

FREE

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Santa Monica Daily Press

Picked fresh daily. 100% organic news.

Union files federal charges against Doubletree

Hotel management accused of threatening and interrogating pro-union employees

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Charges filed Monday with a federal labor bureau accuse management of a local beachfront hotel of unfair labor practices.

The Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union Local 814 filed charges with the National Labor

Relations Bureau accusing management at the Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, 1707 4th St., of threatening, interrogating and discriminating against employees for trying to organize workers into a union at the facility.

Doubletree workers claim hotel managers have followed them around the hotel, inquiring about their union affiliation. Workers also claim that hotel management discriminates against organizing leaders by changing job assignments and duties.

"Managers tell us that if the union comes in the hotel, we will lose our parking privileges and seniority," said housekeeper Flora Andrade, in a prepared statement. "Threats like this are against the law and must be stopped."

Doubletree General Manager Francois Khoury did

not respond Monday to repeated requests for comment on the accusations.

The union has previously filed charges with the NLRB against The Fairmont Miramar Hotel, 101 Wilshire Blvd., before it unionized and the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, 1700 Ocean Ave.

"The Doubletree is unfortunately only one in a series of hotels that have behaved in this manner," said Kurt Petersen, the union's organizing director. "Our hope is that the government will tell the Doubletree to stop these tactics."

"At this point all we're asking is that they stop their unlawful behavior."

See UNION, page 4

Young swinger



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press
Young Kim came from downtown Los Angeles to spend the day swinging at Santa Monica Beach on Monday. Warm weather attracted thousands to the coast during the past two days.

Big Blue Bus seeks more green

Transit company seeks approval for 50 percent fare increase

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

It could take a few more nickels and dimes to ride the Big Blue Bus if the city council approves a fare increase tonight.

The city-owned mass-transit operator is seeking a 50 percent increase in the average adult fare from 50 to 75 cents.

In addition, bus officials want to increase the \$1.25 fare for the Line 10 Express Bus to downtown Los

Angeles to \$1.75.

"If this passes city council, the Big Blue Bus would still be the least expensive transit system in the region," said Dan Dawson, a Big Blue spokesman. "We have been the least expensive system for 20 years, and even with the fare increase we would maintain that edge."

Another proposal would not require a fare increase but would eliminate all local bus transfers, which historically have been free. If that plan is approved, the company also would create a \$2 all-day bus pass meant to alleviate some of the burden.

But company officials dislike the transfer plan because the financial burden would be placed entirely on the 16 percent of daily riders who utilize the transfer

See BLUE BUS, page 4

Deadline for small business loans nears

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

Small businesses still reeling from the fallout of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks have eight days to receive a reprieve.

The Small Business Administration is offering low-interest loans to businesses who can't meet their operating expenses as a direct result of the terrorist attacks.

Business owners also can qualify for loans up to \$1.5 million if their company was affected as a result of any

action the federal government took relating to the attacks between Sept. 11 and Oct. 22.

However, the offer ends May 22.

The purpose of the loans is not to cover lost income, lost profits or losses because of an economic downturn, but to enable businesses to continue operating, said SBA spokesman Rick Jenkins.

The loans are intended to provide the company with enough working capital to pay its expenses until business returns to normal.

"Across California we have approved \$30 million in loans, which is pretty significant," Jenkins said. "We have given out more than \$350 million nationwide."

Two Santa Monica businesses have received loans through the program, both of which are directly impacted by the attacks because they provide tourism-related services.

World Link Travel Network Inc., located on Wilshire Boulevard and 19th Street, received a \$215,200 loan from SBA. The loan has allowed co-owner Liliana Ahmed to continue providing corporate leisure and travel services to her clients.

"I can say it helped since we are still running," she said.

Sada Tour Services on Euclid Street also received \$13,600 from SBA.

See DEADLINE, page 5

Vodka mistaken for hazardous fluid

By The Associated Press

ALISO VIEJO — An unidentified fluid leaked from a package in an Orange County office building Monday morning, with intoxicating results.

At least four workers felt ill after breathing the fumes. The building was quickly evacuated and an Orange County Fire Department Hazardous

Waste team was dispatched. The dangerous fluid?

"It was 80-proof Russian vodka," said Scott Lake, a spokesman for the Orange County Fire Department.

The discovery was made after the Department's Hazardous Materials Team had sprayed four workers with decontaminants and sent a firefighter in a special suit to inspect the contents of the bag.

The firefighter found a broken bottle of vodka inside.

There were unconfirmed reports that some employees of the Fluor Daniel office were transported to local hospitals.

Lake doubted that anyone was facing any lingering medical problems.

"It's really only dangerous if they drink it and try to drive," Lake said.

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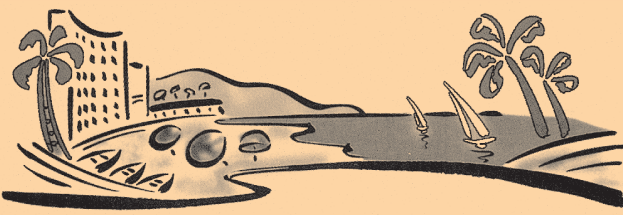
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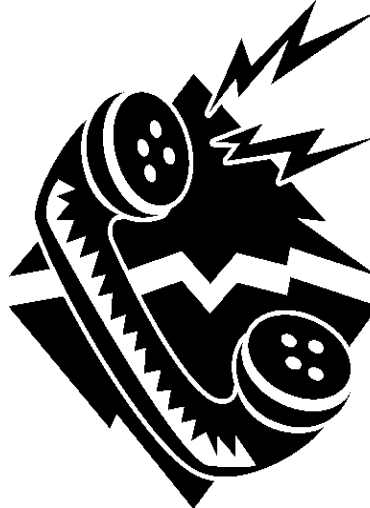
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ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Much changes quickly with love and romance. You seem to say the right words at the right moment. Take a strong action toward another, especially if you feel the need to change what lies between you. Be open to more positive exchanges. Tonight: At home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ You might have a difficult time allowing another to see a situation as he or she wants. Loosen up and have a direct discussion. Another has an odd way of expressing his or her feelings. Express your caring so that this person hears you. Tonight: Do something special for yourself and someone else.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Emphasize your strengths, not your negatives. Your softer side emerges, drawing many toward you. Use your charisma to make it easier for another to say "yes" to your plans. You assume a leadership position. Others hear you loud and clear. Tonight: Happy as a clam.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★ Much occurs behind the scenes. You also must keep another's confidence, if you know what is good for you. Reveal your feelings in such a manner that another might be able to hear you, especially if it involves anger or frustration. Tonight: Do something for yourself.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Your impact might be felt way past your immediate circle. Others will listen and perhaps challenge your ideas. Nevertheless, you will win over others in the long run. In fact, you could present a whole different point of view. Tonight: Where the gang is.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Pressure gets your attention, though you cannot seem to get everything in balance. Bosses make demands. Your home life takes up your time as well. Key in to the positives and what you can do. Tonight: Work as late as need be.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Touch base with loved ones. You might be taking off before you know it. Try another way. Open up and, at the same time, refuse to take comments personally. Do something very differently. You will find that another comes through for you. Tonight: Hop on the computer.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Don't put off what you can do today, even if you feel as if there is no solution. Don't get into a financial power play. A partner comes through for you. Think twice about what is being offered. You're unusually strong-willed. Tonight: Go along with another's request.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ You easily could start the day askew. Take a deep breath. Consider taking a walk or, if that doesn't work, eating a chocolate bar! Be more generous with those in your life. Give 100 percent. All that ends well is well. Tonight: The only answer is "yes."

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ You could be overly tired. What might be important is to recognize your fatigue and stop pushing yourself. Take the day off, if possible, and dote on yourself. Schedule a massage for later in the afternoon if you can't split. Just know that you're coming to the end of your energy. Tonight: Make it easy.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ A friend disappoints you. However, in some way, the door opens to a new beginning if you flow with opportunity. Work with the unexpected, especially if it surrounds a child or loved one. A new romance could be budding if you are single. Tonight: Play away.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ A boss or someone in charge certainly is contrary. You aren't going to be able to get anywhere by challenging this person. Rather, stay in control and stay in touch with your feelings. You'll turn this situation around. Tonight: Happy at home.

QUOTE of the DAY

“We had seen the light at the end
of the tunnel, and it was out.”

— John C. Clancy

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LOCAL



Staples plans 'superstore' for busy Wilshire intersection

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

A popular office supply company is planning a "superstore" for an already congested Wilshire Boulevard intersection.

Staples Inc., announced Monday it has

signed a lease for property currently occupied by a small tire store on the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and 16th Street.

The company said in a prepared statement that it hopes to have a functioning store in place by early 2003 that will employ up to 30 people.

Staples already operates five stores in the area, including locations in West Los Angeles, Venice, Culver City and Westchester.

But opening a store in Santa Monica with as much space required for a Staples would likely require city approval.

City officials have recently blocked stores proposed by The Target Corporation in downtown Santa Monica and Trader Joe's on Wilshire Boulevard because of the traffic they would generate.

"In general we can't dictate what type of uses come in," said Kelly Olsen, planning board chairman. "As long as it fits the zoning code, we can't say we want this type of business or that kind."

But Olsen added, "discretionary review from the planning commission — which would address neighborhood concerns over parking and traffic impacts — could be required."

However, if the company makes little or no changes to the current location —

now occupied by Just Tires — they may not need city approval, said principal city planner Amanda Schachter.

"If it's an existing building, going from a retail use to another retail use would be allowed by right," she said.

The same corner where the store is proposed already has a lot of traffic generated by Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and dozens of nearby doctors' offices.

Staples Vice-Chairman Joseph Vassalluzzo said the company is counting on the high number of potential customers in the area.

"We are excited at the prospect of becoming the complete, one-stop shopping destination for the small business, small office and home office customers in the community," he said.

Headquartered outside Boston, Staples is the largest operator of office superstores in the world.



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Just Tires, 1610 Wilshire Blvd., occupies the space where Staples Inc., has signed a lease to build an office supply "superstore."

District appoints new special education leaders

By Daily Press staff

New leadership was hired earlier this month for special education services in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

Cindy Atlas was appointed director of special education, while Mary Ellen Toomey will serve as the new coordinator of special education. Both positions are effective July 1.

Atlas comes from San Diego, where she held a similar position in that city's school district.

Toomey is from New York and has been a special education teacher since 1975.



The south swell from Sunday and Monday is passing, but a southwest swell is blowing in. Southern California surf will reach shoulder-and-head-height the next two days. Unshadowed south and southwest exposures should see rare, inconsistent overhead sets.

In L.A. County, the northern spots just south of Point Dume hold the most promise. Wind swell from the northwest will be in effect by afternoon.

Swell persists Wednesday, with conditions looking similar to today and wave height remaining constant. Water temperature should rise into the high 50s. Reports show clean water in Santa Monica Bay, though a concentration of pollution earns Surfrider beach a C-rating at Malibu Colony fence and an F at the Malibu Pier.

(Information compiled by Jesse Haley.)

Location	Tuesday	Wednesday	Water Quality
County Line	2-4'/Fair	2-4'/Fair	A+
Zuma	3-4'/Good	3-4'/Good	A+
Surfrider	2-4'/Fair	2-4'/Fair	C-D
Topanga	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	B
Breakwater	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A+
El Porto	2-4'/Fair	2-4'/Fair	A+



Campaign season has begun in Santa Monica. Last week residents learned about a November ballot measure that would rewrite how people are elected to the city council. If approved, the measure would allow residents to vote for one city council member from their neighborhood, instead of all seven who run at-large currently. It also would require that the mayor be elected by the people, instead of being appointed by council

members. Supporters of the measure think certain neighborhoods, like the city's east side, are not represented.

This week Q-Line wants to know, "Do you feel adequately represented by your city council? Why or why not?"

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

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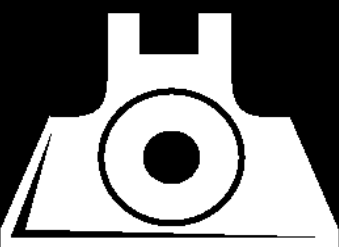
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Check Out the Question of the Week
on Page 3 and Call Us with Your Opinion!

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Santa Monica's Daily Calendar



GET OUT!

Write Away will be held today at the Ocean Park Library. Share your existing work and write new pieces in a supportive, constructive weekly meeting. 12 p.m. To 2 p.m., Ocean Park Library 2601 Main Street. For more information call (323) 293-1099.

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), the nonprofit weight-loss support group, meets every Tuesday evening from 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. in the community room of the Santa Monica Public Library, 2601 Main Street at Ocean Park. For more information, phone (310) 559-6665.

Community Yoga Classes offered to students of all levels. \$6, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. Saturday 2 p.m., Santa Monica Yoga, 1640 Ocean Park Blvd., (310) 396-4040.

The Santa Monica College Music Department presents SMC Jazz Vocalists with the Jon Mayer Trio. Admission is free! Today @ 11:15 a.m. SMC Concert Hall, 1900 Pico Blvd. For more information please call (310) 434-3000 or (310) 434-4323.

Step Up on Second will host a lecture tonight (with special guest, Michael DiPaolo, Ph.D.) to raise the awareness of mental health issues in our community. Topic will be: The Ups and Downs - Understanding Bipolar Disorder. 7 p.m. To 9 p.m. Step up on Second is located at 1328 Second Street, Santa Monica. For more information, please call (310)394-6889 ext. 25.

FREE Worldwide Internet Questions & Answers events with John Morton (Spiritual Director of the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness) 7:30 p.m. @ 2101 Wilshire Blvd. Website: www.msia.org/live For more information please contact Genie Ford at MSIA (323) 737-4055 ext. 312

Santa Monica Daily Press

Blue Bus to ask city council to approve fare increase

BLUE BUS, from page 1

service, Dawson said.

The first option "distributes the burden of the fare increase to all riders, so that not just one group would shoulder the burden," he said.

"And internally for us, it provides the greatest economic security, meets economic projections for a long time period, (and) would prevent us from having to do another rate hike for the longest amount of time."

The Big Blue Bus has not increased fares since 1983, though the average cost per rider has increased from 66-cents to \$1.49 since then. If the current fare is adjusted for inflation, it would be approximately 86 cents.

Some elected officials said that if at all possible, they would like to prevent a fare increase.

Councilman Ken Genser has argued that the Big Blue Bus should explore more options that would allow the company to continue offering the same low fare.

"I still have some concerns," he said. "My motivation is to try to keep the 50-cent fare — even if it means making adjustments in other parts of the fare structure."

Councilman Richard Bloom — who

rides the bus to work three to four times a week — said he understood the need to raise bus fares. However, he is concerned about the affect it would have on some areas of his constituency.

"Even though the out of pocket might be relatively small, for people on fixed incomes that's a big chunk of change," he said.

Besides fares, the Big Blue Bus helps pay for its operating expenses through revenue from advertisements that appear on its buses.

Currently, the Big Blue is re-negotiating its advertising contract. If approved, the new contract with Viacom Outdoor would bring in almost \$500,000 more than the existing \$6 million contract with Gateway Outdoor Advertising.

That money would help stave off future fare increases.

"My concern is that we not exclude people from using the bus because the whole objective is to make sure it is as widely accessible as possible," Bloom said. "I know I'll continue to ride it regardless, but I can afford the fare increase."

"I'm riding every day with people who might not be able to afford it."

CURRENT AND PROPOSED FARES

FARE TYPE	CURRENT	PROPOSED
Local Cash Fare	.50	.75
Tokens (10)/Little Blue Card Student/Little Blue Card (K-12)	.45	.70
Senior & Disabled (local)	.25	.35
College Student Card	.25	.35
Line 10 Express Regular	.40	.60
Line 10 Express Senior & Medicare Card	\$1.25	\$1.75
Line 10 Express Disabled	.60	.75
Interagency Transfer	.25	.35
Big Blue Bus Local	.25	.25
Transfer	Free	Free

Housekeeper says managers followed her into bathroom

UNION, from page 1

Doubletree management re-instated housekeeper Elba Hernandez April 26 after suspending her indefinitely a week before while the hotel investigated her for distributing fliers complaining of unfair workplace practices.

Hernandez's suspension sparked an uprising among union activists and clergy members. On April 23, clergy and community activists staged a sit-in and a prayer session at the Doubletree's restaurant.

Union activists now accuse the hotel's management of unfairly picking on Hernandez for her pro-union activities.

"Management tries to intimidate us, threaten us and even follows me into the restroom," Hernandez said.

The union has launched a public campaign to organize the hotel's workers. They have held rallies at a recent Santa

Monica-Malibu Unified School Board meeting and at Santa Monica High School.

The school district leases the land to the Doubletree, located just west of Santa Monica High School. Union organizers have spurred the school district into re-evaluating its lease with the hotel.

They hope the school district will be able to re-negotiate its lease with the hotel, and in the process help settle the long-standing labor dispute. The city has helped unions become established in hotels leased on publicly-owned land.

Currently, the Pacific Shore Hotel, 1819 Ocean Ave., and The Miramar are the only beachfront resorts in Santa Monica with a unionized workforce.

Union officials said they would like to organize all the large hotels in Santa Monica, but they would only confirm active efforts at Loews and at the Doubletree.

LOCAL



CrimeWatch

Man attacks, tries to rape two women

By Daily Press staff

■ A 50-year-old man was arrested after he allegedly attacked and tried to rape two young women near the beach.

On May 3 at around 6 p.m., the two women were walking along the 3000 block of Ocean Front Walk when a 50-year-old man allegedly grabbed them by the neck, threw them to the ground and held them down.

The man then climbed on top of one girl and attempted to remove her clothing.

The women fought the man off and he took off running south down the beach. One woman used a pay phone near a beach restroom to call police, who arrived within minutes.

Soon after, a man fitting the suspect's description was stopped by police near Navy Street and Ocean Front Walk. The victims were driven past the area where the suspect was detained and they positively identified Ambrose Golg as their attacker.

Golg was booked for assault with intent to commit rape and false imprisonment. His bail was set at \$50,000.

■ Just after noon on April 29, police arrived at the 1500 block of Stanford Avenue, responding to a woman's call that armed robbers were in her apartment. Police dispatchers called the apartment and told everyone inside to move outside.

Police then searched the apartment and found a large quantity of a substance believed to be marijuana that allegedly belonged to the victim's roommate.

The substance was booked into evidence and the roommate was booked for sale of marijuana.

Investigators are attempting to determine if the break-in was drug related. The two robbers, one of whom carried a small handgun, are still at large.

One suspect was described as a male Hispanic in his 30's, 5-foot-2-inches tall and 130 pounds. The other man was described as a black male 30-35 years old, 5-foot-9-inches tall and 180 pounds.

■ At around 2:30 p.m. on April 29, an employee of the Albertson's on the 2600 block of Lincoln Boulevard watched a suspicious-looking woman placing items in a shopping cart.

The woman filled her cart and continually looked around to see that nobody was watching her. The woman pushed the cart out of the store without paying, and store employees caught her and placed her in custody.

Police arrived and arrested Laura Gene Spradlin, of Santa Monica for theft. The store recovered the merchandise, which totaled \$657.37.

Spradlin's bail was set at \$15,000.

■ Shortly after midnight on May 2, a man standing on the sidewalk at the 1300 block of 11th Street was approached by two men.

One showed a handgun and demanded money, while the other reached into the victim's pockets and took his wallet, cell phone and keys. The two suspects fled on foot.

The victim's wallet contained \$260 and miscellaneous credit cards.

The first suspect was described as a male Hispanic, 18-20 years old, 5-foot-6-inches to 5-foot-8-inches tall and 160 pounds.

The second suspect was described as a male Hispanic, 20 years old, 5-foot-7-inches tall and 160 pounds.

Any additional information regarding these crimes contact the office of crime investigations at 310-458-8451.

Loan deadline extended to help owners hurting now

DEADLINE, from page 1

The law authorizes loan terms up to 30 years with a maximum interest rate of 4 percent.

Jenkins said some businesses have been able to prove that their revenue declined because the company is located near the airport. Because of heightened security measures brought on by the federal government, a furniture store in Las Vegas was able to prove an impact to their business, Jenkins said.

Other businesses that proved economic hardship because of federal government action were companies in San Ysidro, near the Mexico-California border. The wait time getting in and out of the country prior

to Sept. 11 was a half-hour. After security was heightened at the border, the wait time increased to six hours, directly impacting businesses in the area, Jenkins said.

The deadline has been extended to May 22 because some business owners may just be feeling the pain now and need the assistance.

"Often times businesses are impacted in stages and they are just realizing it now," Jenkins said. "Or, they tend handle it on their own as long as they can."

The average processing time to be approved for a loan is 12 days, he added. Business owners can call 1-800-488-5323 for more information and to apply for a loan.

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STATE

Santa Cruz surfers and kayakers fight over waves

BY MARGIE MASON
Associated Press Writer

SANTA CRUZ — The surfers who live to ride some of the best waves along the West Coast have helped make this free-spirited town famous for its mellow, do-your-own thing vibe. But when the surf is up, the scene can turn gnarly, and it's all about dominating the best waves.

When kayakers paddle into a popular surf spot known as Steamer Lane, the mix becomes even more volatile. Kayakers quickly learn they're not welcome; they're shouted at and told to leave before someone gets hurt.

"I was the first guy to get into a fight with them. I took the paddle. I was one of the main instigators to get them out of the water," said Vince Collier, a Santa Cruz native known as the heaviest local in town.

No one has been killed, but blood has been shed in the water. Some surfers claim they're acting in self-defense — that collisions with heavier, less-maneuverable kayakers can seriously injure surfers vying for the same space.

Surfers for Safe Berth, a local group, is pressing the city to ban kayakers from the surf zone altogether. They say at least a dozen surfers have been injured in the last few years as waves spit kayakers out like missiles toward their unprotected bodies.

Kayakers say they have every right to the same choice waves — and that surfboards on leashes also can be hazardous.

"Collisions are going to happen in the water no matter if there are kayakers in the water or not," said Steve Hiegel, a kayak instructor in Santa Cruz and coach of the West Coast's U.S. Surf Kayak Team.

"What's that make a surfboard, a small weapon?" he asked. "How about those pointy tips that the short boards have, and how about those razor fins they have that kayakers don't have?"

Parks and Recreation Director Jim Lang is encouraging both groups to compromise.

"If you want us to solve this, we can — and we'll screw it up," Lang told both groups, warning that once the city gets involved, rules and regulations likely will follow.

About 100 people showed up at a public meeting in April to discuss the dispute, and another meeting is set for Tuesday night. Among the proposed solutions: post "rules of the waves" on the beach and educate all comers about surf etiquette.

Lang has been dealing with territorial egos for years — Eastside surfers scared to surf on the Westside and vice versa, and

both sides ousting out-of-town wave riders, beginners and anyone else using the "wrong" board.

Like most top surf spots, there are only so many waves to go around.

"It's not like a ski area where you're going to have a bunch of runs," said Lang. "It's up and everybody goes."

It's a subculture of unwritten rules and pecking orders that start at the shoreline and grow deeper during the paddle out.

"It's territorial. It's like a dog on a fire hydrant," said Collier, who admits to bullying people out of the water for years. The basic attitude: "You're not getting any of my waves."

Now Collier says it's time to share with the kayakers before everyone loses.

"I'm taking a lot of flak from my friends in the surf community. I'm blue in the face trying to get my point across. What's going to happen is we're going to lose control of our surf spot," Collier said.

Some surfers say there's room for the kayakers, as long as they follow surf etiquette — unwritten rules that dictate when to take off on a wave, where to paddle, who's up for the next wave, where to sit in the lineup and which locals automatically are given the right-of-way.

Colin Brown, a lawyer for the surfing group, says such rules are essential to prevent accidents.

"A guy who works for the city had his thigh split open like a hot dog by a kayak. Another woman got her leash caught on a kayak and she was dragged upside down under water," Brown said. "A kayak took off in front of me and caught a flat wave. It suddenly got steep, and his kayak didn't fit in the curve of the wave and it hurled him right at me. If I had been less nimble, he would have taken me out."

But many say kayakers are a rare sight at Steamer Lane, aside from three days in March when kayakers compete in the World Surf Kayaking Championships.

"It really isn't a big deal. There aren't that many kayakers," said Howard "Boots" McGhee, who's been surfing for 40 years, and thinks the surfers are too aggressive toward kayakers.

"I'm just very, very tired of it. I'm really kind of embarrassed," McGhee said. "People are cutting out a whole group of people because of one or two or three incidents and some of that was instigated. There are paralyzed people that choose to do kayaking, and they go into the surf zone and ride some waves. That should be their right."

Surf etiquette, at a glance

By The Associated Press

Basics of surf etiquette:

- The person closest to the curl of the wave owns the wave.
- The person on the wave always has the right-of-way.
- Do not paddle for a wave unless you intend to take off.
- No one else can take off once a surfer is up and riding. It's typically one surfer per wave.
- Locals have the right-of-way. They catch more waves and are typically positioned "deepest," or closest to the curl.
- Take turns. Don't position yourself to hog several sets in a row.
- Do not paddle toward oncoming surfers. Go around them to the side, even if it's a tougher paddle.
- Don't hit anyone with your board. Never let go of it while others are nearby.
- Remember that not everyone knows or follows the surf etiquette at every beach.

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NATIONAL



July 4th attack on nuclear plants possible, sources say

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — U.S. intelligence officials have received threats that terrorists will strike a U.S. nuclear power plant July 4, and are reviewing the information to determine whether it is reliable.

The government is taking the threats seriously, though officials have preliminarily determined that the information is not credible enough to act upon, said officials familiar with the investigation.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the alleged plot to attack on America's celebration of independence is one of scores of threats filtering through U.S. intelligence and is not considered serious enough to formally warn the public or change the nuclear industry's already high level of alert.

The threat received last week suggested that an unidentified Islamic terrorist group was planning to attack a nuclear power facility in the Northeast, officials

said. It did not specify a target.

Unlike some other recent threat information, the power plant threat did not come from Abu Zubaydah, the senior al-Qaida operational leader in U.S. custody. Abu Zubaydah's interviews with U.S. interrogators led a recent warning to banks, and heightened concerns al-Qaida was developing a radiation-spreading dirty bomb.

Rep. Edward Markey of Massachusetts, a senior Democrat on the House Energy Committee, said that while he didn't know if the threat was credible, it indicated that "al-Qaida is seriously targeting U.S. nuclear facilities for future attacks."

He said he is urging the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to take such steps as restoring a no-fly zone within a 10-mile radius of nuclear plants, federalizing the security force and conducting more extensive background checks of all plant employees.

The Washington Times first reported the threat.

Truckers tapped to watch for potential terror strikes

BY JONATHAN D. SALANT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Paul Barnes spends eight to 10 hours on the road each day. He drives across bridges and through cities. He already makes a point of looking for drunken drivers and disabled vehicles.

Now he's enlisting in the war on terrorism.

Barnes, 46, of South Portland, Maine, is one of the 3 million truck drivers the industry hopes will sign up for training in how to spot suspicious activities that could indicate a potential terrorist attack.

"Sept. 11 really made me aware of what could happen," said Barnes, who hauls paper products for Pottle's Transportation of Bangor, Maine. "You take for granted nothing's going to happen because we live in a pretty safe country. Now something like this happens and it's 'Wow, what can you do to make things different.'"

The trucking industry plans to offer classes for drivers and provide a toll-free number to report anything unusual, with the information forwarded to law enforcement agencies.

"We know what should and should not be on the highway," said Mike Russell, a spokesman for the American Trucking Associations, an industry group. "If we see something wrong that has security implications, we're going to make a call."

The program will be an extension of what truckers already do, such as routine-

ly alerting local police when they see erratic drivers or broken-down vehicles.

This time, the stakes are higher. There has been concern that terrorists could use a truck hauling gasoline or other hazardous materials to kill thousands of people, the way hijackers turned four commercial airliners into flying bombs on Sept. 11.

CIA official Robert Walpole recently told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee that terrorist groups or rogue nations were less likely to fire a missile at the United States than to use trucks, ships or planes to deliver chemical, biological or nuclear weapons.

Last week, the Transportation Department's inspector general said there were insufficient federal and state safeguards to stop would-be terrorists from illegally obtaining commercial truck driver's licenses.

State transportation officials have stepped up surveillance of bridges and tunnels and have begun training maintenance workers on what to look for.

Truckers will be asked to monitor bridges, highways, tunnels and ports.

Barnes said he's already keeping a closer eye on his surroundings as he crosses bridges, looking at not just the traffic in front of him but vehicles going the other way, stalled cars and even pedestrians walking across the span.

Drivers are also being asked to watch out for other truckers.

Man mauled to death by cow

By The Associated Press

VINTON, Iowa — A farmer was mauled to death by a cow while trying to rescue the animal's newborn calf from the mud.

Bruce Schulte, 50, of rural Norway died Saturday, shortly after calling his mother on his cell phone, Sheriff Kenneth Popenhagen said.

Schulte had tried to move the calf out of some mud it was lying in. The cow charged him, kicking and mauling him, the sheriff said.

Dr. John Schiltz, state veterinarian, said cows can be very protective of their offspring, but it is unusual for one to turn on a farmer.

The sheriff would not say what happened to the cow and calf.

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SPORTS

Sacramento advances to Western Conference finals

BY GREG BEACHAM

AP Sports Writer

SACRAMENTO — In an amazing race of a playoff series, the Sacramento Kings were faster, deeper and tougher than Dallas — and maybe even good enough to beat the Lakers.

Chris Webber and Mike Bibby each scored 23 points to lead six Kings in double figures Monday night as the franchise advanced to the Western Conference finals for the first time since 1981, beating the Dallas Mavericks 114-101 to win the best-of-seven series in five games.

Fill-in starter Hedo Turkoglu had 20 points for the Kings, who averaged more than 114 points in an incredibly entertaining series. At the final buzzer, the Kings had a group hug at center court while team owner Gavin Maloof jumped and danced with the team's cheerleaders on the court.

The Kings will play the winner of the semifinal between Los Angeles and San Antonio which the two-time defending NBA champion Lakers lead 3-1 with Game 5 Tuesday in Los Angeles.

Unless the Lakers-Spurs series is extended to the limit, Game 1 of an all-California conference final will take place at Arco Arena this weekend.

While closing out a playoff series at home for the first time since 1964, the Kings backed up their run to the NBA's best regular-season record with a historic and convincing victory over the Mavs, whose offensive firepower made them a favorite of many observers.

But in front of a crowd that seemed louder than the Mavericks' customized team plane, the Kings got the last of three straight victories despite the absence of second-leading scorer Peja Stojakovic, who hasn't played since the third quarter of Game 3 because of a sprained ankle.

What's more, Webber limped to the locker room in the third quarter after spraining his left ankle, missing several minutes. But no distraction in this series seemed to bother the Kings — not the health of their All-Stars, not the cowbell chorus behind their bench in Dallas, not even the Mavs' high-octane offense.

After all, the Kings have been playing this style for four seasons now during the most exciting time in franchise history — and the payoff finally has arrived. The fans' chants of "Beat L.A.!" began in the third quarter, when the game's outcome was still in doubt, and picked it up again afterward.

All-Star Dirk Nowitzki of the Mavericks recovered from his series-long struggles with 32 points and 12 rebounds, and Michael Finley had 26 points. But Dallas is still a year or two behind Sacramento on the development curve, and the looks on the Mavs' faces afterward sug-

gested they were learning from the painful experience.

Unless the Lakers' series with the Spurs is extended to seven games, the first game of an all-California conference final will take place at Arco Arena this weekend.

In the end, the Kings' style and substance beat the Mavericks' flash and dash. Dallas wrested the league scoring title from the Kings during the regular season, but Sacramento has a postseason toughness earned through series losses to the Lakers each of the past two seasons.

In Game 5, Sacramento ran away from the Mavericks as soon as Webber returned late in the third quarter. The fourth quarter was a recital, with nearly every member of the Kings turning in a spectacular offensive play as they held off a rally from the resilient Mavs.

Turkoglu, thrust into Stojakovic's starting spot, finally solved his shooting struggles with several big baskets in the second half. Bibby, who became an offensive force in the series, had another dominant game on his 24th birthday while thoroughly outplaying Steve Nash, who had 12 points and nine assists.

Vlade Divac had 18 points for the Kings, while Bobby Jackson and Doug Christie each had 15.

The Kings, who trace their peripatetic history to the

NBA's founding days, are the closest they've been to a championship since 1981, when the Kansas City Kings made the conference finals. The Rochester Royals won the franchise's only NBA title in 1951.

Sacramento used the backing of another deafening crowd to get off to a hot start, hitting seven straight shots and taking an early nine-point lead. Nowitzki's improved play kept Dallas in it, and his jumper at the halftime buzzer cut the Kings' lead to 59-53.

Notes: The Kings' previous 14 playoff series all ended on the road. The 1963-64 Cincinnati Royals finished the Eastern Division finals at home. ... The cowbell controversy appeared to be resolved, as Kings fans rang their bells unabated behind Dallas' bench. Mavericks owner Mark Cuban exchanged shouts with some unfriendly fans in the second quarter before Slamson, the Kings' mascot, sprayed Cuban with Silly String. ... Jackson made a jaw-dropping triple-pump layup on a drive to the hoop in the second quarter, drawing a foul from Wang Zhizhi along the way. ... Former Michigan and Arizona State coach Bill Frieder was in attendance. Webber works with Frieder at various summer basketball camps.



National Basketball Association playoff schedule

By The Associated Press

CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS — EDT (Best-of-7)

Saturday, May 4

Sacramento 108, Dallas 91, Sacramento leads series 1-0

Sunday, May 5

New Jersey 99, Charlotte 93, New Jersey leads series 1-0

Detroit 96, Boston 84, Detroit leads series 1-0

L.A. Lakers 86, San Antonio 80, L.A. Lakers lead series 1-0

Monday, May 6

Dallas 110, Sacramento 102, series tied 1-1

Tuesday, May 7

New Jersey 102, Charlotte 88, New Jersey leads series 2-0

San Antonio 88, L.A. Lakers 85, series tied 1-1

Wednesday, May 8

Boston 85, Detroit 77, series tied 1-1

Thursday, May 9

Charlotte 115, New Jersey 97, New Jersey leads series 2-1

Sacramento 125, Dallas 119, Sacramento leads series 2-1

Friday, May 10

Boston 66, Detroit 64

L.A. Lakers 99, San Antonio 89,

Saturday, May 11

Sacramento 115, Dallas 113, Sacramento leads series 3-1

Sunday, May 12

New Jersey 89, Charlotte 79, New Jersey leads series 3-1

Boston 90, Detroit 79, Boston leads series 3-1

L.A. Lakers 87, San Antonio 85, L.A. Lakers lead series 3-1

Monday, May 13

Sacramento 114, Dallas 101, Sacramento wins series 4-1

Tuesday, May 14

Boston at Detroit, 8 p.m., if necessary

San Antonio at L.A. Lakers, TBA, if necessary

Wednesday, May 15

Charlotte at New Jersey, TBA, if necessary

Thursday, May 16

Detroit at Boston, TBA, if necessary

L.A. Lakers at San Antonio, TBA, if necessary

Friday, May 17

New Jersey at Charlotte, 8 p.m., if necessary

Saturday, May 18

San Antonio at L.A. Lakers, TBA, if necessary

Sunday, May 19

Charlotte at New Jersey, TBA, if necessary

Boston at Detroit, TBA, if necessary

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Santa Monica Community College District (SMCCD) is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Madison Theater Project. The project, located at SMCCD's Madison Campus at 1310 11th Street in the City of Santa Monica, will consist of a new 536-seat performance theater and includes converting the existing unused school auditorium into a classroom rehearsal hall. SMC intends to use the Madison Theater as an academic lecture hall Mon. through Thurs. mornings and Mon., Tues., and Wed. evenings, and as a performance theater providing cultural and performing arts programming on a seasonal basis on Thurs. and Fri. evenings and weekends. The following environmental issues will be addressed in the EIR: Land Use, Neighborhood Effects, Traffic, Parking, Air Quality, Noise, Public Services, Utilities, Historic Resources, and Aesthetics (Views, Light/Glare, Shade/Shadows). The public is encouraged to provide written comments to the SMCCD with respect to potential environmental impacts that may occur as a result of this project. Please address all comments to Mr. Thomas Donner, Executive Vice President, Business & Administration at 1900 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, CA, 90405. Written comments are due no later than June 14, 2002. A public scoping meeting will be held to present the project and solicit public comments with regard to potential environmental impacts. The meeting will be held at the Madison Campus Cafeteria, at 1310 11th Street, Santa Monica, on Sat. May 18, 2002, at 1:00 p.m.

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INTERNATIONAL



Carter takes issue with U.S. claims about Cuba

BY ANITA SNOW

Associated Press Writer

HAVANA — Touring a major biotechnology lab with Fidel Castro, Jimmy Carter on Monday took issue with Bush administration claims that the island nation has exported technological know-how to rogue states for use in biological weapons.

Bush administration officials, however, said they were standing by their assertions that Cuba has at least a limited biological warfare program and has shared such biotechnology with rogue states. One allegation says those states are Iran and Libya, Carter said.

A State Department official also said Monday that Carter was not briefed on the weapons issue because his briefing occurred before the allegations by Undersecretary of State John Bolton last week in Washington.

During a Monday morning tour of the Center of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, Carter told Castro and Cuba's top scientists that he specifically asked White House, State Department and intelligence officials during a recent briefing if Cuba was transferring technology or other information that could be used in terrorist activities.

"The purpose of this briefing was for them to share with us any concern that my government had about possible terrorist activities that were supported by Cuba," he said.

"There were absolutely no allegations made or questions raised. I asked them specifically on more than one occasion if there was any evidence that Cuba has been involved in sharing any information to any other country on Earth that could be used for terrorist purposes.

"The answer from our experts on intelligence was, 'No,'" Carter said.

The former American president — the first former or current American leader to visit Castro's Cuba — noted the apparent contradictions and questioned their timing.

"These allegations were made, maybe not coincidentally, just before our visit to Cuba," Carter said of Bolton's concerns.

In remarks last week to the Heritage Foundation, a conservative research group, Bolton said he believes Cuba has at least a limited offensive biological warfare



Gregory Bull/Associated Press

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, left, speaks as Cuban President Fidel Castro, center, and former first lady Rosalynn Carter listen during a visit to a center for genetic engineering and biotechnology in Havana, Cuba on Monday. Carter is the first U.S. head of office, in or out of office, to visit communist Cuba since the 1959 revolution that put Castro in power.

research and development effort.

"Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to other rogue states," Bolton said. "We are concerned that such technology could support BW programs in those states. ... We call on Cuba to cease all BW-applicable cooperation with rogue states and to fully comply with all of its obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention."

Havana denounced Bolton's allegation as a lie and promised Carter "complete access" to any Cuban biotechnology laboratory.

But Monday, Secretary of State Colin Powell repeated what Bolton had said and added that it was not a new statement by the Bush administration.

"I don't know what briefings President Carter received," Powell told reporters traveling with him to Iceland to attend a NATO summit.

Otto Reich, the assistant secretary of state for the Western Hemisphere, told The Associated Press that Carl Ford, the assistant secretary of state for intelligence and research, had given some of the same information to

Congress at a March hearing.

Carter said Monday that Cuban scientists deny they have any technology transfer program with Libya and that a new program with Iran has not yet started — two countries considered rogue states by the U.S. government. Dr. Luis Herrera of the biotechnology center said Cuba had no program with Iraq, either.

With Castro sitting next to Carter in an auditorium at the lab, Cuban scientists told Carter their transfer contracts with other countries forbid using Cuban technology for anything other than the vaccines and other lifesaving purposes they were designed for.

Answering a question from Carter, Herrera insisted that Cuba monitors the use of technology transferred to other countries to ensure it is not used for terrorism.

"I just want to assure myself," Carter said.

Carter also praised Cuba's focus on medicine.

"We have been overwhelmed with the dedication of the Cuban people and the government in the research and humanitarian sharing of knowledge about health care with the rest of the world," he said. "My hope is that in the future there can be close cooperation between the scientific and medical community in Cuba and in my country, the United States."

Traveling with his wife, Rosalynn, and Carter Center staff, the former American president had no biotechnology experts with him when he visited the center on Havana's outskirts. Carter has a science background, but in nuclear technology.

Castro wore civilian clothes instead of his usual military uniform.

Carter also met Monday with two leading Cuban dissidents for a human rights briefing. Elizardo Sanchez and Oswaldo Paya briefed Carter on a proposed referendum asking voters if they want guarantees of individual freedoms, an amnesty for political prisoners, the right to own their business and electoral reforms.

"Carter understands the concept very well because he is a man of dialogue," Paya said.

In Washington, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Castro should give his own people the same freedom to travel and speak to dissidents that he has given Carter.

"Why have one standard for a visitor and have a far worse, much more repressive standard for his own people?" Fleischer said.

Arafat tours West Bank, while Sharon slapped by party

BY GREG MYRE

Associated Press Writer

BETHLEHEM, West Bank — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israel Sharon both confronted the fallout Monday from the surge of violence in the preceding weeks.

With his travel ban lifted and Israeli troops gone from Palestinian cities for the first time in six weeks, Arafat toured battle-scarred West Bank towns, but skipped the devastated Jenin refugee camp when aides feared he would face heckling.

Hours earlier, Sharon suffered a resounding defeat when his party brushed aside his pleas and voted overwhelmingly to oppose Palestinian statehood.

Sharon, who concedes that a Palestinian state is likely to emerge someday, had asked his hard-line Likud party not to vote on the resolution rejecting any future Palestinian state. The vote does not prevent Sharon from formally pursuing negotiations that might lead to Palestinian statehood, but hampered his ability to maneuver. The Israeli leader was booed when he left the convention center in Tel Aviv.

Arafat responded sharply to the vote. "This is the destruction of the Oslo accords, which they have signed," Arafat said, referring to the interim peace agreements he reached with Israel in the mid-1990s.

For the first time in six months, Arafat left the West Bank town of Ramallah,

traveling Monday aboard a Jordanian air force helicopter. The Palestinian leader, who frequently hopped between world capitals in the past, was effectively grounded since last November. Israeli air strikes destroyed his helicopters, followed by increasingly tough restrictions on his movements.

Israel lifted the travel ban on Arafat as part of a U.S.-brokered deal that ended a 34-day Israeli siege on the Palestinian leader's headquarters May 2.

Arafat made three stops Monday in West Bank towns hard hit by Israel's military incursion in search of militants. His visit to the town of Jenin, in the northern West Bank, was also to include a tour of the devastated Jenin refugee camp, scene of heavy fighting a month ago.

Some 3,000 camp residents turned out to see Arafat, but aides said privately that Arafat could face heckling in the camp and canceled the visit, a decision that disappointed many and angered some in the crowd.

"He must visit the camp," Ahmad Nawasrah, an unemployed construction worker, said of Arafat. "We've lost our houses, we've lost our sons and we have gotten nothing. We hoped that he would have come and we could have shown him our problems."

The crowd, which broke into cheers several times when it was announced that Arafat was on his way, later launched into chants of "To Jerusalem we go, martyrs in the millions."

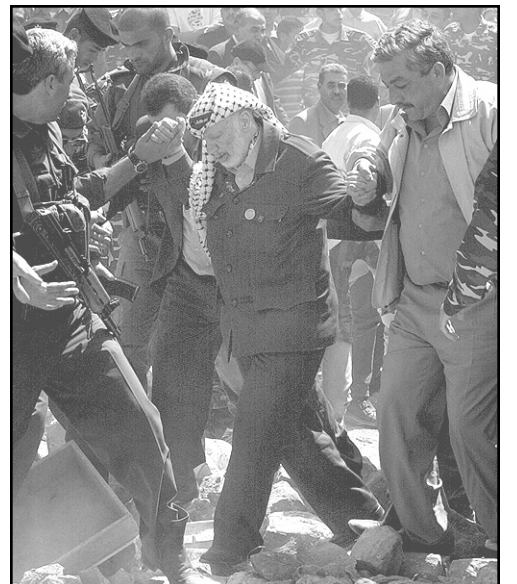
Palestinian leaders initially claimed hundreds were killed in the camp in what they described as a massacre by Israeli troops. Arafat compared the battle to Stalingrad, where more than 1 million people perished in the bloodiest battle in World War II, between Nazi Germany and the Soviet forces.

But Arafat gave no speech and did not refer to the fighting during his Jenin visit. Israel calls the Palestinian claims wild exaggerations, saying about 50 Palestinians were killed in the camp, most of them fighters. International human rights groups have accused the Israeli military of abuses in the camp, but said there was no evidence of a massacre.

"All the people in the camp supported Arafat when he was under the siege in his compound in Ramallah," said Mohammed Damaj, 34, a resident of the refugee camp and an activist in Arafat's Fatah movement. But Damaj said some Palestinians were disappointed that Arafat did not press harder for a United Nations inquiry into the fighting, which was scrapped when Israel resisted.

"Arafat was silent about that — the people in the camp felt that Arafat sacrificed them for his personal interests," Damaj said.

Arafat's trip to Jenin was also marred by a gunfight between two members of his Fatah movement. After an argument, one shot the other in the leg, sending the surrounding crowd fleeing in panic.



Enric Marti/Associated Press

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, center, is helped by his aides to walk through the rubble during a visit to inspect the damage caused by the latest Israeli military operation in the West Bank town of Nablus on Monday.

Arafat also stopped in Bethlehem, visiting the Church of the Nativity, where more than 200 Palestinians, including wanted gunmen, police and civilians, had been holed up for 39 days before Israel lifted its siege under a deal that sent 13 militiamen into exile. Arafat has been widely criticized at home for agreeing to the deportations.

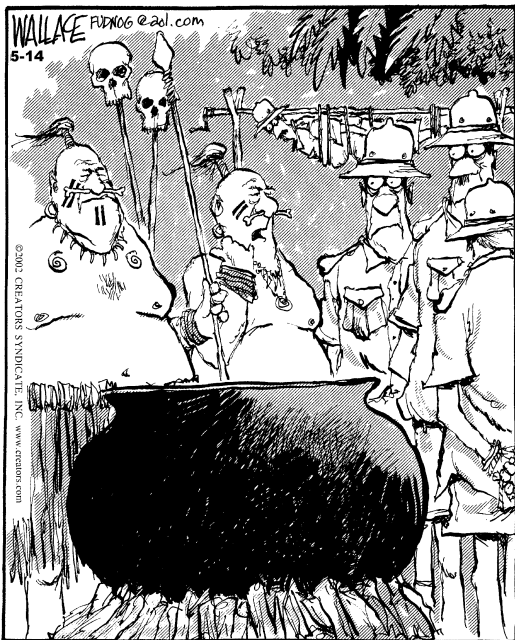


COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



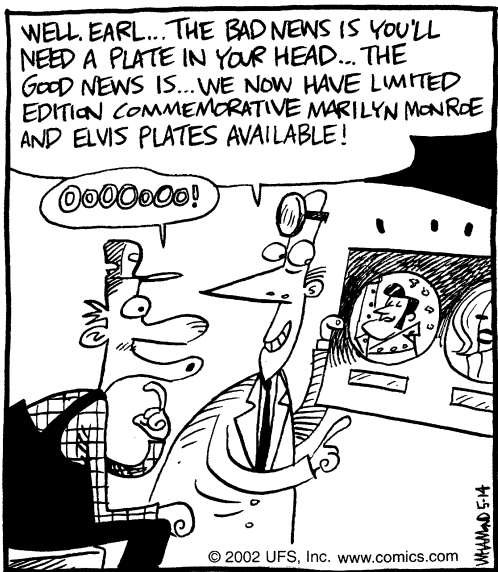
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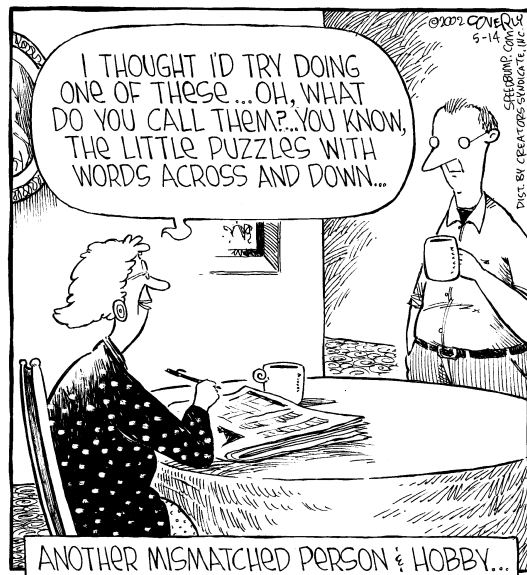
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- ACROSS
- 1 "Meet John Doe" director
 - 6 Hackneyed
 - 11 Fixed a squeak
 - 12 Track events
 - 13 Trip planner
 - 15 High rating
 - 16 Snapshot
 - 17 Follower of HST
 - 18 Unrelated son, e.g.
 - 20 Golf aid
 - 21 Archaic
 - 22 Time in office
 - 23 Model Crawford
 - 26 Pentagon bigwigs
 - 27 Angers
 - 28 Eastern "way"
 - 29 Pinnacle
 - 30 Loose-leaf holders
 - 34 Picnic pest
 - 35 Common conjunction
 - 36 By way of
 - 37 Mole
 - 40 Bert's friend
 - 41 Hospital employee
 - 42 Yorkshire town
- DOWN
- 43 Starts a poker hand
 - 1 Terra —
 - 2 Broadcast
 - 3 Texas city
 - 4 Abbr. before a minister's name
 - 5 With skill
 - 6 Follow the outline of
 - 7 Cloth tatter
 - 8 Summer drink
 - 9 Offers
 - 10 Reveres
 - 14 Told whoppers
 - 19 Pea holders
 - 22 Trampled
 - 23 Strong-hold
 - 24 Magnetite, for one
 - 25 God of the sea
 - 26 Kerchief
 - 28 Fork part
 - 30 Cotton bundles
 - 31 Turn aside
 - 32 Washer cycle
 - 33 Fills
 - 38 Auction
 - 39 Shooting range need

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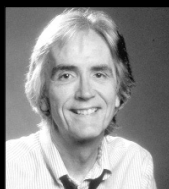
Yesterday's answer

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37			38				39		
40					41				
42					43				

5-14

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Man's buttocks amputated after he contracts flesh-eating bacteria

A Manitoba, Canada, farmer filed a lawsuit in January against four doctors and the Brandon Regional Health Authority after he contracted the flesh-eating-bacteria disease while undergoing colon surgery. The man had to have his buttocks amputated.

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BACK PAGE

Bigfoot believers swap stories at Oregon convention

BY ANDREW KRAMER
Associated Press Writer

HILLSBORO, Ore. — Woodsy men in suspenders and muddy boots examined Ziploc bags holding strands of "Bigfoot hair" and grainy photographs of ape-like forms. One man — a school teacher — keeps a pile of dung he says may have come from a Bigfoot.

About 400 people showed up for a weekend regional conference on Bigfoot, also known as Sasquatch.

It was a meeting not of skeptics, but of true believers — folks who are quite certain there's a large, hairy ape-like creature roaming the misty forests of the Northwest.

"A lot of people in the Northwest believe in Bigfoot," said Ray Crowe, a retired electrician and director of the Western Bigfoot Society, a Portland-based nonprofit that's considered the largest of its kind.

A big man wearing a dress shirt untucked over khakis, Crowe shuffled about as he reviewed fresh photographs, brought in from places like the Mount Hood wilderness in Oregon, the slopes of the Coast Range, and Skamania County, Washington, where a 1969 ordinance protects Bigfoot.

In those places, a sea of trees hides a body of lore that has captivated people for generations — even though Bigfoot's existence has never been proven.

Supposed evidence of Bigfoot was on display, and on sale, at the weekend convention at the Washington County Fairgrounds.

They included plaster footprints that

ranged in size from the eponymous big — 20-inch indentations with toes as big as corn dogs — to a dainty pair from a "baby Bigfoot."

For the kids, there were Chewbacca action figures — apparently offered because of the Star Wars character's resemblance to many people's idea of what Bigfoot looks like.

The search for Bigfoot had its heyday in the Northwest in the late 1960s, after Robert Patterson and Bob Gimlin returned from an expedition in Northern California with film of a Bigfoot about 10 feet tall loping along a creek behind a log jam and gravel bank.

Bigfoot societies were formed and expeditions launched. Peter Byrne, an Irishman who has also sought Yeti in Nepal, opened the Bigfoot Research Center in The Dalles with a \$1 million endowment from a donor.

Huge, humanoid footprints were found across the country.

Crowe said he receives about 30 letters a month describing sightings these days, most from around the Northwest.

The weekend convention showed something new is afoot among those who seek the Sasquatch.

Accounts have evolved alongside the changing sensibilities about the environment in Bigfoot country, which is generally understood as Northern California, Oregon, Idaho and Washington.

In past decades, Bigfoot sightings returned from the woods with loggers and hunters. More recently, Bigfoot seekers include environmentalists who propose

preserving Bigfoot habitat from logging, said Crowe.

"It's definitely shifted more to conservation," Crowe said.

But Terry Reams says killing a Bigfoot may be necessary to disprove those who doubt its existence.

"In my personal opinion, it has to come down," said Reams, a 51-year-old electrician from Longview, Wash.

Reams told the assembled believers of driving east on Interstate 84 near Cascade

Locks on a rainy December in 1975. He looked out the window and saw Bigfoot loping along the shoulder of the highway beside his car, he said.

He now spends weekends hiking and hunting elk in the Dark Divide area of southern Washington, known as the heart of Bigfoot country.

Thom Powell, an eighth grade science teacher, keeps two clumps of dung in a cupboard of his science classroom, and says they may have come from a Bigfoot.

Merchant convicted for passing bogus Bordeaux

By The Associated Press

BORDEAUX, France — A French court convicted a wine merchant for trying to pass off a mixture containing cheap table wine as authentic Bordeaux.

Jacques Hemmer was sentenced to 18 months behind bars, with eight of those suspended, and was ordered to pay a fine of 1 million euros (\$915,900) for fraud and violating French laws that guarantee a wine's origin and style.

Prosecutors said Hemmer mixed table wine from the Languedoc-Roussillon region into Bordeaux wines from Medoc or Saint-Estephe. The scheme lasted from 1994 to 1995, according to LCI television.

Although much French table wine

comes from Languedoc-Roussillon and is exported all over the world, it is generally considered inferior to the full-bodied wines produced in the Medoc and Saint-Estephe regions.

Six Bordeaux merchants who bought and sold Hemmer's wines also were charged last February in the affair, but were acquitted Monday.

Still, they will pay fines for violating labeling standards. Prosecutors said the distributors may not have known the wine they were selling was diluted, but they did know it wasn't being bottled on Hemmer's property, as the label claimed.

Hemmer's attorney, Jacques Chambaud, said he plans to appeal the verdict.



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