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Santa Monica Daily Press

WHAT A TREE SEE PAGE 5

We have you covered

THE CHA CHING ISSUE



TAKING A CLOSER LOOK: A woman stops to view one of the three nativity scenes in Palisades Park late last year.

Daniel Archuleta daniela@smdp.com

Religious groups present proposal to preserve nativity scene displays

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL Christmas may not be in the air, but controversy is.

A nonprofit law group that represents religious interests released a proposal Tuesday for a system that would allow displays for only December holidays to be erected in Palisades Park during the traditional holiday season.

The seven-page document issued by the Liberty Counsel calls for a system that would allow displays that depict holidays from the month of December, ban signs that take up more than 15 percent of any design and outlaw speech against other reli-

gions.

It comes two weeks in advance of a City Council meeting that will decide the fate of the winter displays, a 57-year tradition in Santa Monica that was dominated by a coalition of churches and their 14 dioramas of the nativity story until a group of atheists from outside the city stole the show in 2011.

Council members are expected to make a decision on May 22 on whether or not to allow the displays at all for 2012 after a flood of applications for the normally uncontested spots forced staff to put a lottery system in place for the 21 spaces.

That cost City Hall money, resulted in accusations of unfairness and ultimately

caused a stir that was splashed across headlines nationwide.

Staff recommended in February that the whole tradition be scrapped.

Keeping some version of the tradition alive would be preferable, but may not be possible, said Mayor Richard Bloom.

"That said, I will review the proposal that this organization is making very carefully as well as any other proposals that are made and keep an open mind," Bloom said.

The Liberty Counsel, intervening on behalf of the Save Our Nativity Scenes group, believes it has found the solution.

The proposal would create fair, subject-

City Hall gets \$39.5M from Boeing

Aerospace firm will pay to clean water from industrial site

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL The City Attorney's Office announced a \$39.5 million settlement with the Boeing Corporation to clean contaminants out of the water in the Olympic well field left behind by the former Douglas Aircraft Co.

According to Assistant City Attorney Joseph Lawrence, Boeing will pay \$150,000 within the first 30 days of the settlement. The remainder will be paid out over the course of the next 10 years.

Under the terms of the settlement, City Hall will be responsible for treating the water it pumps from the Olympic Well Field, and Boeing will have to do any other clean up required by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board at various sites.

Those locations include 2902 Exposition Blvd., 1909 Centinela Ave. and 2341 to 2425 Michigan Ave.

Boeing will not admit liability or responsibility for any claims of contamination, according to the settlement.

Although the aerospace company will pay the settlement, it is actually the Douglas Aircraft Co., a major player in the aircraft industry during World War II and former employer in Santa Monica, that can be blamed for the contamination at what is now the Verizon maintenance yard.

The company used industrial solvents called PCE and TCE for degreasing, chemicals which were later discovered in the Olympic basin, said Gil Borboa, the water resources manager with City Hall.

"That was back in the time where chemical handling processes were not as careful as they are today," Borboa said.

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Calendar

2

THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2012

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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Finding work

Main Library

601 Santa Monica Blvd., 6:30 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

Learn the finer points of searching for jobs during this free panel discussion with experts.

Everything from resume writing to networking skills will be addressed. For more information, call (310) 434-2608.

On Oklahoma City

Barnes & Noble

1201 Third St., 7 p.m.

Andrew Gumbel, author of the new book "Oklahoma City: What the Investigation Missed — and Why It Still Matters," will lead an in-depth discussion of the new discoveries about the 1995 bombing and how it relates to 9/11 and national security today.

Sky's the limit

Annenberg Community Beach House

415 Pacific Coast Highway, 6 p.m. — 8 p.m.

Three local artists will showcase their celestial inspiration at a new exhibition titled "SkyScapes." All pieces in this exhibition highlight the sky's natural beauty and its ability to inspire dreams and self-reflection, whether it be through photography or paintings.

Thursday is the opening reception, and the exhibition will run through Aug. 12. For more information, call (310) 458-8350.

Mixed-use

Ken Edwards Center

1527 Fourth St.,

6:30 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

Many Santa Monicans are upset with the number of developments going up around town. Here's a chance to voice that frustration.

City planners will host a meeting to discuss a proposed mixed-use development that will consist of 56 residential units and above ground floor commercial, with subterranean parking at 1318 Second St. For more information, call (310) 458-8341.

Friday, May 11, 2012

In the stars

New Roads School

3131 Olympic Blvd.,

7:30 p.m. — 9:30 p.m.

Learn about the stars in the night sky during this regular cosmic discussion. The Santa Monica Amateur Astronomy Club hosts this free event. For more information, call (310) 495-7595.

Masquerade

Montana Branch Library

1704 Montana Ave.,

3:45 p.m. — 7:15 p.m.

Children ages 4 and up are invited to make their own masks with local artist Debra Disman. For more information, call (310) 458-8682.

Green building

Santa Monica Civic Auditorium

1855 Main St., 10 a.m. — 5 p.m.

The AltBuild Expo, the largest and most respected green building and design expo in Southern California, will be in Santa Monica this weekend. The event is geared toward those interested in or committed to sustainable living through design. More than 40 speakers will address alternative building practices and 100 exhibitors will cover green building, water and energy issues. Hands-on workshops also available. For more information, call (310) 390-2930.

To create your own listing, log on to smdp.com/submitevent

For help, contact Daniel Archuleta at 310-458-7737 or submit to editor@smdp.com

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com/communitylistings



Sexual battery suspect on the loose

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY Police are asking for the public's help in catching a man believed to be responsible for a series of sexual batteries that have taken place since January on the east end of the city.

Detectives with the Santa Monica Police Department issued a bulletin Wednesday that gave a description of the suspect. He is described as a Latino male in his 30s, 5 feet, 5 inches to 5 feet, 9 inches tall, with a medium to heavy build with straight black hair slicked back.

Police said the man rides alongside his victims on his bicycle, described as a mountain bike, and grabs or slaps an intimate part of their bodies. He never turns back to look at his victims, making it difficult for them to identify him.

The first incident occurred on Jan. 5 near the corner of Franklin Street and Santa Monica Boulevard. Since then there have been five additional reports of similar incidents. All have happened in close proximity to one another, and the description of the suspect is similar, police said.

Three of the incidents have taken place in the early morning hours, while the other three have occurred in the afternoon, said SMPD Sgt. Richard Lewis.

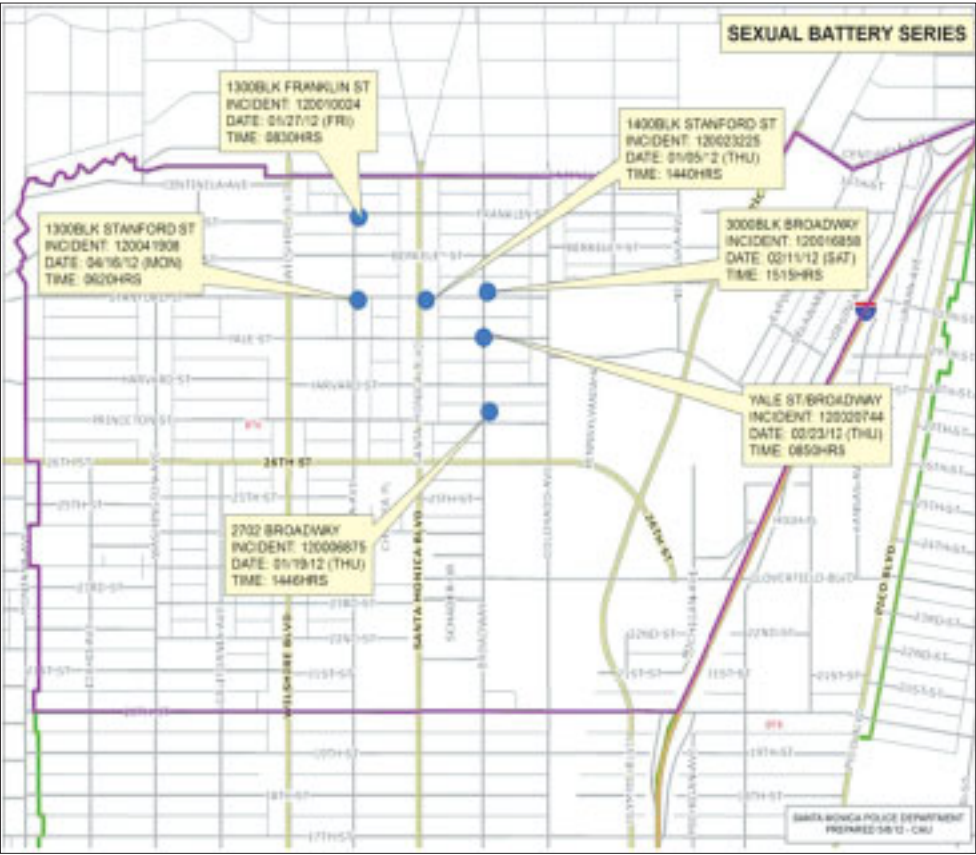
The suspect's clothing has varied with each incident.

Those with any information regarding the attacks are urged to contact detectives at (310) 458-8944 or the watch commander at (310) 458-8427.

Anyone wishing to remain anonymous may call the WeTip hotline at (800) 78-CRIME (27463) or submit the tip online at www.wetip.com. Tipsters can also contact Crime Stoppers by either calling (800) 222-TIPS, texting from their mobile, or by visiting www.lacrimestoppers.org. Callers may remain anonymous and may be qualified to receive a \$1,000 reward from Crime Stoppers.

A sexual battery is the act of making unwanted and sexually offensive contact with an intimate body part of another person or which case an immediate apprehension in the other person that such an act will occur. Intimate body parts include sex organs, the anus, the groin or buttocks of any person and the breasts of a female.

kevinh@smdp.com



Map courtesy Santa Monica Police Department

MAPPING IT OUT: Locations of the six alleged sexual batteries.



Paul Alvarez news@smdp.com

GOTCHA: Samohi's Trevor Pye (right) spikes a ball past a Keppel defender on Tuesday.

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS ROUNDUP Samohi v-ball on to round two

BY DANIEL ARCHULETA
Managing Editor

SAMOH Santa Monica's boys' volleyball team made short work of Mark Keppel on Tuesday to advance to the second round of the CIF-Southern Section Division 4 playoffs.

Playing on their own court, Samohi won in straight sets, 25-8, 25-14, 25-22.

The victory sets up a second round match with Bishop Montgomery for the No. 3 seeded squad from Samohi.

The game will be played today also at Samohi. It begins at 7 p.m.

Xrds defeated Garden Grove on the road in four sets, 25-19, 25-20, 23-25, 29-27.

Crossroads will host Sage Hill, also on Thursday at 7 p.m.

SAMOH

SOFTBALL LOOKS TO STAY UNDEFEATED Samohi's softball team will travel to rival Culver City seeking to go 10-0 in Ocean League play and secure a 12th straight title.

Culver City still has a shot at a share of the league title if they can defeat Samohi, who beat the Centaurs 9-1 late last month.

daniela@smdp.com

XRDS ADVANCES, TOO

Crossroads' boys' volleyball team joins Samohi in the second round of the Division 4 playoffs.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Somebody's watching

Editor:

The column by Bill Bauer was right on ("City Hall's worsening traffic nightmare," My Write, May 7)! I would like to see a serious series of reports on how much and what is the source of money to City Council members. I also think there should be an investigative report into city spending and corruption. The city budget is out of control at over \$550 million – personal use of city cars, cell phones, computers and conferences. Who is watching where the money goes?

And maybe someone should be watching them.

Keep up the good work, Bill!

Jim Lewis

Santa Monica

Coming from behind

Editor:

I do not feel safe walking the sidewalks and foot paths of Santa Monica. Bicyclists pass from my rear like stealth bombs, just waiting to shatter my elbow or knock me to the ground. Some are polite, pass slowly and give a "heads up," but most fly by at break-neck speeds while I am totally unaware of their presence until it is too late to make sure I stay out of their way. It would actually be safer for me to walk in the oncoming bike lane then to walk along the sidewalks. What would City Hall think of that idea?

I have read these same fears many times lately in this section of the paper and it is time City Hall takes this threat seriously. There are bike lanes and signs about protecting our bicyclists all over town. Where are the "bicycles not allowed on sidewalks" and "protect our pedestrians" signs? Where is enforcement of our bicycle laws? I hope we don't have to wait until an unsuspecting pedestrian is mowed down from the rear and seriously injured by a speeding bicyclist.

Jack Allen

Santa Monica

Reasons to save the sculpture

Editor:

There are important reasons why Paul Conrad's "Chain Reaction" sculpture in the Santa Monica Civic Center since 1991 should be saved and restored.

1) To honor the legacy, talent, creativity, and generosity of the late, three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist Paul Conrad, who created the "Chain Reaction" peace sculpture and gifted it to the city.

2) To continue educating, warning, inspiring, motivating, and artistically drawing attention to the dangers of nuclear escalation and the real need to promote peace.

3) To reinstate and reinvigorate our commitment to public art, even when local, state and national art funding is being cut.

4) To honor how "Chain Reaction" has become part of Santa Monica's cultural, artistic, political, and historical landscape.

The Cultural Affairs Division is now accepting tax deductible donations earmarked for restoring "Chain Reaction" through their nonprofit Santa Monica Arts Foundation. We are deeply appreciative of the city's help.

And the family of Paul Conrad has set up a website that provides information on how to contribute to save "Chain Reaction." The website also highlights some of Conrad's political cartoons and sculptures, as well as a Conrad biography. The website is www.conradprojects.com.

There are many good reasons to support the "Chain Reaction" restoration effort. But the most important reason is showing you care.

Jerry Rubin

Santa Monica



Life Matters

JoAnne Barge & Katrina Davy Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Making the most out of a new city

DEAR LIFE MATTERS,

I recently relocated to Los Angeles from the Mid-west as a result of my company's West Coast expansion efforts. As I adjust to a new city, opportunities, and professionals, I would like advice about making the most out of what Los Angeles has to offer. In particular, I am interested in learning more about possible ways to increase my business network and meet new professionals in the greater Los Angeles area. Are there specific functions or networking events that I should consider?

Signed,
Relocated Worker

DEAR RELOCATED,

Welcome to Los Angeles! Relocating for a job can be an exciting way to learn about a new city and business market while enjoying the comfort and security of a company that you know well and have built a strong reputation with. As you think about making your mark in Los Angeles you are wise to consider ways to strengthen your business network and establish yourself in the local business community.

As you may be starting to realize, Los Angeles is a metropolitan area made up of different communities and cities. For a new resident this means a wide variety of communities and areas to navigate as you get your bearings. Many major geographic areas within L.A. County have a Chamber of Commerce dedicated to representing the local businesses and professionals within that community. Joining a local Chamber of Commerce or attending a networking event hosted by a local chamber can be a great way to meet others in your immediate community. On the Westside of Los Angeles alone there are several chamber groups including the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, West L.A., Beverly Hills, Culver City, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, and the LAX Coastal Area Chamber of Commerce. Most of the chambers have an active website listing ways to get involved, upcoming mixer or networking events, and a membership directory to show you who is active within their organizations. Connecting with dedicated professionals active in your local community can be a great way to expand your community connections.

LinkedIn, Meetup and other social networking sites can help you streamline your search by identifying groups that are active in your local community. Try searching for groups based on your career interests, hobbies, geographic location, or affiliations. While some groups may only exist in an online arena, others may host regular networking events or mixers to provide members with an opportunity to meet in person and expand their connections with fellow group members. If someone listed in a group has an interesting title or background,

feel free to reach out and make an introduction. Being proactive in the quest to meet others will help you to achieve success.

Consider ways that your personal network might exist in Los Angeles. For instance, you might consider exploring whether your alma mater has a local chapter or alumni group in Los Angeles. Many universities have active alumni groups throughout the country. Tapping into your university network can be a great way to meet professionals in a new city by leveraging something you have in common. Meetup can be another great way to meet professionals with a common area of interest. For instance, searching the Meetup.com for Mid-west transplants might help you connect with others who have relocated to Los Angeles from the Mid-west. Finding local professionals with a common background or experience may provide you with a network to support you in your adjustment to the L.A. business market.

JOINING A LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OR ATTENDING A NETWORKING EVENT HOSTED BY A LOCAL CHAMBER CAN BE A GREAT WAY TO MEET OTHERS IN YOUR IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY.

Once you start to establish your network in L.A., keep in mind that a few standard rules continue to apply no matter where you are. First, making a connection is only a small piece of the puzzle. Make sure that you work on maintaining that connection by staying in regular contact and providing value to that person. For instance, if you take action based on advice you receive from a contact, stay in touch and let them know that you followed through on their suggestion. If you meet someone at a networking event that you know another contact would value meeting, introduce them to one another. It is never too early to show your value to a new connection.

KATRINA DAVY, M.A., ED.M., is a professional career counselor who has worked in university and private settings. She holds degrees from Cornell and Columbia universities. Visit her online at www.kdcareer.com. Send your questions to newshrink@gmail.com. All questions are kept anonymous; let us help you with your life matters!

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Back to Nature

Reese Halter

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

The magnificent tree of peace

THE OLIVE TREE HAS SUSTAINED humankind since prehistoric time. Some venerable European specimens with gnarled and twisted trunks are 2,000 years old; and most religions revere this truly extraordinary tree.

About 20 species and hundreds of cultivars of olives or *Olea* are members of the ash family. The silver-gray, evergreen, olive leaves are the icons of the Mediterranean, and perfectly suited to the hot, dry, long summers and cool wet winters of this region.

Trees reach about 45 feet in height and in the spring they often display exquisite white, fragrant flowers. As the oblong fruits mature, they change color from green to violet to almost black.

Olives are first produced at about the age of seven and trees continue growing olives until about 800 years old.

Olive trees are renown for providing shade and fruits rich in oil and food.

Over 6,000 years Semitic peoples of Syria cultivated the olive for food and traded it as oil.

About 3,500 years ago the Egyptians began using olive oil in their embalming fluids and they adorned their dead with olive branches. They too learned to cultivate and trade the oil.

Some 2,500 years ago the Romans invented the screw press method of extracting oil, which for the most part remains unchanged today.

During the Roman occupation of Libya, 106 BC-439 AD, they constructed an aqueduct from Jebel to Leptis Magna some 100 miles and transported olive oil by pouring it onto the water at one end to be carried to the other where it was skimmed off and then exported.

At the time of the fall of the Roman Empire olives were cultivated throughout the Mediterranean basin and a central commodity of trade in the Middle East, North Africa, Spain and Morocco.

Spanish explorers brought olives to Peru in the 1560s and in 1769 the Franciscan Father Junipero Serra established Mission San Diego de Alcalá where he planted olive trees.

By 1900 the California olive industry began to flourish and in 1905 Ehmann Olive Co. began canning ripe olives, soon becoming the table olives of choice in the U.S.

Today, there are over 1 billion olive trees on the globe with an average estimated age of 175 years old, covering over 27.5 million acres.

Spain is the largest producer controlling 45 percent of the olive oil and 35 percent of the world's table olives. Italy, Greece and Turkey are the other main producers.

California produces .02 percent of the world's olive oil and 6.7 percent of the table

olives.

Harvesting olives is labor intensive and groves require year-round attention. Almost all the picking is done manually, accounting for the higher prices of olive oil.

Olives are crushed into black paste and the juice is squeezed out of the paste; no heating is involved hence the term "cold press." Water from the olives that is present is separated, leaving only oil. Heat is applied to the remaining paste to further extract oil used only for cooking.

It takes 11 pounds of olives to make a quarter gallon of oil.

Ninety percent of the global olive production goes into manufacturing oil, the remaining 10 percent of the olives, green or black are either salt-brined-pickled or dry-salted and then eaten.

Extra virgin oil has less than 0.8 percent acidity, fine virgin oil has less than 1.5 percent acidity, whereas ordinary olive oil has less than 3 percent acidity.

If you fry or cook with olive oil it diminishes the health properties of the oil. Consider cooking with refined avocado or sunflower oil for high heat. Olive oil is best used at room temperature on salads.

Olive oil is best stored in a dark, cool place; both heat or direct light breaks it down.

Olive oil contains no cholesterol, but plenty of vitamin A, D calcium and iron. Many cultures take a couple tablespoons twice daily. Olive oil is effective at increasing high-density cholesterol (the beneficial sterol) and has earned it, rightfully so, the moniker "a protector of cardiac health."

It is effective at regenerating skin cells and dissolving scar tissue.

According to Greek mythology, Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom, gave the olive to the Athenians.

Jesus visited Mount Olive after the Last Supper; there in the olive garden at Gethsemane an angel appeared and give him strength.

In the Islamic tradition the olive is known as the World Tree described in the Koran for its oil as "the light of the heavens and the Earth."

In the Jewish faith the olive wood symbolizes "peace of the immortal soul." Also the olive tree is referred to as the Tree of Light for its oil is used to light the seven-branched candlestick or menorah.

In the Bible, a dove sent by Noah from the Ark returned with an olive branch.

Today, the olive branch symbolizes peace.

DR. REESE HALTER is a distinguished conservation biologist and author of the award-winning "The Insatiable Bark Beetle," Rocky Mountain Books.

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The Q-Line

Pulling away

There's a movement gaining speed that is calling for Malibu to pull away from the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

So, this week's Q-Line question asks:

Do you oppose the district splitting up, or do you think it's time for Malibu to break off?

Contact qline@smdp.com before **Friday at 5 p.m.** and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. You can also call **310-573-8354**.



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GREG RISLING
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES A judge overturned a nearly \$10,000 small claims judgment against American Honda Motor Co. that was won by a car owner who said the automaker misrepresented that her hybrid Civic could get 50 miles per gallon, according to a ruling released Wednesday.

Superior Court Judge Dudley W. Gray II ruled Tuesday on Honda's appeal of a court commissioner's award of \$9,867 to Heather Peters.

Peters had opted out of a class-action settlement giving some 200,000 owners between \$100 and \$200 each, plus a rebate if they buy a new Honda She elected instead to sue the automaker on her own.

Peters, a lawyer, also urged Honda owners to take the small-claims route as she did, and her initial success led some 1,700 other hybrid owners to follow suit.

The ruling by Gray will not have a direct effect on any of those other cases. However, a legal observer said it could pose a challenge to those pursuing small claims actions.

"I think it will make it harder for them to fight their case on an individual basis," said Aaron Jacoby, a class action lawyer in Los Angeles who is not involved with the Honda case.

The ruling is "not binding on another court, but it certainly is persuasive," he added.

A phone message left Wednesday for Peters was not immediately returned.

Honda said in a statement that it's pleased with the ruling.

"We are never satisfied when a customer is anything less than satisfied with one of our products, and the company does not relish the necessity to defend the truth in opposition to any of our customers," the statement said.

Gray's ruling found, among other issues, that while Peters had standing to bring the case in state court, federal regulations govern fuel economy ratings posted on vehicles and related advertising claims. The ruling also said most owners of that type of car achieve fuel economy close to federal Environmental Protection Agency estimates.

In addition, the judge said EPA miles per gallon ratings are for comparison among

vehicles and don't account for various factors such as the condition of the car or the length of the trip, that can affect mileage.

"Despite these many variables, most of the owners of the subject vehicle achieve fuel economy very close to the EPA estimate," Gray wrote.

Peters argued that Honda knew it had problems with the hybrid cars but continued to advertise them as an alternative to high gas prices and a way to help the environment.

But Gray said the automaker's advertising slogans "are not specific promises of anything."

Peters also said her battery failed early on and was never again fully charged after she received a software update, leaving the car to run almost entirely on gasoline.

"The court finds it was designed to prolong the life of the battery, not to increase mileage or performance of the vehicle," Gray said of the software update.

Peters' "subjective impressions of sluggishness or impaired safety are unsupported by any objective evidence," he said.

Peters took her case to a small claims court in January, saying her 2006 Civic was expected to get 50 mpg, but barely got 30 mpg. She said she wouldn't have bought the car if its mileage was advertised, and her purpose for taking Honda head-on was to hold the automaker accountable for false advertising.

Her suit marked a unique end run around the class-action process that she said offered too little to Honda owners and too much to lawyers.

A judge has valued the class-action settlement at \$170 million. Attorneys for the plaintiffs have placed the value between \$87.5 million and \$461.3 million, depending largely on how many people accept rebates of up to \$1,500.

Honda said it has prevailed in 16 out of 17 similar small claims cases since January involving Civic Hybrid owners across the nation. The company didn't immediately elaborate.

Jacoby said while others have followed Peters' lead, they may not have her tenacity and courtroom savvy.

"She made it seem anyone could do this," he said. "She's very bright and very hard-working. Not everyone is like that in terms of bringing their own case."

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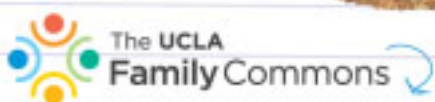
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Bank of America initiates home loan modification offers

ALEX VEIGA

AP Real Estate Writer

LOS ANGELES Homeowners with a Bank of America mortgage have good reason to check their mailbox.

The lender said Tuesday it has begun mailing out letters to customers who may qualify to have their home loans reduced as part of a multistate settlement over alleged foreclosure abuses.

The Charlotte, N.C.-based company estimates that more than 200,000 of its customers could potentially be in line for a reduction in the principal balance on their mortgage.

Some customers could receive letters from the bank as early as this week that invite them to provide financial information as part of a review process for the program. The bank plans to have mailed out most of the letters by the end of the third quarter.

Bank of America estimates that customers who end up receiving the loan modifications will save, on average, 30 percent a month on their mortgage payments.

Among the criteria to qualify, borrowers must owe more on their mortgage than the property is worth, and be at least 60 days behind on payments as of Jan. 31.

Bank of America will reduce the amount owed by the homeowners by as much as \$100,000 in some cases. And only mortgages that are currently owned by Bank of America will qualify. Those that are owned by government entities Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, or backed by the Federal Housing Administration, will not be eligible.

The lender said it began reducing the

principal balance on mortgages in March, focusing initially on homeowners who already had a loan modification bid under review.

Under this initiative, the bank said it has mailed 5,000 trial modification offers, representing potentially more than \$700 million in forgiven principal balances.

Bank of America Corp., Wells Fargo & Co., JPMorgan Chase & Co., Citigroup Inc. and Ally Financial Inc. agreed to a \$25 billion settlement with 49 state attorneys general and federal officials in February.

Most of the settlement is earmarked for reducing loans for about 1 million U.S. households that owe more on their mortgages than their homes are worth.

About 11 million American households are "underwater" on their mortgages, meaning they owe more than their homes are worth. The broader settlement is expected reduce loans for only about 1 million of those Americans and send checks to others who were improperly foreclosed upon.

Of the five major lenders, Bank of America's penalties were the highest: \$11.8 billion.

The settlement ended a painful chapter of the financial crisis, when home values sank and millions edged toward foreclosure. Lender abuses exacerbated the crisis. Many companies processed foreclosures without verifying documents. Some employees signed papers they hadn't read or used fake signatures to speed foreclosures, a practice known as robo-signing.

In the fall of 2010, Bank of America along with other large lenders temporarily halted foreclosures after a furor over robo-signed documents.

STATE BRIEFS

LONG BEACH

Wayward dolphin leaves harbor

A young dolphin who got stuck in Long Beach harbor has managed to swim back to sea.

Officials say the dolphin may have been chasing fish when it swam into a wharf area surrounded by metal sheeting at high tide on Monday morning. When the tide fell, the dolphin apparently got stuck.

Divers cut holes in the walls Tuesday afternoon and by Wednesday morning the dolphin was gone, apparently swimming out to sea during the night.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES

Three arrested for high-end custom bicycle thefts

Investigators say three men used Craigslist and Facebook to steal 200 high-end bicycles throughout Southern California.

The stolen custom bicycles, which cost up to \$15,000 each, were worth \$250,000.

Los Angeles County sheriff's investigators arrested 23-year-old Julian Herrera, his 21-year-old brother Jamie Herrera and 34-year-old Alberto Mejia.

The Los Angeles Times says the suspects are facing burglary and conspiracy charges.

Authorities say 200 bikes were stolen by the trio in the past two years. Some stolen bicycles and bike parts were recovered.

Detectives said the thieves scanned Craigslist and Facebook to prey on the growing online bicycling community who share photos of their bikes and look for parts on the Internet.

AP

Photography by Brandon Wise

FREELANCE Photographer

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Culture Watch

Sarah Spitz

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Going gaga over art galleries

I'VE BEEN A BIT UNDER THE WEATHER this week. Being bedridden gave me the excuse to dig into my overstuffed bookshelves. Plowing through three books in three days, I want to commend the one that stopped me in my tracks, "A Million Nightingales," by author Susan Straight, a Riverside, Calif. native and professor of creative writing at UC Riverside.

Published in 2006, it's a trying but triumphant historical novel about the life of a mulatto slave woman set in the caste-ridden multicultural world of early 19th century Louisiana. This may sound like heavy sledding but you won't be able to put it down. I couldn't.

Despite the respite that books bring me, I'm glad I was able to do some gallery hopping last week because it gave me a chance to think. When artists make art, should they reflect the world as they see it? Or is the role of the artist to help elevate the spirit?

If you like your work beautiful and meditative, head over to Annenberg Community Beach House tonight for the opening reception of "Skyscapes." Artists Lita Albuquerque, Bruria Finkel, and Chris Garland celebrate the open spaces and changeable vistas of the sky. Enjoy the stunning images in the gallery then treat yourself to the real sky just beyond the window. "Skyscapes" runs through August and the gallery is open daily, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; parking info and more at annenbergbeach-house.com or call (310) 458-4904.

At Bergamot Station's Craig Krull Gallery, the definition of joy is spelled Nancy Monk with "Black Matter." Don't let the title throw you; the works by this prolific and playful artist are light, bright and made me gush out loud.

This is Monk's sixth solo show here and she's a master of the small and the large, of paint and collage, of works on paper and on canvas. Among the numerous pieces are vintage stereoscopic cards that she paints over, creating re-imagined visions such as "Climbing Tree," with tiny photographic figures peeking out from the stereoscopic card as they climb up the tiered limbs of her painted trees.

Monk loves patterns, designs and colors, and there's an entire vitrine filled with tiny delight-filled mini mixed-media works, replaced on a rotating basis because they're moving so quickly; at only \$300 apiece, you could build an entire miniature collection of her work very affordably from this glass case alone.

Paired with Monk is Jenny Okun, in her eighth solo show at Craig Krull, whose large scale "Dreamscapes" are created from pictures she shoots during her world travels. Both a contrast and complement to Monk's art, Okun's wall-sized works do funny things to your brain.

She montages multiple images into photographic abstractions to create fantasy landscapes, wall-sized compositions that take you into a multi-dimensional universe



Photo courtesy Chris Garland

IN THE SKIES: Photographer Chris Garland's 'Prince Charming' is part of a new exhibit at the Annenberg Community Beach House called 'Skyscapes.'

— from an English garden to a Costa Rican topiary, a Jain temple in India to Gaudi's surrealistic Barcelona Cathedral; all real places but rearranged via her creative process into otherworldly spaces. Monk and Okun's works are on view through May 26 — craigkrullgallery.com.

If, however, you prefer your art to represent the real world of political and economic reality, "Main Street to Wall Street" may be the ticket for you. Painter, sculptor, photographer and teacher George Small says this about his show: "It's becoming impossible for me to separate my work from my beliefs

and observations. I want to create beautiful images, but the social world is too compelling not to comment. I have to make commentary!"

Small's mixed-media works on paper combine photographic images of junked vintage cars, stenciled over with provocative words and phrases such as "Owner Occupied," "Bankrupt," "Made in America" and more. See the series at this weekend's receptions held at The Studio Gallery on Ocean Park Boulevard, Saturday, 5 p.m. to 8

SEE WATCH PAGE 9

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Hollywood







Play Time

Cynthia Citron

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Have you heard about the ‘New’ Cyrano?

I CAN'T RAVE ENOUGH TO ADEQUATELY convey my excitement and admiration for the new adaptation of “Cyrano de Bergerac” that opened recently at the Fountain Theatre.

Written by Stephen Sachs and directed by Simon Levy, this brilliant “Cyrano” is performed by the extraordinary actors of the Deaf West Theatre.

I have long been convinced that once you had seen Jose Ferrer in the role, you had no reason to see it done by anyone else. Ferrer was the definitive “Cyrano”; he won a Tony for his performance on Broadway and an Oscar for the film. As far as I was concerned, they might as well just hang up the sword and retire the white plume.

Until Troy Kotsur.

Kotsur, who renders the role of “Cyrano” in American Sign Language, is as articulate with his hands as Ferrer was with Edmond Rostand’s beautiful words. His hands dance while his face expresses his pain — the pain of being unique and alone.

As in the original, the plot deals with Cyrano’s unspoken passion for Roxanne (here called Roxy and portrayed by Erinn Annona), and his efforts to help another man win her love. In this case, the other man is not the soldier Christian, but Cyrano’s brother Chris (Paul Raci), an insensitive clod who plays in a rock band.

In Sachs’ adaptation, the setting is the present rather than the 17th century, and the messages that Cyrano composes for Chris are delivered by smart phones and e-mail and transported on eight computer screens strung across the stage.

Rather than a large nose, Kotsur’s “handicap” in this version is his deafness, and Sachs has adapted the whole play around this conceit. All the wonderful solil-

oquys are transmogrified to deal with deafness, rather than the nose that Cyrano was so distressed about. For instance, when a fellow patron in Roberta’s Café, where much of the play is set, insults him crudely about his deafness he delivers a series of bon mots that the man might have said instead, had he any brains or wit. Sample question: “If a deaf man loses one of his fingers, does he develop a stutter?”

The lines that Sachs puts in Cyrano’s mouth for this speech are even more clever and witty than Rostand’s. And anyone familiar with the original play will also relish the swordfight (here a fist-fight) in which Cyrano composes a poem while he fights. Or the “No, thank you” speech in which Cyrano tells his friend (Bob Hiltermann) why he prefers to be a loner rather than become a member of the deaf “community.”

Although Kotsur dominates the action (he never leaves the stage), he is surrounded by an ensemble (six deaf members out of 13) that is as perfect as he is. Whether dramatically voicing the words that the others are signing, or “speaking” the words with their expressive hands, the players are thrilling to watch, and under Simon Levy’s deft direction, Jeff McLaughlin’s clever set design, and Jeremy Pivnick’s creative lighting design, the play emerges as a poignant, inventive, riotously funny, and marvelously satisfying masterpiece.

This world premiere of “Cyrano” will run Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. through June 10 at The Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Ave., in Los Angeles. Call (323) 663-1525 or visit www.FountainTheatre.com for reservations.

CYNTHIA CITRON can be reached at ccitron@socal.rr.com.

WATCH FROM PAGE 8

p.m. and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. “Main Street to Wall Street” is on view through June — georgesmallartist.com.

On the other hand, if your taste in art leans more toward the apocalyptic, catch Stanley Donwood’s solo exhibition, “Lost Angeles,” at Subliminal Projects in the Silverlake area. Fans of Radiohead will recognize Donwood’s work from the Grammy-winning British band’s album art and posters.

Donwood definitely uses his art to define his worldview: “There is no future. We have evicted ourselves from our own cities, rendered our agriculture poisonous, criminalized the poor, aggrandized the rich, honored the stupid and ridiculed the intelligent. ... I have no solutions, no wisdom to offer. ... Whilst Rome burns, I take up my little chisel and I carve a panoramic apocalypse of my own ... and if you want to see it, you’re more than welcome.”

Similar to a project he did in London, Donwood carved 18 panels of linoleum then hand-burnished them onto Japanese Kozo paper to create this limited edition print — an 18-foot panorama of the City of Angels being destroyed by fire, flood and meteor storm — subliminalprojects.com.

Speaking of Japanese Kozo paper, I don’t know why it’s taken me so long to visit Hiromi Paper International, the amazing fine art paper store at Bergamot Station. If you need a gift for a friend — or yourself — this will be the place to get something utterly unique and handmade. I saw dried fruits and vegetables made into beautiful papyrus sheets, wood grained patterned paper, the thinnest rice paper known to mankind, woven paper, art and archival paper, wrapping papers and more, all in brilliant colors and textures. This, too, is a store worth gushing about — a one-of-a-kind resource and gem.

SARAH SPITZ is a former freelance arts producer for NPR and former staff producer at public radio station KCRW-Santa Monica. She reviews theatre for LAOpeningNights.com.

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SCENES

FROM PAGE 1

tive standards and prevent any one group from dominating the system, said Mathew Staver, the founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel.

"One of the things that the atheists have done is try to abuse the forum," Staver said. "They try to use it as a soap box to run down other people's religions and holidays. That's not what this forum is about."

However, under the rules proposed, atheists would be hard-pressed to put up any of the displays that they posted last year.

Those consisted mostly of signs with messages, many of which assaulted religion.

The sign that started it all, put up first in 2010 by Burbank prop maker Damon Vix, prominently displayed a quote from founding father Thomas Jefferson saying that religions are based on fables and mythologies.

The signs had little to do with any "December holiday," which would be required under Liberty Counsel's proposal.

Staver did not want to discuss what kinds of holidays atheists could use, saying only that they had to be "recognized," and could not be birthdays.

"I'm not going to tell them what to say, as

long as they or anyone else do not cut down another religion," Staver said.

The proposal also requires that the displays be erected by Dec. 14. If not, the space would be given away to another party. Several of the spaces won by atheist groups were unused last year.

City officials have had very little time to review the proposal, but say that it raises some concerns.

City Attorney Marsha Moutrie wrote in an e-mail Wednesday that it would be difficult if not impossible to ask people to excise speech regarding other religions.

"I don't think we can require people to 'be nice,' because we can't censor content except in a very, very limited way," she wrote in an e-mail.

Other arguments brought up in the proposal — including limiting displays based on aesthetics or restricting signs in particular — will require further review, Moutrie wrote.

If the City Council chooses to adopt the Liberty Counsel construct, the organization agreed to take on any litigation should the matter be taken to court, Staver promised.

The offer was appreciated, but declined.

"We prefer to handle it and are quite capable of handling it," Bloom said.

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WATER

FROM PAGE 1

Douglas Aircraft was eventually bought by a company that came to be known as McDonald Douglas. That company was bought by Boeing in 1997.

Santa Monicans are already using water out of the contaminated well, which is treated using an "old school" process, Borboa said.

The water is aerated, similar to running it through sprinklers, which turns the chemicals into vapor. That air is then sent through carbon scrubbers which removes the contaminants.

Ultimately, City Hall would like to build a water treatment facility that would not only take the solvents out of the water, but contaminants that might cause problems in the future, Borboa said.

City Hall opened the Arcadia water treatment facility one year ago to treat water from the Charnock Wells that had been sullied with methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE), another industrial solvent.

If officials choose to build a new one, it would target the new chemicals as well as any others that they expect to find in the

future.

For instance, Borboa's office has identified another solvent called 1,4-dioxane that is currently within acceptable levels, but may not be in the future.

"We'll take a hard look for everything in that basin and build a facility that could treat everything," Borboa said.

At the City Council meeting on Tuesday night, City Manager Rod Gould cautioned council members to hold onto the cash so that a new facility could eventually be built.

The settlement is closely modeled after a 2010 settlement with the Gillette Corporation, the company that paid out for contamination of the Olympic Well Field caused by industrial processes at the former Papermate site, Lawrence said.

That deal involved similar chemicals and helped create the framework for the Boeing deal.

"It sends a message to other parties that the city is serious," Lawrence said.

The attorney had no comment when asked if there were any future water contaminant settlements in the offing.

"We're pleased, and it's good to get this behind us," Lawrence said.

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Initiative seeks to modify lawmakers' term limits

HANNAH DREIER
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. Two decades after approving term limits to force entrenched state lawmakers from office, California voters are being given a chance to change the law with an initiative its supporters say will encourage more consistency and stability.

Proposition 28 on the June 5 primary ballot would reduce the total number of years lawmakers can serve in the Legislature from 14 to 12, but it would allow them to serve all of that in one house. They now can serve up to three two-year terms in the Assembly and two four-year terms in the Senate.

Critics say the initiative dilutes term limits instead of strengthening them.

California voters narrowly rejected a nearly identical attempt to modify state lawmakers' term limits in 2008, when it was criticized as a power-grab by incumbents because lawmakers currently in office would have benefited.

This time, the change would apply only to future lawmakers. Proposition 28's supporter say they think that will remove the taint of self-interest from their campaign.

"Term limits are something that most people support, but there's been some problems," said Gabriel Sanchez, spokesman for the campaign. "The way that term limits are set up now, lawmakers are constantly looking for a job instead of sitting down and doing the work."

The 1990 ballot measure that established California's term limits was sold as a way to reduce the power of special interest groups. It gave California the strictest legislative term limits in the country, along with Arkansas and Michigan, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

But critics say it accomplished the opposite, assuring that the statehouse would be filled with inexperienced politicians who are overly reliant on lobbyists and bureaucrats to help them write legislation. They also raise campaign cash constantly, including during the periods when they are voting on bills.

Former Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, who helped promote the failed 2008 initiative when he served in the Legislature, said the existing system forces inexperienced lawmakers into leadership positions. It also makes them obsess about what their next job might be, he said.

That preoccupation sometimes leads them to take votes that are based on how the action will be perceived by future voters, rather than taking positions based strictly on the merits of a bill.

"I had colleagues when I was in the Assembly, the day they got elected, they were figuring out what their next move would be," Nunez, a Democrat who now works for a political strategy firm in Sacramento, said in a telephone interview.

He said it had been wrong to try to include sitting lawmakers last time around.

"We all learn from our mistakes," he said.

Mindful that term limits remain popular with voters, proponents of Proposition 28 emphasize that it would reduce lawmakers' total time in the statehouse by two years even if it means they could serve longer in

either the Assembly or Senate. It also would eliminate a loophole that allows lawmakers to serve as many as 17 years if they begin their political careers by filling an open seat vacated early by a lawmaker who has stepped down.

Opponents say the initiative is dishonest because few lawmakers actually serve 14 years. For example, Assembly members often fail to move to the Senate because there are 80 seats in the lower house and just half that in the upper house.

"The fact that it lowers the amount of time you can spend in the Legislature is a smoke screen," said Philip Blumel, president of U.S. Term Limits. "They've crafted a very tricky proposition that's hard to beat."

The title and summary on the June ballot also are misleading, said California Republican Party spokeswoman Jennifer Kerns. The initiative is titled, "Limits on legislators' terms in office," and the summary does not mention that lawmakers currently are limited to six years in the Assembly and eight in the Senate.

Former television game show host Chuck Woolery, who co-founded Restart Congress to push for term limits, recorded a three-minute web video casting the initiative as a gift to corrupt politicians.

"I lived in California 37 years; I voted for term limits in 1990. This is just moving backward," Woolery said in a telephone interview from his home in Horseshoe Bay, Texas, where he has lived for eight years.

There are no term limits on members of Congress.

As of May 9, the campaign against Proposition 28 had raised \$100,000 from the Liberty Initiative Fund, a conservative organization founded this year in Virginia to work on ballot measures, and \$45,000 from East Coast developer Howard Rich, who has supported term-limit campaigns across the country.

Proponents of the measure have raised more than \$2 million, pulling from a diverse list of organizations that includes the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and Pacific Gas & Electric Co.

The measure also has received a boost from rival developers competing to build a National Football League stadium in Southern California. Majestic Realty has given \$400,000 and L.A. Live Properties LLC has donated \$100,000.

Majestic Realty spokesman Ben Porritt said company leaders believe the reform would lead to greater efficiency in government. He declined to comment on the NFL stadium plans.

Several of the 30 lawmakers giving up their seats this year because of term limits said they had mixed feelings about leaving the Legislature just as they've built up a body of expertise.

"Am I a better legislator today then I was when I walked in the door? Absolutely, in every sense," said Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, who plans to run for Santa Clara County Supervisor.

Then again, he said, if not for term limits, the Senate seat he won in 2004 might not have been open that year.

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National

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THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2012

Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

Embattled Postal Service to keep rural post offices open

HOPE YEN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON Bending to strong public opposition, the nearly bankrupt U.S. Postal Service on Wednesday backed off a plan to close thousands of rural post offices after May 15 and proposed keeping them open, but with shorter operating hours.

The move to halt the shuttering of 3,700 low-revenue post offices followed months of dissent from rural states and their lawmakers, who said the cost-cutting would hurt their communities the most. In recent weeks, rising opposition had led Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe to visit some rural areas in a bid to ease fears about cuts that could slow delivery of prescription drugs, newspapers and other services.

In an election year, the angst over postal closings also extended to nearly half the senators, who in letters last week urged Donahoe to postpone closing any mail facility until Congress approves final postal overhaul legislation. The Senate last month passed a bill that would halt many of the closings; the House remains stalled over a separate bill allowing for aggressive cuts.

"I could live with this plan, and I think the majority of people could," said June Nygren, who runs the Jersey Lilly Saloon & Eatery in the tiny Montana town of Ingomar. Donahoe visited the rural town of about 80 people last month, which welcomed him with a spread of home-made baked goods and a packed school gymnasium as people pleaded for their post office to stay open.

"I felt he really paid attention, and apparently he did," Nygren said.

At a news briefing, Donahoe said he hoped the latest plan will help allay much of rural America's concern about postal cutbacks. He prodded Congress to act quickly on legislation that will allow the agency to move ahead with its broader multi-billion dollar cost-cutting effort and return to profitability by 2015.

"We've listened to our customers in rural America, and we've heard them loud and clear — they want to keep their post office open," he said. "We believe today's announcement will serve our customers' needs and allow us to achieve real savings to help the Postal Service return to long-term financial stability."

While no post office would be closed, more than 13,000 rural mail facilities could see reduced operations of between two hours and six hours, but only after a review process that is expected to take several months. An additional 4,000 rural post offices would keep their full-time hours.

The agency also will announce new changes next week involving its proposal to close up to 252 mail processing centers.

After the Postal Service gets regulatory approval and hears public input sometime this fall, the new strategy would go into place over two years and be completed in September 2014, saving \$500 million a year by reducing full-time staff.

Under the plan, communities would get the option of keeping their area post offices open, but with reduced hours. Another option would be to close a post office in one area while keeping a nearby one open full-time. Communities could opt to create a

Village Post Office, one set up in a library, government office or store such as Walmart, Walgreens or Office Depot.

"At the end of the day, we will not close rural post offices until we receive community input," said Megan Brennan, the Postal Service's chief operating officer.

The latest move comes as the Postal Service is pushing Congress to pass cost-saving postal legislation that includes an end to Saturday mail delivery.

The Senate-passed bill would give the Postal Service an \$11 billion cash infusion but also impose a one-year freeze on shuttering rural post offices. It would cut about half the planned closings of mail processing centers, give affected communities new avenues to appeal closing decisions and bar cuts to Saturday delivery for at least two years.

At the time it was passed, the Postal Service denounced the Senate bill as "totally inappropriate" because it would keep unneeded facilities open.

In the House, hesitancy among rural lawmakers is helping to stall a separate bill that would allow for far more aggressive cuts, including a more immediate end to Saturday delivery.

Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., a co-sponsor of the House bill, said the plan announced Wednesday doesn't cut costs enough. He noted, for instance, that additional cuts can be made in more densely populated urban communities, which should also be prodded to consider Village Post Offices or other alternatives that save money.

"The smallest 10,000 post offices collectively cost USPS less than \$600 million to operate each year," he said. "To achieve real savings creating long-term solvency, the Postal Service needs to focus on consolidation in more-populated areas where the greatest opportunities for cost reduction exist."

Most of the 3,700 post offices that had been under review for possible closing had been in rural areas with low volumes of business, with most having only two hours of business a day even though they are open longer. Currently the post office operates more than 31,000 retail outlets.

The agency said its new plan will save more, mostly by weeding out full-time postmasters who don't have labor contract protections and replacing them with part-time workers. It plans to discuss possible buyouts with 13,000 postmasters who are now eligible for retirement. More than 80 percent of postal costs in rural areas are labor-related.

The Postal Service has been grappling with losses as first-class mail volume declines and more people switch to the Internet to communicate and pay bills. The agency has forecast a record \$14.1 billion loss by the end of this year; without changes, it said, annual losses will exceed \$21 billion by 2016.

If the House fails to act soon, postal officials say, they will face a cash crunch in August and September, when the agency must pay more than \$11 billion to the Treasury for future retiree health benefits. Already \$13 billion in debt, the health payment obligation will force the agency to run up against its \$15 billion debt ceiling, causing it to default on the payments.

The agency plans to release its latest quarterly financial results on Thursday.

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Obama voices his support for gay marriage

JULIE PACE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON President Barack Obama declared unequivocal support for gay marriage on Wednesday, becoming the first president to endorse the politically explosive idea and injecting a polarizing issue into the 2012 race for the White House.

Obama's announcement, after refusing to take a clear stand for months, cheered gay rights groups who have long urged him to support gay marriage. It also opened up a distinct area of disagreement with Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, who opposes gay marriage.

Polling suggests the nation is evenly divided on the issue. "I have hesitated on gay marriage in part because I thought that civil unions would be sufficient," Obama said in an interview with ABC at the White House. He added that, "I was sensitive to the fact that for a lot of people the word 'marriage' was something that invokes very powerful traditions, religious beliefs and so forth."

Now, he said, "it is important for me personally to go ahead and affirm that same-sex couples should be able to get married."

The president's decision to address the issue came on the heels of a pair of events that underscored the sensitivity of the issue.

Vice President Joe Biden said in an interview on Sunday that he is completely comfortable with gays marrying, a pronouncement that instantly raised the profile of the issue. And on Tuesday, voters in North Carolina — a potential battleground in the fall election — approved an amendment to the state constitution affirming that marriage may only be a union of a man and a woman.

The president has already supported a number of initiatives backed by gays, including an end to the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, and a decision not to defend in court a federal law that was designed as an alternative to gay marriage.

He had stopped short of supporting gay marriage, though, saying his position was "evolving."

Obama spoke about his support for gay marriage in deeply personal terms, saying his young daughters, Malia and Sasha, have friends whose parents are same-sex couples.

"Malia and Sasha, it wouldn't dawn on them that somehow their friends' parents would be treated different," Obama said. "It doesn't make sense to them and frankly, that's the kind of thing that prompts a change in perspective."

Obama said first lady Michelle Obama also was involved in his decision and joins him in supporting gay marriage.

"In the end the values that I care most deeply about and she cares most deeply about is how we treat other people," he said.

Acknowledging that his support for same-sex marriage may rankle religious conservatives, Obama said he thinks about his faith in part through the prism of the Golden Rule — treating others the way you would want to be treated.

"That's what we try to impart to our kids and that's what motivates me as president and I figure the most consistent I can be in being true to those precepts, the better I'll be as a dad and a husband and hopefully the better I'll be as president," Obama said.

The political cross-currents are tricky.

Some top aides argued that gay marriage is toxic at the ballot box in battleground states like North Carolina and Virginia because, as Tuesday's vote proved, the issue remains a reliable way to fire up rank-and-file Republicans. It also could open Obama up to Republican criticism that he was taking his eye off the economy, voters' No. 1 issue.

Other Democratic supporters claim Obama could energize huge swaths of the party, including young people, by voicing his support for gay marriage before November. He also could appeal to independent voters, many of whom back gay marriage, and he could create an area of clear contrast between himself and his Republican rival as he argues that he's delivered on the change he promised four years ago.

On Tuesday, former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a Democrat, told Obama to "man up" and take a position on gay marriage.

Romney has not generally raised the issue in his campaign.

paign.

On Wednesday, he told KDVR-TV in Denver that "I do not favor marriage between people of the same gender, and I do not favor civil unions if they are identical to marriage other than by name. My view is the domestic partnership benefits, hospital visitation rights, and the like are appropriate but that the others are not."

The Romney campaign did not respond to questions about which benefits the Republican candidate would oppose.

The former Massachusetts governor told an Ohio television station Monday that he believes "marriage is between a man and a woman, and that's a position I've had for some time and I don't intend to make any adjustments at this point — or ever, by the way."

Public opinion on gay marriage has shifted in recent years, with most polls now finding the public evenly split, rather than opposed.

A Gallup poll released this week found 50 percent of all adults in favor of legal recognition of same-sex marriages, marking the second time that poll has found support for legal gay marriage at 50 percent or higher. Majorities of Democrats (65 percent) and independents (57 percent) supported such recognition, while most Republicans (74 percent) said same sex marriages should not be legal.

Six states — all in the Northeast except Iowa — and the District of Columbia allow same sex marriages. In addition, two other states have laws that are not yet in effect and may be subject to referendums.



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FDA favors first treatment for preventing HIV virus

MATTHEW PERRONE
AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON Federal drug regulators on Tuesday affirmed landmark study results showing that a popular HIV-fighting pill can also help healthy people avoid contracting the virus that causes AIDS in the first place. While the pill appears safe and effective for prevention, scientists stressed that it only works when taken on a daily basis.

The Food and Drug Administration will hold a meeting Thursday to discuss whether Truvada should be approved for people who are at risks of contracting HIV through sexual intercourse. The agency's positive review posted Tuesday suggests the daily pill will become the first drug approved to prevent HIV infection in high-risk patients.

FDA reviewers conclude that taking Truvada pre-emptively could spare patients "infection with a serious and life-threatening illness that requires lifelong treatment."

Despite the positive results, reviewers said that patients must be diligent about taking the pill every day. Adherence to the medication was less than perfect in clinical trials, and reviewers said that patients in the real world may forget to take their medication even more than those in clinical studies.

First announced in 2010, Truvada's preventive ability was hailed as a breakthrough in the 30-year campaign against the AIDS epidemic. A three-year study found that daily doses cut the risk of infection in healthy gay and bisexual men by 44 percent, when accompanied by condoms and counseling. Another study found that Truvada reduced infection by 75 percent in heterosexual couples in which one partner was HIV infected and the other was not.

The FDA's panel of advisers will take separate votes on whether Truvada should be approved for:

- gay and bisexual men
- men or women in relationships with HIV-positive partners
- other people at risk of acquiring HIV through sexual activity

The FDA is not required to follow the advice of its panels, though it usually does.

An estimated 1.2 million Americans have HIV, which overwhelmingly affects men who have sex with other men, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HIV attacks the immune system and, unless treated with antiviral drugs, develops into AIDS, a fatal condition in which the body cannot fight off foreign infections.

Because Truvada is already on the market to manage HIV, some doctors currently prescribe it as a preventive measure. FDA

approval would allow the drugmaker Gilead Sciences to formally market its drug for the new use.

But support for FDA approval is not unanimous. Some researchers stress that condoms remain the best weapon against AIDS, and a prevention pill is not the chemical equivalent.

"We know that if the person doesn't take the medication every day they will not be protected," said Dr. Rodney Wright, director of HIV programs at Montefiore Medical Center in New York. "So the concern is that there may not be adequate adherence to provide protection in the general population."

Wright, who is also chairman of the AIDS Health Foundation, added that some upcoming medications may be more effective at preventing infection than Truvada.

Researchers also worry about Truvada's mixed success rate in preventing infection among women. Last year a study in women was stopped early after researchers found that women taking the drug were more likely to become infected than those taking placebo. Researchers speculated that women may need a higher dose of the drug to prevent infection. They also said the disappointing results may have resulted from women not taking the pills consistently.

Still, many HIV patient advocacy groups say the drug should be a prescribing option to prevent HIV, alongside condoms, counseling and other measures.

"If we're going to reduce the more than 50,000 new HIV infections in this country each year, we need to increase the available options for people," said Ronald Johnson, vice president of AIDS United. He added that more studies are needed to determine the drug's effectiveness in women and other patient subgroups.

"The current state of the data warrants going forward, but we believe additional clinical trials should also go forward to broaden the use of Truvada."

Last month, AIDS United and more than a dozen other advocacy groups sent a letter to the FDA, urging approval of Truvada.

Foster City, Calif.-based Gilead Sciences Inc. has marketed Truvada since 2004. The drug is a combination of two older HIV drugs, Emtriva and Viread. Doctors usually prescribe the medications as part of a drug cocktail that makes it harder for the virus to reproduce. Patients with low viral levels are far less likely to develop AIDS.

Side effects with Truvada include diarrhea, dizziness, nausea and vomiting. More serious problems can include liver toxicity, kidney problems and bone thinning.

Company shares fell 56 cents, or 1.1 percent, to \$49.34

Expungements: Burying Those Skeletons In Your Closet

Have you ever applied for a job, professional license, and/or school application where they asked if you have ever been convicted of a crime? If so, did you get nervous and distraught at the thought of having to circle "yes" and then explaining the circumstances of what happened years and years ago with your minor run in with the law? If this is a likely scenario for you or someone you know, help make those skeletons in the closet disappear by filing an expungement/dismissal motion. California Penal Code Sections 1203.3 and 1203.4 set forth the basic rules for expungements. This article focuses on some need to know legal rules and consequences with regard to expunging your record in California. Please note that this article examines the basic elements and procedures of expungements. If you or someone you know is filling out an application or reporting a past conviction to anyone in an official capacity it is advisable to speak with a criminal attorney about whether you must report the past conviction, even after the expungement process.

In terms of filing an expungement and clearing up your record, there are a couple preliminary questions that must be answered. First, was your past conviction for a felony or misdemeanor crime? Second, was probation granted and if so have you successfully completed probation? And lastly, once you have determined that you are eligible for expungement, what do you do?

If the answer to the first question is a misdemeanor, then you're on the right path! If the answer to the first question is felony, then there is another step that must be completed prior to filing an expungement. In order to expunge a felony conviction or have it dismissed from your record, a motion must be made pursuant to Penal Code Section 17(b) to first have the conviction reduced to a misdemeanor. Certain felony crimes, however, are never capable of being reduced to a misdemeanor and can never be expunged. Convictions that cannot be expunged or dismissed by law include any misdemeanor listed in Vehicle Code section 42001(b), any violation of P.C. 286(c), 288, 288a(c), 288.5, or 289(g), a felony under P.C. 261.5(d), and any infraction. Moreover, if you were never granted probation and instead went to State Prison, although there are options for clearing your record, the basics of expungements as explained in this article will not apply to your given scenario.

Once you have determined that your past conviction was a misdemeanor or capable of being reduced to a misdemeanor, move on to question number two: Was probation granted and have you successfully completed all the terms and orders of your probation? Typically, in misdemeanor cases, courts order that a defendant be placed on 1-3

years of probation and to follow all rules and regulations. If the court does not order probation, you're ready to file the motion! If probation was granted, the time period is over and done with, and you have fulfilled all the terms of the probation (including completing any classes, service work, and/or paid all fines) then you are also ready to file the motion! If probation is still open and has not been completed, a separate motion for early termination of probation must first be filed. If granted, and probation terminated early, then you are ready to file the motion! In sum, before a motion for expungement/dismissal is filed, probation must typically be successfully completed either by the passage of time or by early termination from the court.

Now that the motion is ready for filing, what do you do and how do you do it? California courts vary in terms of requirements for expungement/dismissal motions. For instance, some courts require a filing fee (usually around \$60) and attached declaration (preferably by an attorney). All courts, however, require that a P.C. 1203.4/1203.4(a) Petition For Dismissal be completed and filed. In order to fill out this form correctly, a petitioner needs to obtain the case number, date of conviction, conviction charges, date of birth, driver's license number, last four digits of social security, and if possible the Criminal Identification and Information (CII) number. After entering the requisite information simply check the applicable boxes and sign/date the form. Additionally, along with the Petition, you should also attach a Court Order. The same information must be filled out on the Court Order; however, this form is for the judge to review and then sign/date. The signed Court Order is then stamped and recorded by the clerk certifying that a judge has ordered the case dismissed/expunged. Expungement/Dismissal Petitions typically take anywhere from one to three months for the court to review and complete.

Avoid the headaches and problems associated with explaining away your past minor run-ins with the law and get rid of skeletons in your closet today by filing an expungement! Call the Legal Grind to schedule an appointment to meet with a skilled and experienced attorney to help you navigate through this tricky process and answer any questions that you might have.

THIS COLUMN WAS PREPARED BY JACOB GLUCKSMAN, A CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY. HE CAN BE REACHED THROUGH THE LEGAL GRIND AT 310-452-8160 OR REFERRAL@LEGALGRIND.COM

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TUESDAY 9:00am-12:00pm	Patent, Trademark and Copyright Law with Attorney Marcus Rizzo (By appointment only)
4:00pm-5:00pm	(1st and 3rd Tuesday of the Month). Civil and Criminal Law with former Deputy District Attorney Hart Levin. Hart has expertise in all criminal and traffic issues, and he also has extensive knowledge in many areas of civil law including business disputes, fraud, personal injury and employment law.
5:00 - 7:00 pm	Wrongful termination, harassment; discrimination; wage and hour ;denial of unemployment benefits; and general counseling on issues in the workplace w/ attorney Nina Baumlner. (Call for Appointment)
WEDNESDAY 11:00am-3:00pm	Special Education Law (By appointment only. Also available by appointment on Mondays or Fridays from 11:30 am to 3:00 pm) Attorney Alison Arkin has extensive experience working with parents of special needs children with a wide range of disabilities, and can help them obtain appropriate services from both school districts and regional centers. She has experience with every level of the process including obtaining appropriate assessments, representation at IEP meeting, mediations, settlement negotiations and hearings.
5:00-6:30pm	Divorce and Legal Separation; Domestic Partnerships; Child Custody, Support and Visitation; Spousal Support; Prenuptial Agreements & Mediation with Family Law Specialist Attorney Elizabeth Fields
THURSDAY 12:00-2:00pm 4:00-5:00pm	Immigration and Family Law with Attorney Galorah Keshavarz (By appointment only) (By appointment only) Chapter 7 and 13 Bankruptcy, Debt Negotiation and Personal Injuries cases with Attorney and Legal Grind founder Jeffrey J. Hughes
FRIDAY 4:00-5:00pm	(2nd & 4th Friday/Month) Criminal, DMV & Traffic Law; Felony and Misdemeanor Crimes with Attorney & former Deputy D.A. Jacob Glucksman. By Appointment only
4:00-5:00pm	(1st & 3rd Friday/Month) Small business start-ups, Corporations, Contracts, Non-Profit Organizations, Green Law, Employment Law, Green and Sustainable Business Practices with Attorney Becki Kammerling.
SATURDAY 10am-11:30am	(1st, 3rd & 5th Saturday/month) Real Estate, Estate Planning, Wills & Living Trusts, Will Contests, Probate, Elder Law Business Litigation, Formation & Dissolution, Contracts, Construction Contracts Family Law including Divorce, Child/Spousal Support, Prenuptial Agreements, Personal Injury, Accidents, Premises and Product Liability, & Legal Malpractice with Attorney Richard Ruman. (By appointment only-Please call Call Dick at 310.273.7474)
12PM TO 2PM	Personal Injury free consultation; Regular consultation on all areas of Estate Planning, Landlord/Tenant rights, Mortgage Litigation, Premises Liability, Construction Accidents, and Products Liability with attorney Sandeep Agarwal. (By appointment only-Please call Mr. Agarwal at 866.844.4125)

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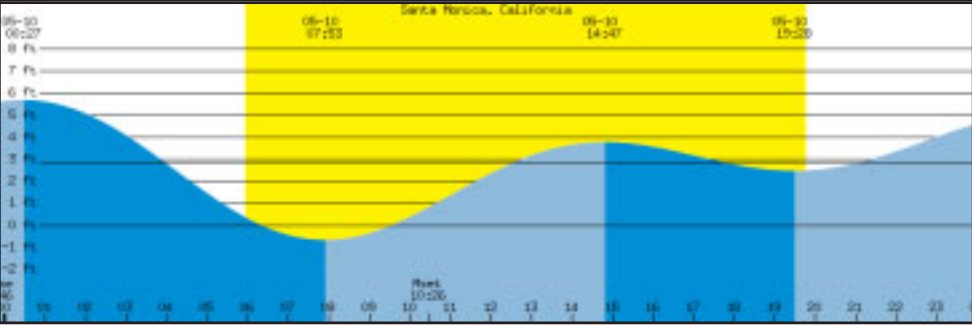
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QUICK STATS (for the last 30 days)

Number of sewage spills — 0

Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill — 0

Number of wet days — 13

Number of A grades for dry/wet weather — 32 / 33

Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather — 0 / 0

The Beach Report Card is made possible by: The Otis — von Furstenberg Family Foundation, simplehuman, LARGLY, and SMA

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 for extended health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET	LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Canillo Beach, at Arroyo Sepul Creek mouth.	A+	A+	Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club near fence.	A+	A+
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	A+	Will Rogers State Beach at Palga Canyon storm drain.	A+	A+
El Pescador State Beach, between Luchessa and Los Alamos creeks.	m	m	Will Rogers State Beach at Tamarack Canyon drain.	A+	A+
General Canyon at El Matador State Beach.	A+	A+	Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chatsworth).	A	D
Basal Beach at Trancoso Creek mouth.	A+	A+	Santa Monica Beach at Westmonte Ave. drain.	A	A+
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth.	A+	A+	Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain.	A+	A+
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private).	A+	D	Santa Monica Municipal Pier.	A	C
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	A+	Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Venice storm drain.	A	F
Escamido Creek, just east of Escamido State Beach.	F	F	Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restaurants).	A+	A+
Lidger Canyon Creek mouth.	A	A+	Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain.	A+	D
Soldado Canyon at San Onofre County Beach.	A+	B	Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain.	A+	A+
Puerto State Beach at creek mouth.	A	A	Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain.	A+	A+
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerto Beach, at 21672 Malibu Rd.	A	A+	Venice Beach at Winkhurst Ave. drain.	A+	A+
Seafolder Beach at Malibu Calvary fence.	A+	A+	Venice Fishing Pier — 50 yards south.	A+	A+
Seafolder Beach (beach location) — daily.	F	F	Venice Beach — projection of Topical St.	A+	A+
Malibu Pier — 50 yards east.	B	A+	Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach — lifeguard tower.	A	B
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon.	A+	A+	Deckweiler State Beach at Bolinas Creek mouth.	A	F
Los Flores State Beach at Los Flores Creek (point road).	A+	F	Deckweiler State Beach at Calver Blvd. drain.	A+	A+
Big Rock Beach at 13648 PCH stairs.	B	A+	North Westchester Storm Drain at Deckweiler State Beach.	A+	A+
Pena Creek at Los Tunes County Beach.	A+	A+	Deckweiler State Beach at World Way (south of DMV jets).	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon.	A	A+	Deckweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain.	A+	A+
Tapanga State Beach at creek mouth.	F	F	Deckweiler Beach — opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant.	A+	A+
Candlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	A+	A+	Deckweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain.	A+	A+
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	A+	A			
Will Rogers State Beach at 17358 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain).	A+	A+			

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

na — 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

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 swimmers are happy.

LEGAL NEWS

Arrest made for torching cab after ‘10 Lakers victory

BY ROBERT JABLON
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES A man videotaped torching a taxi after the Los Angeles Lakers won the NBA championship two years ago was charged with arson and police will crack down on any fan violence this year if the Lakers, Clippers or Kings triumph, officials said Wednesday.

“We have to celebrate responsibly” if the Lakers, the NBA rival Clippers or the NHL’s Kings advance in the ongoing playoffs to win their championships in coming weeks, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa said outside Staples Center, home of the three teams.

The Lakers defeated the Boston Celtics to win the NBA championship there on June 17, 2010. After the game, knots of rowdy celebrants set fires, rocked cars, smashed windows and threw objects at fans and police officers, leading eventually to some 45 arrests.

“I think we all remember the images. The city was overwhelmed,” Villaraigosa said. “What should have been a day of celebration, a day of festivities, turned out to be a day where a small group of people ...thought they’d engage in criminal activity and arson, assaults, and that it would just be OK.”

Some fans surrounded a taxi near the arena, stomped on the hood, smashed the windows, slashed the tires and set the car on fire, fire investigators said. The driver escaped but lost his livelihood.

A video taken by a bystander showed people chanting “Light it up! Light it up!” before throwing a lighter and paper into the taxi. Some of the attackers posed for photographs as the vehicle burned.

Darren Cooper, 22, of San Bernardino was identified through a recent tip after the video was posted on YouTube and he cooperated with arson investigators who arrested him, fire officials said.

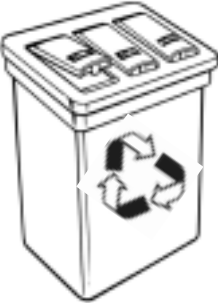
“He said he got caught up in the celebration,” said Battalion Chief Michael Greenup, head of the Fire Department’s Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section.

Cooper was arrested and charged on April 30 with a felony count of arson to property. At the time, he was jailed in San Bernardino County on suspicion of committing domestic violence.

He was later freed on \$100,000 bail pending a June 1 arraignment and could face up to four years in state prison if convicted, according to the Los Angeles County district attorney’s office.

It was not immediately known whether he had a lawyer.

Arson investigators were seeking five other men who also were videotaped torching the taxi. Their faces were revealed after the six-minute video was broken down into individual frames and enhanced. The shots were detailed enough to show faces, clothing and tattoos, and Cooper had stars on his arm that matched those seen in one frame.



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City of Santa Monica

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BID #3097 – FURNISH AND DELIVER ONE (1) NEW AND UNUSED HIGH PRESSURE JETTER VACUUM UNIT AS REQUESTED BY FLEET MANAGEMENT DIVISION.

Please refer to the bid packet for further details.

The bid packet can be downloaded at:
<http://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=15167#>
Submission Deadline is May 30, 2012 at 3:00 PM Pacific Time.

Request for bid forms and specifications may be obtained from the City of Santa Monica, 1717 4th St., Suite 250, Santa Monica, California, by calling (310) 458-8215, or by e-mailing your request to monica.diaz@smgov.net. Bids must be submitted on forms furnished by the City of Santa Monica.

Vendors interested in doing business with the City of Santa Monica are encouraged to register online at <http://www.smgov.net/finance/purchasing/>

MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre 1328 Montana Ave. (310) 260-1528	11:50am, 3:20pm, 6:40pm, 9:15pm, 10:00pm	Citizen Gangster (NR) 1hr 45min 1:50pm, 4:30pm, 9:45pm
A Man Escaped (NR) 1hr 40min 7:30pm	Pirates! Band of Misfits (PG) 1hr 28min 11:45am, 4:50pm, 9:45pm	Thrive (NR) 2hrs 10min 7:30pm
AMC Loews Broadway 4 1441 Third Street Promenade (888) 262-4386	Pirates! Band of Misfits 3D (PG) 1hr 28min 2:15pm, 7:20pm	Highest Pass (NR) 1hr 30min 3:20pm, 5:35pm, 7:50pm
Marvel's The Avengers (PG-13) 2hrs 22min 1:30pm, 2:30pm, 6:00pm, 9:20pm	Think Like a Man (PG-13) 2hrs 02min 11:00am, 1:50pm, 4:45pm, 7:40pm, 10:30pm	AMC Criterion 6 1313 Third St. (310) 395-1599
21 Jump Street (R) 1hr 49min 1:40pm, 4:15pm, 7:00pm, 9:45pm	Five-Year Engagement (R) 2hrs 04min 11:00am, 1:50pm, 4:45pm, 7:40pm, 10:30pm	Hunger Games (PG-13) 2hrs 22min 11:30am, 3:00pm, 6:30pm, 10:00pm
Little Bit of Heaven (PG-13) 1hr 47min 1:50pm, 4:30pm, 7:15pm, 9:50pm	Marvel's The Avengers 3D (PG-13) 2hrs 22min 1:00pm, 4:20pm, 7:40pm	Safe (R) 1hr 35min 11:55am, 2:40pm, 5:20pm, 7:50pm, 10:25pm
Titanic 3D (PG-13) 3hrs 14min 4:50pm, 9:10pm	Laemmle's Monica Fourplex 1332 Second St. (310) 478-3836	Raven (R) 1hr 43min 11:15am, 1:50pm, 4:30pm, 7:00pm, 9:50pm
Chimpanzee (G) 1hr 18min 11:55am, 2:20pm, 4:45pm, 7:00pm	Perfect Family (PG-13) 1hr 24min 1:00pm, 3:10pm, 5:20pm	Lucky One (PG-13) 1hr 41min 11:00am, 1:30pm, 2:30pm, 4:15pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:45pm
Cabin in the Woods (R) 1hr 35min 11:30am, 2:00pm, 4:40pm, 7:20pm, 10:00pm	Damsels in Distress (PG-13) 1hr 38min 1:00pm, 10:00pm	Marvel's The Avengers 3D (PG-13) 2hrs 22min 11:15am, 12:20pm, 3:50pm, 7:10pm, 7:50pm, 10:30pm
Marvel's The Avengers (PG-13) 2hrs 22min	In the Family (NR) 2hrs 49min 1:00pm, 4:50pm, 8:30pm	

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



MYSTERY PHOTO

Daniel Archuleta daniela@smdp.com

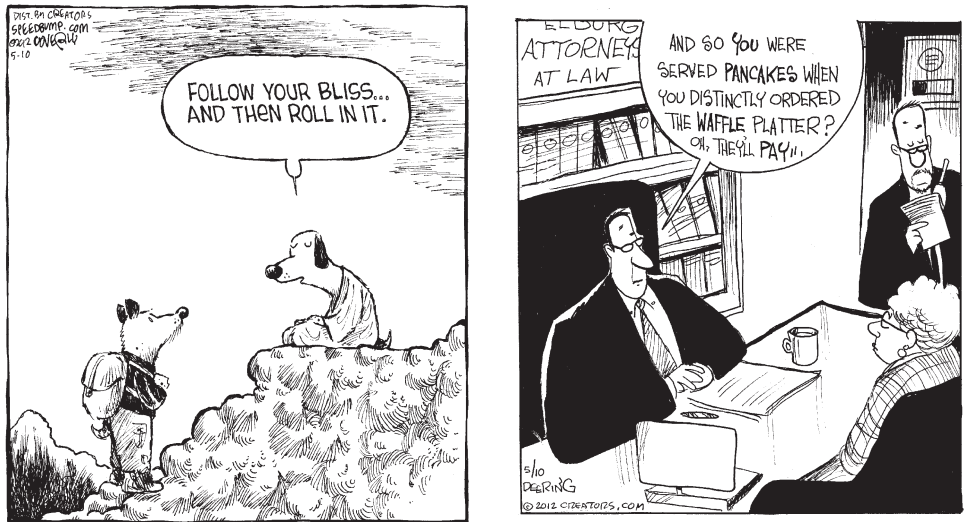
The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to editor@smdp.com. Send your mystery photos to editor@smdp.com to be used in future issues.

Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly

Strange Brew

By John Deering



Dogs of C-Kennel

By Mick and Mason Mastroianni



Garfield

By Jim Davis



The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



Put your feet up tonight, Leo

- ARIES (March 21-April 19)**

★★★★ You make your point with ease. How others respond at first might be very positive, yet one person will prove to be unusually difficult. Give this person space to turn around his or her mood and point of view. Tonight: Have a discussion with a friend.
- TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**

★★★★ You see beyond what others see. At times, this ability could seem to be a problem, in that others do not get what you are saying and quickly discard your view. A meeting takes an unusual tone, especially if you decide to participate less. Tonight: Organize any upcoming plans.
- GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**

★★★★ Defer to others, and you will have an opportunity to gain a broader perspective. Please note that when you don't give one person enough attention, he or she can become quite difficult and touchy. Your instincts will guide you through difficult moments. Tonight: Togetherness is the theme.
- CANCER (June 21-July 22)**

★★★ Others demand to hear your point of view. You might not want to share as much as you need to. Within a meeting and/or a group, your audience will be far more receptive. A personal problem might be coloring your mood. Tonight: Among friends, anything can happen.
- LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**

★★★★ Slow down and complete whatever you must. You easily could be overwhelmed by a situation that keeps popping up. You might not be sure when to say "enough," but when you do, say it loud and clear. Tonight: Put your feet up.
- VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**

★★★★★ Where others fail, you seem to come in with ease and a solution. Will others follow your lead? You will not know until you get to that moment. Tonight: Start the weekend early.
- LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**

★★★ Stay close to home. You'll gain a certain level of comfort as a result. Deal with a partner or key person in a far more effective manner. Know what you want, and you'll find that others will agree with you. Be wishy-washy, and people will follow suit. Tonight: Make togetherness the theme.
- SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**

★★★★ You could be overwhelmed by everything that comes up. In fact, you hear so many different points of view and encounter so many diverse situations, that you might decide to split early for the weekend. Tonight: Catch up on a friend's news.
- SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**

★★★ You might feel as if you are the only person who is aware of the costs of proceeding according to plan. Others seem overly optimistic. Stop and have a serious talk. You cannot ignore the situation or pretend that you did not know what was happening. Tonight: Your treat.
- CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**

★★★★ Your personality fills in many gaps, and your efforts finish a project. Others might be a bit too dependent on you. Know when to let go and encourage others to go on their own. Tonight: Let the fun begin.
- AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**

★★★ You might realize that you are sitting on a ticking time bomb. With any luck, the storm clouds will disappear if you say little. Remain optimistic, despite the fact that you feel overwhelmed and concerned. Tonight: Nap, then decide.
- PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**

★★★★ Use this day as if there were no tomorrow. You could be surprised by how much you can achieve when you are left to your own devices. Someone has special news that could make you smile from ear to ear. Tonight: Where people are.

Happy birthday

This year you carry key projects and goals to completion. You have always been a steady captain of your ship, and this year you are even more so. Recognize when it would be best to abandon ship, like if an idea does not seem to work. Do not get bogged down in what you must do so much so that you do not enjoy your friends and loved ones. If you are single, you could meet someone who offers you a lot of what you want. Explore this bond. If you are attached, your sweetie may long for some silliness. Why not? Laughter heals the heart. AQUARIUS opens doors. Dare to go through them.

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

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★★★★ Positive	★ Difficult
★★★ Average	

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North of Montana
Great Location



526 Palisades Avenue
In Escrow

17,250 +/- Square Foot Lot

\$4,200,000

North of Montana
Vintage Treasure



Wants & Needs Corner

I represent Well-Qualified Buyers
who are looking for the following:

- Raw land or tear-down North of Montana & West of 7th St (or possibly West of 10th Street)
- Single Family Home (minimum 3 bedrooms) North of Montana up to \$2,500,000
- Single Family Home North of Montana & West of 17th St (minimum 4 bedrooms) up to \$5,300,000

If you or a neighbor are contemplating selling,
please contact me

Kate Bransfield
Proud Sponsor Of:



Average Price of ALL Santa Monica Single Family Homes From ALL agents in ALL companies Listed for Sale As of Early May 2012		
Santa Monica Canyon	=	\$2,587,833
North of Montana	=	\$3,868,167
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	\$2,044,667
South of Wilshire	=	\$912,429
Sunset Park	=	\$1,262,000
Ocean Park	=	\$1,835,333
Statistics updated every Monday		

What is Your Home Worth? Contact Me to Find Out!

This is not intended as a solicitation if you currently have a broker. The information has been retrieved from the Multiple Listing Service. Some of these properties have been sold or listed with other Real Estate Agents.