

FREE

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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District asks hotel to acknowledge labor dispute

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

Santa Monica's school board asked the management of a local hotel to stop ignoring labor unrest and come to a compromise with its workers.

"The board of education ... believes that an amicable, timely mediation of any possible labor dispute would be to the mutual benefit of all parties," states a resolution considered Thursday by the seven members of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of

Education.

A vote on the resolution hadn't been taken at press time Thursday night.

The district leases the land to the Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, which is located on Fourth Street just west of Santa Monica High School.

In a press release Thursday, Doubletree general manager Francois Khoury reiterated the hotel's stance that most of its employees have told management they don't want to be unionized.

"We are unaware of any 'labor dispute' at our hotel,"

Khoury said. "The fact is that a few outsiders are attempting to impose the union on the hotel without allowing the employees to choose for themselves."

Hotel management would like to wage their own campaign against unionization, but union members want a vote by ballot, which prevents a campaign, and the results cannot be challenged.

More than 100 Doubletree Guest Suites hotel workers and union organizers rallied Thursday in support of the

See LABOR DISPUTE, page 4



Pedestrian sting yields violators

Woman on cell phone nearly hits one officer

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

Police nabbed more than a half-dozen motorists Thursday during a pedestrian sting operation on Wilshire Boulevard.

The sting consisted of

Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press
Above, Santa Monica Police traffic investigator Chris Dawson crosses Wilshire Boulevard at Franklin Street on Thursday as part of an undercover sting operation to enforce the motorist-pedestrian safety laws. After the operation, Dawson checks in with SMPD's motorcycle officers, who handed out seven tickets during the sting.



two plain-clothed officers from the Santa Monica Police Department's traffic enforcement division walking back and forth across Wilshire Boulevard at Franklin Street in a crosswalk.

If any motorist failed to yield, motorcycle officers waiting nearby were given the signal to pull them over.

Within 40 minutes, police cited seven motorists for failing to yield in the crosswalk — a \$103 fine and one point off their driving records.

Two of the violators Thursday were talking on their cell phones. One such driver didn't even realize she had nearly hit Chris

Dawson, a SMPD traffic investigator who helped conduct the sting.

SMPD conducts about two to three pedestrian sting operations a month. Dawson said he has had several near misses since he started doing the stings four years ago.

"I've had to dive out of the way from a car in a full frontal lock-up," he said. "Nothing like having a 4,000-pound car coming at you."

On other occasions, car mirrors have brushed the buttons on his shirt, he said.

The SMPD conducts the stings not only to enforce the law, but also to

educate the public about pedestrian safety. There were 130 pedestrian collisions last year, an 8 percent increase over 2000.

Many of those incidents occurred because motorists did not pay attention to people walking in crosswalks, or because they weren't familiar with the law.

"Once the pedestrian steps onto the roadway, the pedestrian has the right-of-way," said SMPD spokesman Lt. Frank Fabrega.

He added that pedestrians also have a responsibility to cross the street with a degree of care and

See STING, page 4

What's a name worth?

By The Associated Press

EAST ST. LOUIS, III. — Frederick James thinks his name is worth a bundle.

Claiming he has copyrighted the use of his name and is due royalties on its use, James sent the judge overseeing his drug case a hefty \$151 million bill.

James claims judges and his public defender have used his name 302 times in court proceedings and he charges authorities \$500,000 every time they speak or write his name.

Officials at the U.S. Copyright Office said it does not allow names to be legally protected from another's use.

U.S. District Judge Michael J. Reagan ruled Monday that James is not mentally impaired, can stand trial and can represent himself against marijuana dealing and weapons charges.

James is charged with dealing less than 50 kilograms of marijuana and various firearms violations. He could face up to 20 years in prison.

Before ruling on James' mental state, the judge asked, "Do you not think it's bizarre that you charge people to use your name?"

"It's my private property," James replied.

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

A westside organization wants Santa Monica to rename its main library after infamous civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.

"As a city, we recognize the power of naming public buildings and the power they portray to the public," said Michelle Wittig, president of the Martin Luther Jr. Westside Coalition. "But Santa Monica has no place to honor the most distinguished American leader of the 20th century civil rights movement."

Current plans call for the city to spend \$50 million to demolish and rebuild the main library building, located at the corner of Sixth Street and Santa Monica Boulevard.

The new building will have more "park-like settings," a courtyard with an independently operated cafe and three levels of subterranean parking that will accommodate 600 vehicles.

Plans for the project are expected to come before the city council in July. The structure now is known as the Santa Monica Main Library.

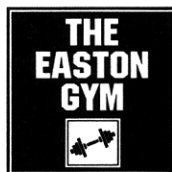
Wittig pointed out that the city has named several parks and civic buildings after former mayors and council members and the school district has named several schools after famous figures in American history.

In 2000, when the city initiated several new construction projects — including redeveloping the civic center area and

See LIBRARY, page 5



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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Use your financial savvy to help others feel more secure. Your creativity comes up later in the day when others tap into your energies, whether it is to make fun plans or put the topping on a work project. Make an important meeting. Tonight: Let the good times roll.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Do whatever you can early in the morning when you're in the mood to finish off details. Your energy peaks early on, when you get a lot done quickly. Stay upbeat and return all calls. Don't anticipate another's reaction. Tonight: Mosey on home.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Deal with financial matters in the p.m. Carefully review a situation that involves your security. Reach out for someone at a distance later in the day. Do needed research and seek out your own information and facts. You'll be surer of yourself as a result. Tonight: At a favorite spot.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ You melt away barriers, adding to the present possibilities. Use the a.m. to clear out responsibilities involving others. Others respond strongly to your enthusiasm and energy. Be sensible with another and discuss finances this afternoon. Tonight: Don't put off what you can do now.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Stand back early in the day. Use your sixth sense when dealing with a boss who wants everything done yesterday. This afternoon you get a second wind and become a veritable force to deal with. Network, return calls and don't forget to make plans! Tonight: Whatever makes you happy.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Focus on what you want today. You like what you see when you handle a long-overdue relationship. You get results, especially if you use your time in the a.m. In the p.m., you might want to mull around an idea or two, or make an important decision. Tonight: What's wrong with a quiet night at home?

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Bosses turn to you to finish off last-minute details. The good news is that you accomplish your goals with plenty of extra time to pursue your own projects. Groups of people prove unusually successful and lucky for you. Network away. Tonight: Wherever the party is.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Reach out for others at a distance. If you need an expert, find that person this morning. Do research on the computer. You're able to zero in on a problem with a great deal of ease. Others follow your lead in the afternoon. Tonight: All eyes turn to you.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Visualize more of what you want from another, and don't be surprised if you get a strong reaction. Not everyone sees things as you do. Loosen up and relax with someone on the phone in the afternoon. You can do business this way. Tonight: Take off ASAP.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Let another carry the ball. Often, you accept too much responsibility. Ease up some and simply relax. You cannot control others, though you sometimes try. Loosen up when dealing with an uptight associate. Praise works better than criticism. Tonight: Make nice.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Realize your limits when dealing with associates at work. Others have made up their minds and know what they want to do. A meeting in the afternoon could be unusually important or successful. Socialize and network away. You make an impact. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Use your imagination when heading in to work. Buy something special for a co-worker who could be a bit down and out. Use the day to complete as much as you can. In fact, you might want to work late, if possible. Tonight: Clear out some errands.

QUOTE of the DAY

**"Love your enemies in case your friends
turn out to be a bunch of bastards."**
— R.A. Dixon

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LOCAL



Morning and afternoon should bring inconsistent, knee-to-shoulder-height waves at best, with better swells building and peaking late Saturday. A storm should bring warm water from the tropics, boosting temperatures into the 60s. The swell will fill out nicely by Saturday and stay big well into Sunday. The southwest exposure should gain one-foot of surf, putting waves in the chest-high range by Saturday afternoon. But be prepared for inconsistent sets.

For Sunday, expect similar conditions, with low morning winds picking up in the afternoon for moderate wind swell. Water pollution remains low at most spots except Surfrider.

(Information compiled by Jesse Haley.)

Location	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Water Quality
County Line	2-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	A
Zuma	2-3'/Good	3-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	A
Surfrider	2-3'/Fair	2-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	C-F
Topanga	2-4'/Fair	2-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	B
Breakwater	3-4'/Poor	3-4'/Poor	2-4'/Fair	A
El Porto	2-5'/Poor	3-5'/Fair	3-5'/Fair	A



If approved, a November ballot measure would allow Santa Monica residents to vote for the city council member from their district, instead of casting ballots for all seven. In addition, it would require the mayor to be elected by the people, instead of council members. This week's Q-Line asked: **"Do you feel adequately represented by your city council. Why or why not?"** Here are your responses:

■ "The mayor and city council operate on a good old boy system. You pat my back and I'll pat yours. I'm in favor of Veritas and plan to vote for it in November. Council people who live north of Montana cannot fairly represent people on the eastside. Each district needs to have its own representative. I do not intend to vote for any current council members running in November. I do not think any person should serve any longer than two terms. Some of the members have been in office so long that they've become stagnant. They really don't have the best interest of Santa Monica in mind. They've got their own agendas. This has got to stop."

■ "Residents will have a stronger voice and better representation with individual district legislators. A specific representative will be forced to be more responsive to the needs and opinions of those voters in his or her district."

■ "I am very well represented by my city council. I think they give thoughtful consideration and explain their views every time they vote and I like that a lot."

■ "Santa Monicans who are not

allied with [Santa Monica Renters' Rights] are not represented by any SMRR supported city council person. In fact, SMRR council members have a history of using information against those who communicate views that are in contrast to their own. This is why non SMRR Santa Monicans can't talk to a SMRR councilperson. Mayor Feinstein acknowledged this at last week's Veritas debate when he stated, under Veritas, 'If you didn't vote for the elected council person in your district, you won't be able to talk to them. Under the current system you have a better chance of having someone to talk to.' What a sorry statement that was. Thanks for telling it like it is."

■ "I do not think that the city council adequately represents the city. I do believe that the best thing that would happen to this city is to have each area vote for the particular councilperson that would represent them in that area. Of course, the other council people would have an influence but at least you would have someone to talk to. It is also a better idea to have the mayor elected at large. Right now the Santa Monica

See Q-LINE, page 4

NEWS BRIEFS

Sex offender identified

By Daily Press staff

A registered sex offender arrested for suspicious activity in Santa Monica has been identified as 48-year-old Richard Gibbons.

Gibbons was arrested after he was found lurking behind a Santa Monica home watching a child, according to Santa Monica police.

The Department of Justice's sexual predator apprehension team arrested Gibbons April 20 after a Santa Monica woman witnessed the suspect looking through a fence behind her home on 22nd Street and California Avenue.

She reported the suspicious activity to Santa Monica police and was able to provide the suspect's license plate number.

With that information, police found Gibbons, a registered and convicted sex offender. The sexual predator apprehension team put Gibbons under surveillance, during which time he was seen talking to two juvenile boys in Santa Monica.

The Department of Justice would not release any information regarding Gibbons or where he resides, despite the fact that California's open records law requires it.

The Santa Monica Police Department released Gibbons' name as a courtesy to the public, even though it was not the arresting agency.

Santa Monica Festival 2002 to take place Saturday

By Daily Press staff

An eclectic blend of music, theater, dance, food, craft vendors and workshops will be featured Saturday at Santa Monica Festival 2002.

The city-sponsored gala, entitled "A Celebration of Our Community Roots," will take place from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Clover Park, 2600 Ocean Park Blvd.

The festival highlights the city's cultural resources and the environment. This year's focus is on the numerous non-profit arts organizations in Santa Monica and the contributions they make to "sustaining a healthy ecology," according to a press release.

All events are free and will take place, rain or shine. Parking also is free, though the festival can be reached by Big Blue Bus #8.

For a complete schedule of performances and activities, visit the festival's Website at arts.santa-monica.org/festival.

Innovative arts program receives grants

By Daily Press staff

A program that uses visual arts, writing, theater and dance to teach children history, math, English and science recently received more than \$150,000 in grants that will continue and expand the project.

Called Santa Monica Arts, or SMARTS, in Schools, the program was awarded \$139,000 from the California Arts Council, and \$20,000 from the Grammy Foundation, an arm of the Santa Monica-based National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

The project was "devised as a blueprint to test the assertion that arts education in the school curriculum enhances academic achievement," according to a press release. To that end, professional Santa Monica-based artists are partnered with classroom teachers who together devise ways students can learn core curriculum using the arts.

For instance, during the SMARTS in Schools Spring term, which began April 8 and runs through June 21, kindergarten through fifth graders in some Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District schools learned social studies, math, history and marine biology through the visual arts.

In addition, they were presented history and social skills through theater, earth science and English through dance and English and writing through poetry.

The 18th Street Arts Complex, Santa Monica Playhouse, the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Dancesence and KidPower are some the organizations involved with the project.

Many of the results of these efforts will be on display at Saturday's Santa Monica Festival 2002 at Clover Park.

See NEWS BRIEFS, page 5



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LOCAL

The QLine

Q-LINE, from page 3

renters rights has a strong hold on the city. They do whatever they want. If someone says we have representation now, we don't, we really don't."

■ "Regarding the city council members ... it's sad and I think it's very true that a lot of them have pockets that are very open, and are ready to fill their own personal pockets when money is presented to them. There are a lot of issues that this has happened with, and it probably will continue."

■ "Hell no! The bigger question is, do I feel Veritas is going to equally spread the

power about? Hell no! One reason, the mayor has veto power. The districts are unfairly gerrymandered so that there are five districts that are automatically going to go to renters. I am a renter. But, the mayor now has veto power! He can veto things up to 30 days after the city council makes the decision. This is a dictator's seat. Right now our mayor is a dumb figurehead. I would sure like to elect our own dummy. I will not and cannot be part of allowing the dummy to have veto power and such control. This will only destroy the city and was only set forth as a device to generate money for a very few ignorant losers in this city that continue to lose. Veritas is a bad idea."

Hotel workers, teachers rally in favor of union

LABOR DISPUTE, from page 1

school board resolution.

"The hotel has been pretty intimidating and they have a lot of security guards watch us," said Alex Angel, a pro-union Doubletree worker. "They follow me to the break area and into the restroom, and they try to keep track of who I'm talking to."

Georgene Acosta, a Santa Monica High School teacher who helped organize a student protest in support of the union last month, asked the board to intervene in the worker's struggle to unionize.

"Members of the Samohi community are concerned about the alleged behavior of the hotel management," Acosta said. "As a teacher, I am very proud of the students that have come forward and become activists and leaders."

The union filed charges earlier this week with the National Labor Relations Bureau accusing management at the Doubletree of threatening, interrogating and discriminating against employees for trying to organize workers into a union.

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.

According to a report by the union, the 253-room Doubletree paid \$367,029 annual

rent in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 — much less than rent the city of Santa Monica received from the 148-room Pacific Shore Hotel, 1819 Ocean Ave., which is leased under a similar arrangement.

The city has helped unions become established in hotels leased on publicly-owned land.

"The hotel has been pretty intimidating and they have a lot of security guards watch us."

— ALEX ANGEL
Pro-union Doubletree worker

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.

Currently, the Pacific Shore Hotel and The Fairmont Miramar Hotel, 101 Wilshire Blvd., 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 Santa Monica Beach Hotel, 1700 Ocean Ave., and at the Doubletree.

Police educate public on motorist-pedestrian laws

STING, from page 1

should look before stepping into traffic.

Several people watched Thursday's sting from in front of their offices, with a few personally thanking officers for their enforcement tactics.

Donna Weather, who works at a law firm on the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Franklin Street, said many of her co-workers cross the street several times a day because the parking garage is on the other side.

"We have so many people in our office who nearly get hit right here," Weather said. "(The motorists) flip us off like it's our fault."

The last scene of a pedestrian sting was 16th Street and Santa Monica Boulevard, where about 10 motorists were given tickets for not yielding to undercover officers. The sting operations are held throughout the city at random, Fabrega said.

"We would be happy if we came to every intersection and no one was pulled over," he said. "That means we are doing our job."

However as it is, many motorists will even change lanes to beat the pedestrian in the crosswalk, Fabrega said.

Dawson said there have been no fatalities yet this year, which could mean enforcement and education programs are working.

LOCAL



Paving the way



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

Workers install paving stones in front of a city parking structure located at 1136 4th St. Initially, the city had installed grass but the turf quickly eroded away and developed large pot holes. The work should be completed by the end of the week.

NEWS BRIEFS

50-family garage sale scheduled for Saturday

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica High School Band Parents' Association will hold a 50-family garage sale Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at John Adams Middle School, located at the corner of 16th Street and Pearl Street.

Proceeds will benefit the Samohi band. For more information, call Judi Bloom at 310-451-5260 or 310-749-6412.

Council positive toward naming library for King

LIBRARY, from page 1

creating a new main library building — the city council voted to name one of its new buildings after King, who was assassinated in 1968.

"This is an important juncture," said Councilman Richard Bloom. "The public should take this opportunity to tell the council how they feel about using this naming opportunity."

Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown whole-heartedly endorsed the idea of naming the new library after King.

"When we pursue excellence in education and erect affordable housing, we do Martin's work," he said. "When we fight for a just and true living wage, we do Martin's work."

And state Senator Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica) sent a representative to read a letter endorsing the naming.

"I believe adding Martin Luther King

Jr.'s name to the Santa Monica Library would be a great benefit to the city and to the library," she wrote. "Santa Monica has always been a very progressive, down-to-earth city and I believe adding Martin Luther King's name to the library would surely enhance that perception."

Councilwoman Pam O'Connor said even though King would be a fine choice to name the new library, she thought more names from history should be researched first.

"I think there are many naming opportunities and we should look into all of them," she said.

City manager Susan McCarthy said her department is investigating how other cities go about naming their civic buildings.

"The city is completing a series of ambitious public works projects over roughly the next four years," McCarthy said. "So we are approaching a lively period of naming opportunities."

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STATE

Surfing legends testify in trial against Abercrombie

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Four surfing legends testified during a jury trial that they never gave upscale clothier Abercrombie & Fitch permission to use a 1965 photograph of them in a catalog.

The New Albany, Ohio-based company had used the picture — taken during the 1965 Makaha International Surf Championship in Hawaii — for its 1999 advertising section entitled “Surf Nekkid,” which featured nude and scantily clad models.

The surfers claim use of the photo caused them shame and embarrassment.

They also allege Abercrombie & Fitch misappropriated their names and likenesses without permission and in violation of California laws against commercial misappropriation.

The case was originally dismissed by U.S. District Judge Manuel Real, but the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals last year reversed the decision and ordered a new trial.

Paul Kalakimau Strauch Jr., 59, testified he was shocked when he saw the catalog photo.

Strauch said it appeared that he and the other surfers endorsed Abercrombie & Fitch products.

Strauch was among the plaintiffs who filed the original lawsuit against the clothing company in 1999. Other surfers who testified Tuesday were Joey Cabell, 63, of Honolulu, Mike Doyle, 61, of Mexico, and Erik “Kiki” Spangler, 55, of Hawaii. Other plaintiffs include George Downing, Rick Steer, Richard “Buffalo” Keaulana and Ben Aipa.

Joel Smith, an attorney for Abercrombie, said the company didn’t use the photo because of the surfers, but viewed it as a “vintage photo” that fit the catalog’s 1960s theme.

The photo by LeRoy Grannis depicts 12 surfers and the arm of another one. They are wearing numbered T-shirts and shorts as they stand in front of their surfboards on a beach.

Grannis scribbled their names at the bottom of the picture when Abercrombie & Fitch bought it. The photographer said he did not know the photo was going to be used as an advertisement, according to court documents.

Child expelled because mother is a nude dancer

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — A private school has expelled a kindergarten student, saying her mother’s work as a nude dancer clashes with its Christian philosophy.

Christina Silvas, 24, of Rancho Cordova said she took the job as a dancer at Gold Club Centerfolds in part to afford the \$400 monthly tuition at Capital Christian School.

But school officials decided no reason could justify her daughter’s enrollment.

“If you choose to do the wrong thing willfully, then God’s word instructs me as to what my responsibility is,” Rick Cole, the head pastor of Capital Christian Center who made the decision to expel the girl, told the Sacramento Bee.

Silvas, who once worked at the church as a Sunday school teacher, said she thought the church was supposed to accept everyone.

Silvas, who is single, said school administrators called her last week and told her that in response to persistent rumors, a parent went to the club’s Web

site, downloaded pictures of Silvas and showed them to school staff.

Silvas said Cole told her that not only would her 5-year-old daughter be expelled, but also that as long as she strips, neither can attend the church.

Cole said parents are concerned about what their children are being exposed to.

Silvas said her daughter enjoys the school’s daily worship sessions and was looking forward to the end-of-the-year pool party and graduation ceremony. She hasn’t told the girl why she won’t be able to go to school next week.

Silvas said when she enrolled her daughter, she signed a statement that she would abide by the school’s Christian philosophy.

Cole said he told Silvas that if she quit her job, he and the church would forgive her — and even waive tuition for the month of June.

But Silvas said the decision is not so simple.

“I have other expenses besides my daughter’s tuition,” she said. “I am also concerned with providing a comfortable life for my daughter.”

Man who registered poodle to vote charged with fraud

By The Associated Press

LAFAYETTE — A Lafayette man has been charged with voter fraud after registering his toy poodle Barnabas to vote, a move he says was meant to show lax registration oversight.

Doald Miller, 78, has been charged with misdemeanor voter fraud. The Contra Costa County district attorney’s office found out about the stunt after reports about Barnabas being called for jury duty in March.

“The registration process is too easy,” Miller said. “It’s not policed.”

Miller registered Barnabas two years

ago as a Republican, but he never submitted a ballot for the dog.

If convicted, Miller faces up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine. He is scheduled to be arraigned June 10.

The retired shop ironworker admits to breaking the law but says he did it to prove a point.

“I stirred up a hornet’s nest where the hornets were lax,” he said.

But officials say Miller could have used a better method to make his point.

“I believe it causes the general public to lose faith in the system,” said Candy Lopez, assistant registrar for Contra Costa County.

NATIONAL



Relatives of 9-11 victims angry at President Bush

BY DAVID CRARY
AP National Writer

NEW YORK — Some relatives of Sept. 11 victims are seething over revelations that President Bush got advance warnings that Osama bin Laden's terror network might hijack U.S. planes.

"My wife, had she known, would not have taken that flight," said Stephen Push, whose wife of 21 years, Lisa Raines, was killed aboard the hijacked plane that hit the Pentagon.

"It's shameful that they know as much as they did and didn't warn anyone," said Push, of Great Falls, Va. "They put the business interests of the airlines above the lives of the citizens."

Several relatives expressed hope Thursday that the revelations would intensify pressure for a high-powered investigation into possible intelligence and security failures preceding the attacks.

"For the safety of ourselves and our fellow citizens, we want an investigation to make sure something like Sept. 11 never, ever happens again," said Kristin

Breitweiser, whose husband, Ronald, died at the World Trade Center.

She is part of group of Sept. 11 widows from New Jersey who are organizing a rally for victims' families and friends on June 11 at the U.S. Capitol. The purpose is to support a bill introduced by Sens. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., and John McCain, R-Ariz., that would establish a national commission to investigate the attacks.

"I want accountability," Breitweiser said. Breitweiser said she became convinced shortly after the attacks that U.S. authorities mishandled clues that could have helped avert the carnage. She also contended that Bush, if he had received private advance warnings, should have acted more decisively at the first signs of trouble on Sept. 11.

"They said they couldn't connect the dots, but once the dots were connected and the picture was drawn on the morning of 9/11, why did they do nothing?" she asked. "Why was the president allowed to sit for 35 minutes with a group of second graders when this country was under attack?"

Watchdog group declares U.S. beaches safe, clean

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Beaches in 17 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands have been declared safe and clean ahead of the summer season by a nonprofit watchdog group.

Public safety, cleanliness and environmental quality were found adequate at selected beaches in Alabama, California, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin and the Virgin Islands, according to the Clean Beaches Council of Fredericksburg, Va.

"We're seeing marginal improvement" nationally, said Walter McLeod, the council's president, who hopes to incite more interest in coastal environmental issues.

Some 93 million people live in coastal areas of the United States. Ten 10 billion gallons of sewage is disposed of each day through rivers or septic tanks into adjacent coastal waters, said Joan Rose, a senior science fellow on the council and professor of water microbiology at the University of South Florida.

The council for the past three years has evaluated beaches as part of its "Blue Wave" listing based on how well they meet Environmental Protection Agency water quality standards and dozens of other factors such as the frequency of sampling and amount of lifeguards and records-keeping.

Environmental groups say about two-fifths of U.S. waters are still too polluted for swimming, fishing and supporting aquatic life.

Woman accused of stalking Richard Gere pleads guilty

BY SAMUEL MAULL
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — A woman accused of stalking Richard Gere avoided jail Thursday when she pleaded guilty to aggravated harassment, agreed to return home to Germany, and promised to leave the actor alone.

Ursula Reichert-Habbishaw, 51, of Kassell, Germany, left the Manhattan courthouse in tears and collapsed on the sidewalk when she was confronted by news cameras. Her Legal Aid Society lawyer, Peggy Bennett, and an unidentified man took her back into the courthouse and out a rear exit to a waiting auto.

Reichert-Habbishaw, a divorced mother of four children ages 16 to 22, allegedly called or faxed Gere as many as 1,000 times and appeared at his Greenwich Village office at least six times during the

past 14 months.

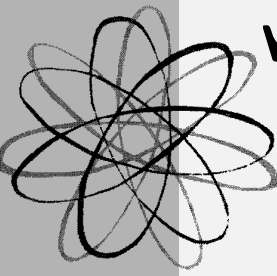
A misdemeanor complaint said she left messages on Gere's voice mail or fax machine, including:

"I want to be with you and share your life," "Death seems to be the best," "I can take a pistol and kill myself," "I will stay with you for all time," and "I will follow you."

Gere's personal assistant, Karen Klose, repeatedly told the woman to stop calling, the complaint said. Police arrested the woman when she went to the "Unfaithful" star's office on April 30.

After Reichert-Habbishaw admitted making the calls, Criminal Court Judge Gregory Carro sentenced her to a conditional discharge, meaning she was free to go if she agreed to leave the country and leave the 52-year-old actor alone.

Carro warned her that any violation would result in a one-year jail term.



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SPORTS

Hoops-la: Sacramento governs but Lakers rule

BY SUE MANNING
Associated Press Writer

In Cowtown, they are at home on the range. In Tinseltown, the fast lane's the place.
Sacramento and Los Angeles meet in the NBA's Western Conference finals beginning Saturday. The Kings and Lakers are as different as their towns, their moods and their manners.

One team has a royal name, the other has the crown. Sacramento governs, Lakers rule.

To the south, Superman (Shaquille O'Neal) plays basketball while Batman's nemesis, the Joker (Jack Nicholson), watches. Up north, there are no super heroes or villains, but Laverne De Fazio (Penny Marshall) and supermodel Tyra Banks, Chris Webber's special friend, spectate.

One team hails from the home of precious metal, the other from a heavy metal zone. To the north, they found gold in the ground, to the south, they pack platinum in a bottle. One has a fistful of rings, the other has none.

Separated by 350 miles, both cities do have a little religion in their names: Los Angeles means "the angels," Sacramento means "sacrament."

Los Angeles is spread out over 468.7 square miles, home to 3.8 million people, and looks to a sign that says Hollywood on the side of a hill as its most recognizable symbol. Official elevation is 330 feet.

Just a few blocks away from the L.A.'s cluster of downtown skyscrapers sits Staples Center. The Lakers play there, but so have Bruce Springsteen, Paul McCartney, Madonna and U2.

Sacramento, at an elevation of 20 feet, spans 98 square miles and boasts a population of 426,000. The Capitol dome is the city's primary landmark at 219 feet, 11 1/2 inches, although there are several taller office buildings.

Arco Arena is actually outside Sacramento's city limits on redeveloped farmland where Interstate 5 meets

Interstate 80. Tractor pulls and pro wrestling matches help fill the arena in the off-season.

Los Angeles has a 90015 zip and a 213 area code. It also has a 34-8 punch that many believe is the best in basketball. At 7-foot-1 and 315 pounds, a healthy O'Neal is both dominating and nimble in his purple and gold 34 jersey and his Superman tattoos. His sidekick, No. 8 Kobe Bryant is a 23-year-old heartstopper who appears to fly like Spider-Man.

If they aren't playing basketball, you might find them making commercials, movies or records.

The Kings numbers: zip 95834, area code 916. The black and purple realm is ruled by a 21-4 combo in former Laker Vlade Divac and Webber. Divac has the conventional moves of an old-time center — no flash, more flops — but he is one of the best big-man passers

in the game.
Webber adds pizzaz with his unfailing outside shot, the way he runs the court and dunks on the fast break — then showboats.

Lakers fans carry cell phones to games. Kings fans tote cowbells.

Fans retaliated with the tormenting bells a few years back after Lakers coach Phil Jackson first derided Sacramento a cowtown.

The Lakers moved to Los Angeles from Minneapolis in 1960. The Kings moved to Sacramento from Kansas City in 1985.

Real estate developer Jerry Buss bought the Lakers in 1979 for \$67.5 million. His daughter is dating the coach. Nevada casino-owner brothers Joe and Gavin Maloof bought the Kings in 1999 for \$240 million.



National Basketball Association playoff schedule

By The Associated Press

CONFERENCE FINALS — EDT (Best-of-7)

Saturday, May 18

L.A. Lakers at Sacramento, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 19

Boston at New Jersey, 5:30 p.m. Monday, May 20

L.A. Lakers at Sacramento, 9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 21

Boston at New Jersey, 8:30 p.m.

Friday, May 24

Sacramento at L.A. Lakers, 9 p.m.

Saturday, May 25

New Jersey at Boston, 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 26

Sacramento at L.A. Lakers, 5:30 p.m.

Monday, May 27

New Jersey at Boston, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 28

L.A. Lakers at Sacramento, 9 p.m., if necessary

Wednesday, May 29

Boston at New Jersey, 9 p.m., if necessary

Friday, May 31

New Jersey at Boston, TBA, if necessary

Sacramento at L.A. Lakers, TBA, if necessary

Sunday, June 2

Boston at New Jersey, TBA, if necessary

L.A. Lakers at Sacramento, TBA, if necessary

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Liquid Laundry Detergent

200 fl. ounces

\$10.99

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FOLGERS COFFEE
Classic Roast

39 oz. can

\$3.99

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SUAVE Shampoo & Conditioner

Assorted 15 oz.



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INTERNATIONAL



Arafat to hold general elections within six months

BY HADEEL WAHDAN

Associated Press Writer

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Facing pressure from the United States, Europe and his own people, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat agreed Thursday to hold presidential and parliamentary elections within six months.

Arafat's decision came as Palestinian legislators mounted their most high-profile challenge yet to the Palestinian leader, calling for elections within a year and a new Cabinet within 45 days.

Previous attempts to reform Arafat's administration have led to few significant changes, with Arafat ignoring laws passed by parliament as well as decisions by the judiciary. The proposed election would be the first time Arafat faced the voters since he was overwhelmingly elected president of the Palestinian Authority in 1996.

"President Arafat has set a program for reform and changes," said Ahmed Abdel Rahman, secretary general of the Palestinian Cabinet.

"The core of the changes will be conducting general elections in a period that will not exceed four to six months," he

said, adding that Arafat has called for a meeting of the Central Elections Committee within two days.

Israeli officials were skeptical of the proposals.

"What's clear is that any Palestinian leadership would have to, first and foremost, renounce terror as a strategic option," said David Baker, an aide to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. "Until now, terror and the Palestinian Authority have been joined at the hip."

Arafat's decision came amid questions about his popularity among his people. With the Palestinian economy in shambles and society reeling from a crushing Israeli incursion into Palestinian areas, Palestinians were pressing for reforms to an administration widely regarded as corrupt.

In a speech Wednesday to Palestinian legislators, Arafat echoed the calls for reform, but gave no details.

Palestinian legislators quickly put together a reform plan Wednesday that called for elections and a smaller Cabinet and approved it Thursday. Soon afterward, Abdel Rahman announced Arafat's own plans to hold elections.

Legislators from Arafat's Fatah move-

ment had also demanded the creation of the post of prime minister and called for empowering it with the day-to-day operations of the Palestinian Authority. Arafat's proposal made no mention of a prime minister.

The legislators also called for streamlining the Palestinian Authority's eight security services. Arafat's proposal did not address this issue.

Arafat has run the Palestinian territories virtually unchallenged since Israel permitted his return from exile eight years ago. He was elected president in 1996 with 87 percent of the vote against Samiha Khalil, a female social worker in her 70s. Members of his Fatah faction won 50 of the 88 seats.

But pressure on Arafat is growing.

The United States has called on the Palestinians to adopt a constitutional democracy and open their closed, top-down system to counter corruption.

In addition, future U.S. humanitarian aid to the Palestinians will bypass the Palestinian Authority, including \$50 million in aid approved last week by the House Appropriations Committee.

EU foreign and security policy chief

Javier Solana also called for sweeping changes Wednesday. The EU has given the Palestinian Authority \$337 million in aid over the past two years.

Palestinian legislator Hanan Ashrawi said elections should be held on all levels to bring new people into the government.

"All these have to be carried out if we are committed to democracy and democratic representation," she said.

Speaking before Arafat's announcement, legislator Hussam Khader, was pessimistic the Palestinian leader was serious about making meaningful changes.

"Maybe he will change a corrupted Cabinet for another more corrupted Cabinet," he said.

Sharon has urged the United States and other nations to reject Arafat's administration and appoint an interim Palestinian government for a year to carry out reforms, Sharon's foreign policy adviser Danny Ayalon said.

Sharon proposed the new government be established whether or not the Palestinians accept it, the Yediot Ahronot daily reported. "The free world must force this government on the Palestinians," the daily quoted him as saying.

Men arrested in Pearl slaying identify location of body

BY NADEEM AFZAL

Associated Press Writer

KARACHI, Pakistan — Three new suspects in the slaying of Daniel Pearl directed police Thursday to a body they claimed was that of the murdered Wall Street Journal reporter.

Police unearthed the body which had been buried in an open field in a poor neighborhood on the Western edge of Karachi. The body was kept at the site while tests were conducted to determine the identify, said a senior police official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

No details were immediately available about the three new suspects, who were arrested Thursday.

Four Islamic radicals have been on trial since April 22 on charges of murdering and kidnapping Pearl. They have pleaded innocent.

Seven other men suspected of holding Pearl hostage and being involved in the killing were being sought, but police didn't say if the three new suspects were among them.

Pearl was abducted Jan. 23 in Karachi, a southern port city. A gruesome three-minute video was delivered to U.S. officials a month later showing his death.

He was researching Pakistani extremists and their possible links to Richard C. Reid, who was arrested in December on a flight from Paris to Miami with explosives in his shoes.

After his disappearance, e-mails with photos of a captive Pearl were sent to foreign and local news publications. They were signed by a previously unknown group demanding better treatment for the suspected Taliban and al-Qaida men being held in Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, Cuba.

U.S. investigators traced the e-mails to

one of the defendants, Fahad Naseem, who in turn identified a British-born militant, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, as the mastermind, police said. Naseem's cousin, Salman Saqib, and former policeman Sheikh Mohammed Adeel are also on trial.

The FBI was called in to assist Pakistan soon after the 38-year-old Pearl was kidnapped.

The court trying the four suspects resumed its hearing Thursday with the cross-examination of two FBI agents by defense attorneys, who claim the video showing Pearl's death is a fake and should not be admitted as evidence.

The trial is closed to reporters, who have to rely on defense attorneys and prosecutors for details of the proceedings.

Defense attorney Rai Bashir said FBI video expert John Falgon admitted during testimony that "such videos can be prepared through computers."

And Bashir said FBI computer expert Ronald Joseph "admitted that all such e-mails can be fed into computers by anyone when the computer is hacked."

The prosecution has called several witnesses to try to make its case that the defendants lured Pearl to the restaurant in Karachi from where he was kidnapped, took photographs of him in captivity and then circulated the photographs and threats via e-mail.

Chief prosecutor Raja Quereshi did not comment on the day's testimony.

Saeed admitted his role in the kidnapping during a pretrial court appearance Feb. 14 but later recanted. His statement is inadmissible at the trial because it was not made under oath.

The court was expected to rule Friday on a prosecution request to send a commission to Europe to obtain a statement from Pearl's widow, Mariane.

Dominican election day



Andres Leighton/Associated Press

A Dominican soldier provides security while women wait to cast their ballots at a polling station in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on Thursday. Under Dominican law, women are required to vote in the morning and men in the afternoon to reduce the number of people voting at one time.

Carter meets with opponents of Castro, Cuban government

BY ANITA SNOW

Associated Press Writer

HAVANA — Former President Jimmy Carter, who has already given Cuban dissidents as much domestic publicity as they have ever had, met Thursday with opponents of Fidel Castro's government.

The first to arrive for the meetings, held in the house of a U.N. official, was Vladimiro Roca, who was freed from prison May 5 after nearly five years in prison for demanding changes in Cuba's communist system.

Others included organizers of the Varela Project, who say they gathered 11,020 signatures seeking a national referendum on rights including free speech, free assembly and the ability to open a private business.

Carter used a nationally broadcast speech Tuesday night to mention the Varela Project, suggesting that the world "would look on with admiration" if Cuban leaders had the courage to hold a

debate and vote on the project in their single-party state.

Cuba's communist news media on Thursday printed Carter's comments in full — giving unprecedented attention to dissidents who are generally ignored by government broadcasters and television.

It also included the text of Tuesday night's responses to Carter from Communist Party loyalists such as national student leader Hassan Perez, who charged that the project backers were "tied to a mafia" in the United States.

Cuban leaders commonly accuse dissidents of being hired agents of a hostile government.

On Wednesday, one of the project organizers, Hector Palacios, said his colleagues were "satisfied, because the Cuban people heard about our project."

"I believe that after this visit (by Carter), nothing will be the same for us," Roca said Wednesday.

Carter's visit was to end on Friday.

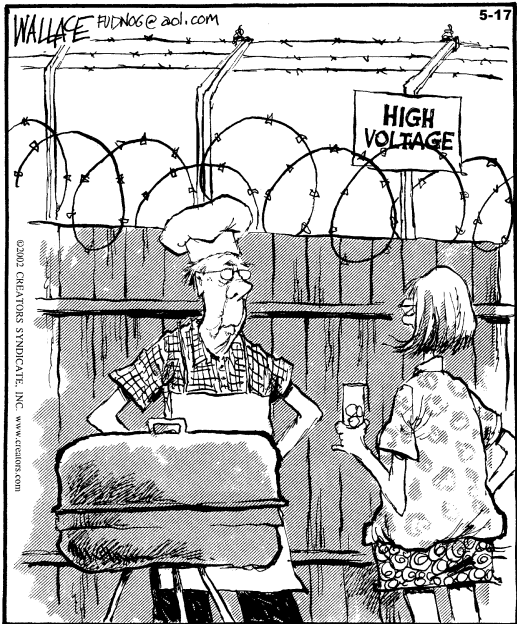


COMICS

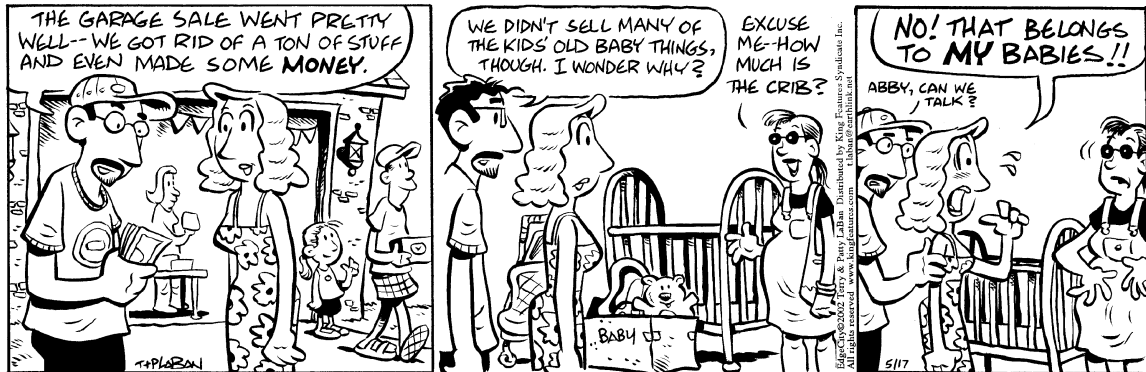
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CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS
- 1 Took care of
 - 6 Boring
 - 11 Hilo hello
 - 12 Verdi creation
 - 13 Blacksmith, at times
 - 14 Words of action
 - 15 Caesar of comedy
 - 16 Haggard book
 - 18 Scrooge cry
 - 19 Stray
 - 20 Damage
 - 21 Compass pt.
 - 22 Hot
 - 24 Jennifer's hubby
 - 25 Improvises
 - 27 Gordie of the NHL
 - 29 Dancer's attire
 - 32 "Once and Again" son
 - 33 "Stand" band
 - 34 Resistance unit
 - 35 Flo's boss
 - 36 French article
 - 37 Refinery need
 - 38 Wall worker
 - 40 Fresh
- DOWN
- 42 Eat away
 - 43 Cager
 - 44 Units of force
 - 45 Uncool sorts
 - 1 Is pert
 - 2 "King of the Trumpet"
 - 3 Alliterative president
 - 4 Common title word
 - 5 Galley workers
 - 6 Imitate a UFO
 - 7 Not closed, to poets

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Yesterday's answer

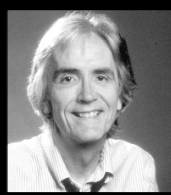
- 8 Alliterative president
- 9 Illinois city
- 10 Prepared potatoes
- 17 Do a board feat
- 23 Whopper
- 24 Whopping
- 26 Maigret's creator
- 27 Finished a skirt
- 28 Noted cow owner
- 30 Bobbin contents
- 31 Reeks
- 33 Old characters
- 39 Horace creation
- 41 Low bill

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5-17

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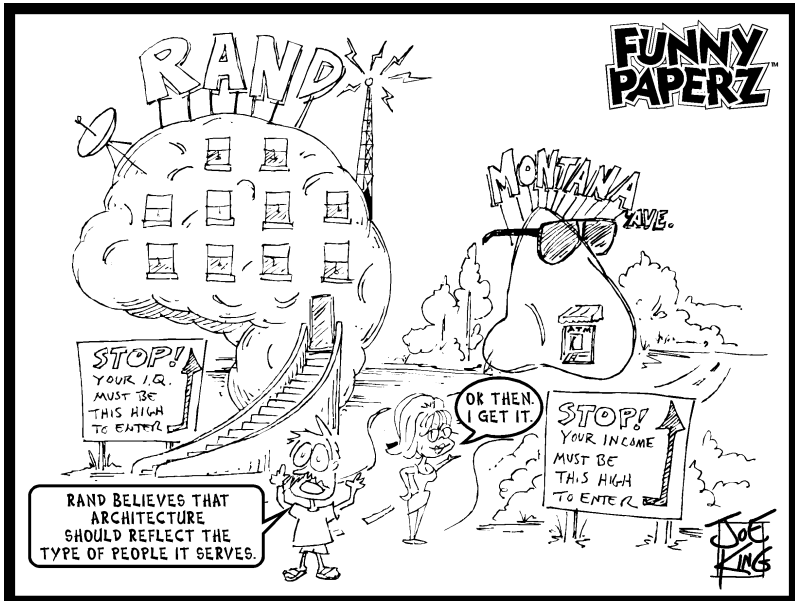


NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Verizon execs get 'bogus' bonuses

According to an April New York Times analysis, Verizon Communications executives, faced with a \$1.4 billion loss last year (a situation which would have denied them performance bonuses), created a \$389 million profit merely by deciding to value the company's pension fund "income" at \$1.8 billion even though the pension fund was actually "swimming in red ink." Securities regulations apparently permit such quixotic valuations provided that they are explained to shareholders (which the executives did in a footnote in the firm's annual report). Thus, though having underperformed on the actual delivery of communications services (according to investors), Verizon executives nevertheless got their performance bonuses.



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BACK PAGE

Fifty-four climbers reach Mount Everest's summit

BY BINAJ GURUBACHARYA

Associated Press Writer

KATMANDU, Nepal — Taking advantage of favorable weather, 54 Westerners and Nepali Sherpa guides scaled Mount Everest on Thursday, mountaineering officials said.

The climbers lined up the narrow path leading to the 29,035-foot summit, the world's tallest peak, with most of them reaching the top in the morning.

They had all begun a final push to the summit Wednesday night from the highest camp on the slopes, said Nepal's Ministry of Tourism, which handles all mountaineering affairs. Most climbers had been boxed in either at base camp or higher level camps for days.

There are 11 teams of about a dozen climbers each, plus Nepali Sherpa guides on the Everest slopes. Most were expected to try for the summit in the next two days.

Among those to scale Everest was Appa, 43, a veteran Sherpa guide who reached the summit for the 12th time, shattering his own record set last year.

Ellen Miller, 43, of Asheville, N.C., climbed the mountain from the southern side, becoming the first American woman to scale the world's highest peak from the northern and southern sides, the tourism ministry said.

Miller had scaled Everest from the northern side last year.

Phil and Susan Ershler of Bellevue, Wash., also reached the summit Thursday, becoming the first couple to climb the highest peaks on each of the world's seven continents

together, according to their spokesman, Dan McConnell.

Also among the climbers were the son and grandson of the pioneers who first scaled Everest 49 years ago.

Sir Edmund Hillary's son, Peter Hillary, 47, and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay's grandson, Tashi Wangchuk Tenzing, 37, were on different teams, but planned to meet at the summit to begin a year of celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the 1953 climb.

Everest has been climbed more than 1,000 times. Authorities say 180 climbers have died on its unpredictable slopes.

The official mountaineering season ends May 31, when the climbers must return to base camp, as monsoon rains make climbing difficult and dangerous.

Mobile fleet of technicians tirelessly checks cell quality

By The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Tim Urton gets some satisfaction out of seeing the Verizon Wireless television pitchman traveling the back roads and repeatedly asking folks back at the office, "Can you hear me now?"

After all, he said, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Urton is one of about 60 drivers who cruise Verizon's service area from Texas to New England in high-tech station wagons outfitted with banks of cell phones and computers.

Every 170 seconds, the phones dial out or receive a call to test the clarity and reliability of the company's service. The process is expensive and time-consuming, but success in the crowded wireless market hinges on the fewest dropped calls and dead spots in the broadest service areas.

"We know we have holes in our system," Urton said. "We know our competitors have holes in their systems. Our job is to get out there and fill the holes."

Despite a growing number of mobile phone users — more than 123 million — and plunging per-minute

prices, wireless service in the United States can be surprisingly mediocre when compared, for example, to the European variety.

According to the J.D. Power and Associates customer survey, the cost per minute for wireless service in the United States has dropped from 56 cents in 1995 to 14 cents last year. In the survey's latest results from last year, more than half the households in the 25 largest U.S. markets had wireless phone service.

Wireless companies are seeing their income per customer drop and the cost of getting and keeping new customers increase, according to J.D. Power and Associates. It put the cost of acquiring each new customer between \$350 and \$475.

Verizon isn't the only company looking for holes. Cingular Wireless based in Atlanta does some of its own testing. "It's part scientific and part burning a lot of tire rubber," spokesman Clay Owen said.

Cingular also uses third-party tester Telephia, a 4-year-old wireless market analysis firm that says it observes 1 billion wireless calls a day on average.

Telephia's research is sold to subscribers and not released to the public, said company spokesman Alex Van Kroh. Owen said Telephia is to the wireless industry what Nielsen ratings are to the television business.

Verizon, the country's No. 1 wireless company with nearly 29 million customers, prefers to use its own people, company spokeswoman Brenda Raney said.

Verizon's high-profile signal testing is also good marketing, says independent industry analyst Jeff Kagan, as it battles to discourage what the industry calls churn — customers changing providers.

Churn can run as high as 30 percent a year and is a big problem for the wireless sector, Kagan said. Customers will leave for as little as \$10 a month savings. But that changes if customers think they are getting a larger coverage area from one provider.

"That's job No. 1, that's the tires on the car," Kagan said.

Most of Verizon's road warriors have engineering experience, but Raney said their enthusiasm for their work sets them apart.

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