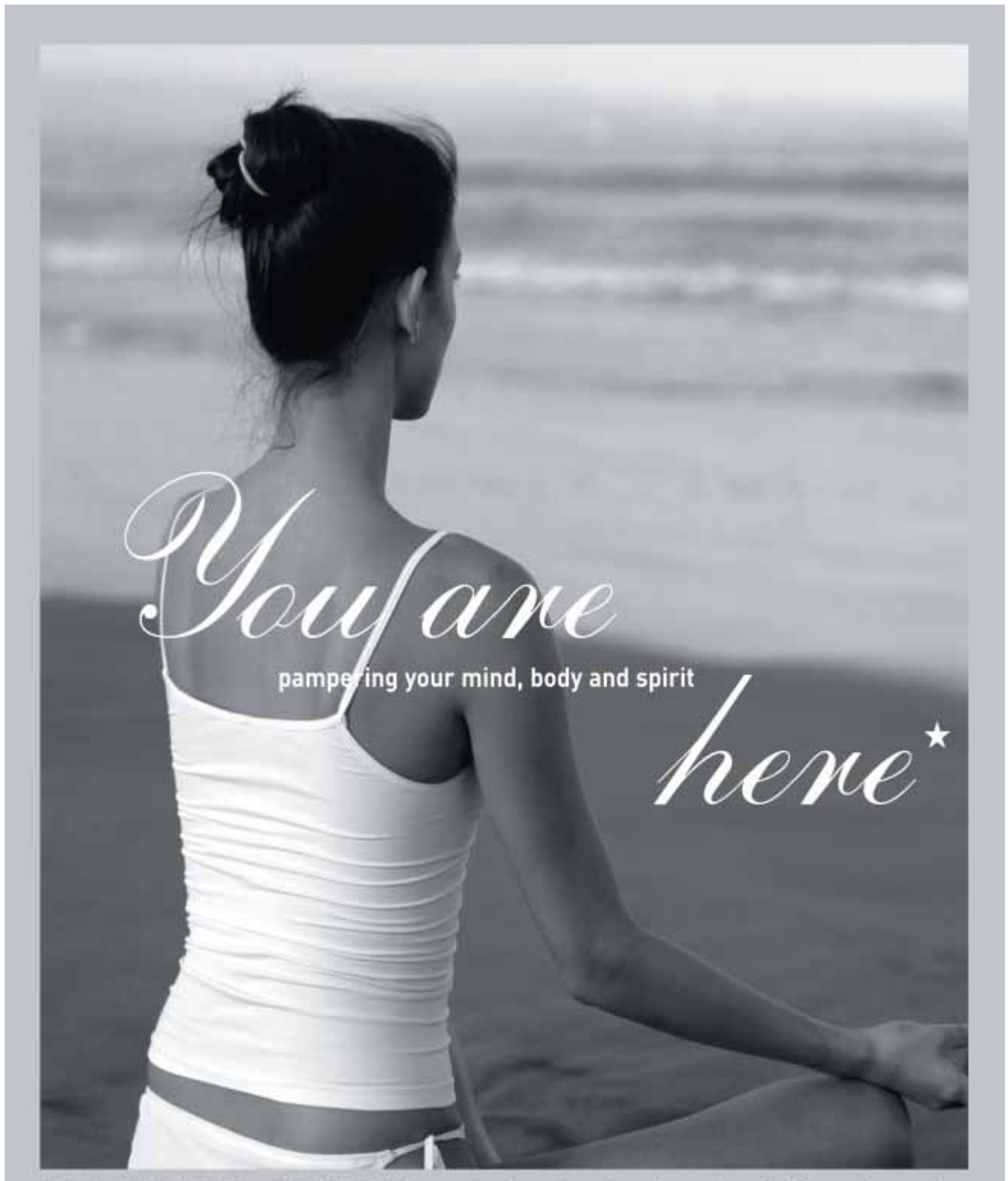


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		Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
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North of Montana	=	$ 4,271,640	$ 1,736,952
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	$ 3,266,100	$ 896,469
South of Wilshire	=	$ 893,724	$ 730,194
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Ocean Park	=	$ 1,732,643	$ 1,327,177

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