



FREE

Santa Monica Daily Press

May 21-22, 2005

A newspaper with issues

Volume 4, Issue 163

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

12 16 25 31 45
Meganumber: 20
Jackpot: \$16 Million

FANTASY 5

1 6 25 29 33

DAILY 3

Daytime: 2 7 3
Evening: 9 1 4

DAILY DERBY

1st: 06 Whirl Win
2nd: 12 Lucky Charms
3rd: 07 Eureka!

RACE TIME: 1:42:35



NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

A New York City jury in January awarded \$450,000 in damages to a professional dancer whose career was ended in 2001 after surgery by Dr. Andrew Feldman at St. Vincent's Hospital. In a pre-op meeting, the dancer described the discomfort in his right knee, and Dr. Feldman wrote a large "X" on the spot of the pain, but 20 minutes later, he mistakenly cut into the man's until-then-healthy left knee.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 141st day of 2005.
There are 224 days left in the year.
This is Armed Forces Day.

On May 21, 1927, Charles A. Lindbergh landed his "Spirit of St. Louis" near Paris, completing the first solo airplane flight across the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1542, Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto died while searching for gold along the Mississippi River.

In 1832, the first Democratic National Convention got under way, in Baltimore.

In 1840, New Zealand was declared a British colony.

In 1881, Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross.

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Homeless liaison's power in question

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

SM AIRPORT — Representatives from nearby cities say they would support a regional homeless leader, but question how the Santa Monica-appointed official would be empowered to affect a regional problem.

Members of the westside Council of Governments homeless issues subcommittee spoke favorably on Friday of the city of Santa Monica's decision to hire a regional homeless leader, while sharing concerns of how the new leadership role would be perceived by surrounding city and county bureaucracies — the support of which they say will be necessary if the new position is to prove successful.

City staff asked COG representatives at the Friday meeting what qualities they would like the person who holds the new person to have.

Besides a show of fundamental interest and support, these homeless issue representatives from Beverly Hills, Culver City and Los Angeles had questions about what the new position would entail.

Natalie Profant Komuro — director of policy and strategic planning for the Los Angeles Homeless Authority, an organization created by the county and city of Los Angeles to address homeless issues — wanted to know how the new position would be empowered to act effectively within the region.

"Would this be a symbolic position, or would this person have control over budgets?" Komuro said. "If

See HOMELESS, page 9

Dog day afternoon



Fabian Lewkowicz/Special to the Daily Press

Friday was graduation day for the inaugural K9 Connection class, a project bringing together dogs and at-risk teens. Ceremonies were staged at John Adams Middle School. The pilot project encourages youths to apply the lessons learned in training homeless shelter dogs to their own lives, developing an awareness of impulsive behavior.

Heavy rains has FD fired up

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

MALIBU — Officials warn the record levels of rain that pummeled southern California this past winter may serve as a catalyst for brush fires.

Los Angeles County Fire Department officials, climatologists and concerned citizens are spreading word that if current weather conditions persist, increased plant growth resulting from the 37.5 inches of rain received in downtown Los Angeles this winter may be a primer for brush fires in rural areas through the fall.

Bill Patzert, a climatologist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, said a variety of recent weather conditions could easily contribute to

brush fires in the Santa Monica and Malibu area in coming months.

"We still have 50 million dead trees in the mountains from the brush fires two years ago," Patzert said. "The bottom line is, if we get Santa Ana's this year, one match and it will all burn."

"Rain" is a four-letter word, and it stands for "fuel."

Patzert explained that the record levels of rain received in Los Angeles County this winter has prompted the growth of plants in outlying rural areas, especially wild grass. The rainy season, which typically lasts through spring, ended early this year — in February — meaning all of this new growth from the rains could easily dry out, a condition that

See FIRE THREAT, page 9

SMFD calls for help, dispatch heads to LA

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Los Angeles will now be handling Santa Monica's calls for firefighter services.

The Santa Monica City Council voted in favor on Tuesday of transferring the city's firefighter dispatch service from its current Santa Monica location to the city of Los Angeles in order to improve service.

The move comes on behalf of Santa Monica Fire Chief Jim Hone, who explained to the council at Tuesday's meeting that an annual 4.5-percent increase in fire calls over the

See 9-1-1, page 9

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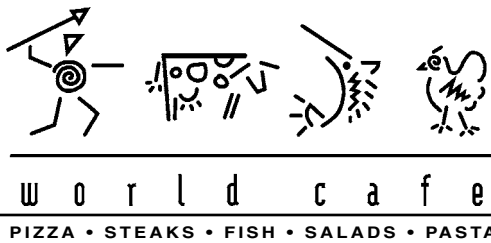
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Santa Monica Daily Press



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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Let others run with the ball. In fact, you might not have a choice. By accepting a passive role, you'll actually enjoy yourself. Others, especially one particular person, let you see how much they care. Relax and enjoy. Others seek you out for your feedback and advice. Tonight: Go along with another's plans.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Take a hint from Aries. You might be delighted by the assortment of invitations and choices. The only mistake you can make is to isolate yourself. You don't agree with everything you hear, nor do you need to! Just weigh others' ideas. Tonight: Where the party is.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Work on relaxing more. Get into a favorite pastime or hobby. Remember, you don't have to do anything at all. Share your plans with someone you care about. Make it OK to be a bit lazy. Everyone needs some downtime. Tonight: Just don't stress out.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Your flirtatious or humorous personality dominates. You have a good time wherever you are. If you are single, you will find lots of new people around you if you pursue a hobby. If you are attached, a child could dominate. Tonight: Spice up the evening.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Don't feel that you have to wander far from home. In fact, a lazy day or two might be just what the doctor ordered. Many of you stay busy with a gardening project or by inviting others over. Do what feels natural. Tonight: Stay close to home.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Breeze out the door and visit with neighbors or friends. Catching up on news could be fun. Separate gossip from news, if you can. Make plans that don't take you far from your neighborhood. Be spontaneous. Tonight: At a favorite spot.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Carefully evaluate an expenditure. You also spend more than usual. Listen well to someone who cares a lot about you. Avoid a tendency to become possessive. Take some downtime to recharge and/or relax. Tonight: Your treat.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ With the Moon in your sign, you can have your way. Notice when you hit an obstacle and how you handle it. Your natural patterns will emerge now. If you are naturally negative, you will be negative. If you are positive, you will be positive. Tonight: Whatever makes you happy.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Know when to lie back. In fact, take the day off and do what you want. Don't force yourself to answer to others. Do what makes you happy. Remember, you don't have to explain everything. Tonight: Vanish.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Plan on being around your friends or where crowds are. Go shopping or to a ballgame. You need people more than you realize. You don't always have control over others, especially right now. Tonight: Where you are, there is a happening.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Whether you need to work or take charge of a situation, you assume a leadership role. You might not want to be so visible, but you don't have a choice right now. Check in on an older relative or friend. Tonight: Out and about.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Schedule a day trip or an outing to somewhere different. You'll relax and gain a new perspective. Learn from other styles and ways. Certainly you aren't always right — there's always a different perspective. Tonight: Let your mind wander.



Santa Monica Daily Press

Published Monday through Saturday

Phone: (310) 458-PRESS (7737) • Fax: (310) 576-9913

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Water usage is up in Santa Monica

By Daily Press staff

Despite this year's near-record rainfall in the southwestern United States, it turns out that the rain fell in the wrong place.

City Hall is encouraging residents in May to cut waste in recognition of "Water Awareness Month," because all the watersheds relied upon by several major metropolitan areas — Los Angeles, San Diego, Las Vegas and Phoenix — experienced significantly lower than normal levels of rainfall and snow pack. The Colorado River is below its average, and northern California water supplies — Santa Monica's primary source — also are lower than normal this year, officials said.

The entire region is under increasing pressure to promote water-efficiency and conservation measures, city officials say. Despite City Hall's goal to cut water waste 20 percent by 2010, local usage is up. Daily water use is more than 13 million gallons per day, significantly higher than expected for a city that is 8.3 square miles, officials say. Reaching the 20 percent target will require cutting use to 10 million gallons per day.

In an effort to reach the goal, City Hall is offering residents and businesses several incentive programs, including rebates that range from \$50 to \$2,000 for water-efficient fixtures. Competitive grant funding up to \$20,000 for installation of California-friendly landscapes also is available. And there are a number of water-saving steps that can be implemented at home or office without significant cost, including using a professional car wash that recycles water and checking for and fixing leaks from faucets, showers, toilets and sprinkler systems.

The forces of supply and demand will impose ever-increasing pressures on water resources as a result of forecasted residential, business and tourism growth in the years ahead, officials say. Currently, an individual Santa Monica residents' water use averages 144 gallons a day for things like showering, toilet flushing, laundry, irrigating gardens and car washing. To help people visualize how much water an individual consumes and how much can be saved, 363 bottles of water — the equivalent of 144 gallons — will be on display in the lobby of City Hall throughout May.

Madison Project receives grant for new theater

By Daily Press staff

Arts education in Santa Monica just got a new boost.

The Madison Project of Santa Monica College has received a grant from the Ahmanson Foundation for the construction of its new visual and performing arts center located at 11th Street and Santa Monica Boulevard.

"We are so thrilled to be receiving this most generous gift from the Ahmanson Foundation for the capital campaign of the Madison Project," said its director, Dale Franzen. "Having the support and trust of this very prestigious foundation is crucial to any capital effort for an arts and education project. We are deeply grateful and honored."

The Ahmanson Foundation, incorporated as a private foundation in California in 1952, was established by financier Howard F. Ahmanson and his wife, Dorothy. Its corpus was augmented in later years by his two nephews Robert H. Ahmanson and William H. Ahmanson. The foundation's broad purpose is to administer funds for charitable, scientific, educational, literary, and religious purposes, all for the public welfare, according to officials.

The Madison Project is an arts education and community outreach organization that designs innovative arts education programs for children and adults, and is currently building a 541-seat theater that will feature both student work and professional engagements in music, theater and dance.

The \$30.78 million center, designed by Zecchetto Architects of Santa Monica, is funded with a combination of public and private funds and is scheduled to be completed in early 2007.

Recent productions include 2004's staging of "Brundibar" and the upcoming "Manzanar: An American Story" in June. For more information about the Madison Project, contact Franzen at (310) 434-3430, or visit <http://www.smc.edu/madison>.

See BRIEFS, page 5



SURF REPORT

On Saturday, we're expecting the NW swell to back off a bit, but we should still see sets running chest- to head-high at most west-facing breaks with some overhead sets around standouts. On Sunday, look for some wind swell to form behind this NW'er with 10-12 second periods, with size in the chest- to shoulder-high range for west-facing breaks. Sunday is also when our next SW swell is due, although that isn't saying much.

Write us at alex@smdp.com
and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.

Today the water is:

60°

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	2:40	0.0	1:54	1.4	8:44	3.8	8:17	5.9
SUNDAY	3:18	-0.6	2:26	1.7	9:33	3.8	8:47	6.3
MONDAY	4:00	-1.0	3:00	1.9	10:23	3.7	9:22	6.5
TUESDAY	4:44	-1.3	3:37	2.1	11:16	3.6	10:02	6.6
WEDNESDAY	5:33	-1.4	4:18	2.3	12:14	3.5	10:46	6.5
THURSDAY	6:25	-1.3	5:08	2.6	1:17	3.4	11:36	6.2
FRIDAY	6:57	-1.0	5:29	2.4	1:42	3.1	12:02	6.0

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The Q Line

City Hall is eyeing more than a dozen properties in downtown Santa Monica that could potentially be used for more parking. Tens, if not hundreds of millions of dollars could be spent over the next decade expanding parking opportunities throughout Santa Monica. How to pay for it is the big question.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Are

you willing to pay more for hourly parking to fund more spaces?"

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition. Please try to limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

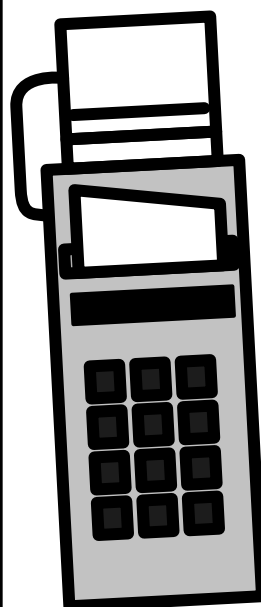


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OPINION

The QLine

CITY RESIDENTS NOT READY TO TAKE A HIKE

This past week, Q-line asked:

Are you willing to pay more for hourly parking to fund more spaces?

Here are your responses:

☉ “It is interesting to note that beach parking lots between the Marina del Rey inlet and Sunset Boulevard remain, with the exception of the weekends, mostly vacant, even through the summer months. Some of this vacancy factor is due to the price of parking. New parking nearer to commercial businesses to facilitate transient parking does not set well with me. As it stands now, parking meters are one-armed bandits, and the bale for a parking citation is obscene and extortive. When enough is more than enough, then it is really enough.”

☉ “Well, it’s about time this city administration is about to do something constructive and forward-looking in regard to the awful parking situation in this city. Perhaps a slight increase in parking fees would be warranted, however one wonders about the real necessity of such an increase given the city’s track record for cavalier and unnecessary spending. More money down the drain? If we stop all the handouts to the increasing vagrant population, we would have quite a useable sum of money for these projects.”

☉ “Yes, I think it’s fine to collect more money for hourly parking, because Santa Monica is a world-renowned place. So yes, let’s get it out of the cars that come here to park.”

☉ “Years ago, the mall merchants paid for the parking structure servicing the mall. Parking was free. Now, it costs to park and City Hall wants us to buy the properties on Fourth Street — an expensive area — and pay for the new parking structures. Why not assess the mall merchants, because they’re not making enough money as it is now? Then, how about if we assess the buildings and properties in the new Santa Monica Place — a train wreck waiting to happen after City Hall adds all of its recommendations? And the reason why we can’t do that is because of all the low-income housing — you won’t get much tax revenue out of them. How about the businesses on Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards or the hotels on Second Street? They provide little parking for customers and hardly any for employees. So the consequences are that we have restricted parking on both sides of Wilshire, and which,

if we are lucky, we can park for \$30 a year two blocks from our homes. Who’s responsible for this mess? It’s not someone making \$100,000 a year in the planning department. No, it’s our progressive city council, who finds it way easier to tax people than to solve the problems that they initiated.”

☉ “I am not willing to pay any more money for parking downtown, or to fund more parking garages. The city has millions of dollars in a redevelopment agency that’s supposed to be used for redeveloping downtown. They should use the redevelopment money to build the parking garages and give the taxpayers of Santa Monica a break.”

☉ “If they didn’t keep building all these high-rises, they wouldn’t have such a parking problem. One other way would be to make the landlords provide parking for all their tenants, since Santa Monica likes to force the landlords to do everything else, they might as well do something useful. If an apartment has three or four cars, there should be a limit. Let them have a certain amount of parking spaces in the building, and after that they have to buy parking permits. If there is more than one car, then they need to pay double for each permit. If they have three cars, then they should pay triple the cost for each permit. That would be one way. They can stop people from driving to Santa Monica all the time — they can take the bus or walk. I haven’t driven into Santa Monica in years because it’s impossible to park. They don’t need

more parking buildings, it’ll just be another place for the bums to use the bathroom in the stairways.”

☉ “Pay more for parking? No way. If the businesses need more for parking, let them subsidize it.”

☉ “In one word, the answer is ‘no.’ No new taxes, no new fees. If the city can’t afford to build it, don’t build it. Stay within the budget as is.”

☉ “No, I do not want to pay more for my hourly parking to fund more parking spaces. I think the city mismanages the money that they have; we have a very wealthy city and they come up with all these harebrained ideas or schemes that they want to get funded when they ignore the basic services that all our citizens deserve. We pay our taxes and we pay more, and we pay more and more. I am fed up with it. City Hall, pay attention, we will vote you out.”

☉ “Since Santa Monica’s Renters Rights has taken over our city, they have sold out renters to commercial development. As you know, most Santa Monica residents don’t shop downtown or on Main Street. Why should we locals suffer from higher parking prices around town to support a giant tourist trap that none of us wanted? Tax the downtown businesses, or let them build their own damn parking.”

Putting away childish things not a good idea



MODERN TIMES

BY LLOYD GARVER

Anyone who knows me or is familiar with this column probably would guess that I follow sports scores a lot more closely than I do art auctions. Nonetheless, one of my favorite recent news stories involved Christie’s, Sotheby’s, and more than \$20 million worth of art. Takashi Hashiyama, president of a Japanese electronics firm couldn’t decide which auction house to use to unload the company’s art collection. Did he ask them to enter a bidding war? Did he split the collection between the two auction houses? Did he ask around to find out which one had the fastest-talking auctioneer? No. He decided to use a decision-making process that kids have been using for generations: rock, paper, scissors.

In case you’ve been living under a rock — or a paper or scissors — in this game,

rock breaks scissors, scissors cuts paper, and paper smothers rock. What I love about Mr. Hashiyama’s decision to use a children’s method to decide the fate of all this art and money is that it was so pure, so fair, and so much more fun than having some MBAs making a bunch of charts based on some fancy theories.

Sotheby’s decided to leave its decision to chance, and had no particular strategy. Christie’s, on the other hand, turned to some experts: the children of their international director of the impressionist and modern art department. The 11-year-old twin daughters immediately told their dad to go with scissors. Their reasoning was that, “Rock is way too obvious, and scissors beats paper.” So, Christie’s chose scissors, Sotheby’s chose paper, scissors “cut” paper and Christie’s got the deal.

Using this method for the art auction deal, there were no kickbacks, no back room deals, no back stabbing. It was just done in a fair and fun way. Maybe playground ethics should be a model for other forms of adult decision-making.

Take international relations. Kids today are taught, “Use your words, don’t

use force.” That’s a nice one for a lot of world leaders to try — at least as a first resort.

And think of all the lives that would have been spared if, instead of waging war every few years, the Germans and French would have just tossed a coin to see who got Alsace-Lorraine. And what would be wrong with the policy of “I’ll show you my nuclear weapons if you show me yours?” And heads of state could play pin the tail on the donkey, with the winners getting to say that their form of government or their religion is the best.

In business, playground rules would be interesting, too. How many of you would be willing to shoot free throws against your boss to determine if you’re going to get a raise? And how about thumb wrestling your colleague to see who gets the corner office? Or racing your competitor around the block to see who gets the prized Noodleman account?

In kid rules, fairness is the most important thing and everyone has to have an equal chance to win. Lying and cheating are bad, telling the truth is good. Sharing is good, bullying is bad. Making up lies

about others is against the rules. Apologizing for doing something wrong is required. It’s all so simple that one wonders why so many adults seem to forget these rules as they move from the classroom to the boardroom or the war room.

But before you ask your senators to try to pass kid rules as the law of the land, remember that it’s a package deal. You can’t just adopt some of the ways kids do things. So, operating under playground ethics, this is what would probably happen if someone were to say, “That wasn’t fair and it wasn’t right when you said Iraq had Weapons of Mass Destruction. And you never even admitted you were wrong or apologized.” Then the culprit would just smile — or smirk — and say, “Hey, I can’t be punished for it. I had my fingers crossed.”

(Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from “Sesame Street” to “Frasier.” He also has read many books, some in hardcover. He can be reached at smdp@lloydgarvermodern-times.com.)



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High-and-dry areas vying for 'inland ports'

BY RONALD D. WHITE

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — The San Joaquin Valley grasslands, miles from the ocean or any navigable river, might seem an odd place to put a port.

But there, along Interstate 5 south of Bakersfield, sits the Tejon Industrial Complex. Resembling a gargantuan freeway rest stop, the sprawling warehouse park calls itself an "inland port" and is one of several ambitious efforts throughout Southern California to relieve chronic congestion at the Los Angeles and Long Beach harbors.

The high desert towns of Victorville, Palmdale and Lancaster are among those similarly trying to position themselves to grab some of the region's growing cargo business and bring in steady jobs.

Right now, inland ports are little more than a regional planning concept in which cargo-processing complexes would hug freeways, rail lines and airports instead of waterways.

Although most of the freight would still flow through the Southern California seaports, recurring logjams would be eased by swiftly moving cargo containers from crowded harbor terminals where the boxes commonly sit for days, proponents say.

Inland communities are attempting to profit from a confluence of shipping trends: The busy ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach have little room to expand; international trade continues to build; the Inland Empire, the destination of choice for warehouses and distribution centers, is becoming increasingly crowded and expensive.

"Five or 10 years ago, there would have been no reason to come up here," said Barry Hibbard, vice president of commercial and industrial marketing for Tejon Ranch, the 162-year-old working ranch in southern Kern and northern Los Angeles counties that is developing a small portion of its 270,000 acres for industry, homes and recreation. "But the advantage we have here now is that the cost of our dirt is not as hard on the tenants. We can offer more storage space and there are no residential neighbors around to complain."

But shipping lines and retailers, among others, are skeptical about the concept, wondering whether it would ease congestion or merely add another step.

"We understand the urgent need to find ways to accommodate the anticipated growth of cargo, and inland ports could well be part of that solution," said Tupper Hull, spokesman for the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, which represents the ocean carriers and terminal operators that move more than 90 percent of the containerized cargo in the United States.

"But the concern is simply that every time you touch a container, the cost and the price of the goods inside goes up. The goal is to touch them as few times as possible."

It doesn't help that there are no U.S. examples big enough to serve as a credible model.

"There is talk and there is smoke but not necessarily much activity," said Peter Hall, a professor at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Canada, who has studied the Southern California ports.

Still, Jon DeCesare of Long Beach-based World Class Logistics Consulting thinks all the talk might be turning into action.

"Inland ports have been talked about for years, but it is becoming more and more important as vessel sizes and trade volumes increase," said DeCesare, whose company has looked at dozens of potential sites for inland ports for clients nationwide. "Southern California is probably where it will happen first because of the volume here."

Many are pinning their hopes on exactly that.

The Southern California Association of Governments pointed to the seaport cargo boom as a way for the region to rebound from the loss of high-quality manufacturing jobs over several years.

In a 2004 report, the association outlined an ambitious proposal for creating inland ports that includes extending the Alameda Rail Corridor and spending \$16.5 billion for two dedicated truck lanes that would reach from the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to the Victor Valley in western San Bernardino County.

The Tejon Industrial Complex's efforts to lure more cargo-dependent tenants to the 1,450-acre development are eagerly supported by Kern County officials, whose constituents are plagued by high seasonal unemployment because of the county's reliance on agriculture. There have been objections too, most notably from environmentalists who want the bulk

of the sprawling Tejon Ranch preserved as open space.

While acknowledging that the site is relatively far from the seaports and lacks rail service, Hibbard said Tejon was becoming more attractive as the Inland Empire has become crowded with warehouses and distribution centers.

"We are going to try to attract everyone in the cargo movement supply chain," Hibbard said.

Situated on the relatively tiny sliver of Tejon Ranch land that straddles the I-5, the complex aims to be a trucker's dream. There are sit-down restaurants and fast-food eateries, a drive-through Starbucks, onsite mechanics, a hotel, laundry services, an arcade, movie theater and even a chiropractor's office.

Its main tenant so far is Swedish home furnishings retailer IKEA, which has nearly 2 million square feet of warehouse space and room outside for 250 to 300 cargo containers. From the Tejon distribution center, IKEA supplies stores in California, the Pacific Northwest and part of Canada.

IKEA moved to Tejon in 2001 to solve several problems, said the company's

North American president, Keith Keller.

Ensnconed in a 400,000-square-foot facility in Ontario, Calif., IKEA was adding stores and needed a facility four times as large, Keller said.

Then, as now, cargo containers arrived at the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports and often sat for days before they were picked up for delivery. Terminals at both ports allow several days of free storage, which exacerbates the chronic congestion there. As the containers pile up, they must be stacked and other containers must be moved to get to the boxes that are finally ready to be delivered.

IKEA wanted to cut through the tie-up by building a warehouse big enough to eliminate the need to use storage at port terminals.

"Time is money, and the situation in Los Angeles and Long Beach is unique," Keller said, given that the ports handle 70 percent of all container traffic moving through West Coast harbors. "When the goods are coming in, companies need to get access to them as soon as possible. We needed to find a solution, and this has worked out really well for us."

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

Judicial independence speaker at SMC

By Daily Press staff

It seems that those in favor of banning the filibuster have met another opponent. The Santa Monica Democratic Club invites all interested persons to hear Susan Lerner speak on "Justice threatened: The impact of the filibuster on the Supreme Court and why we must defend the Independence of our court system."

Lerner has been an activist in progressive, feminist, and pro-choice issues for 25 years. She's also been a trial lawyer for complex commercial litigation and intellectual property for 20 years. She also founded the Committee for Judicial Independence, an organization that believes in and educates Americans on the necessity of an independent federal judiciary and the threat of conservative takeover of the federal courts. She also is the executive director of the California Clean Money Campaign, which works for publicly financed elections.

This event will take place on Wednesday, May 25 at 7 p.m. at Saint Annes' community room, 2017 Colorado Ave.

Admission to the event is free and has free parking. Refreshments will be served, and a question and answer session will follow.

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STATE

Islands off SF form teeming wildlife haven

BY TERENCE CHEA
Associated Press Writer

FARALLON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE — Less than 30 miles from San Francisco, an archipelago of rocky islands rises out of the Pacific Ocean, forming a largely undisturbed wildlife haven that biologists call California's Galapagos.

The public isn't allowed onto the granite islands that make up the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge — the country's largest seabird breeding colony outside Alaska and Hawaii.

But on a rare visit organized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, several journalists saw an ecosystem teeming with life: densely packed colonies of black-and-white murre nesting on steep rocky slopes and Western gulls squawking constantly while defending their brown spotted eggs. A herd of elephant seals lounging in a sandy cove, just out of reach of the great white sharks circling nearby. And passing by in the chilly ocean swells, a gray whale, spouting water high into the air.

"You don't have to go to the Galapagos to see amazing biological diversity and thousands and thousands of animals," said Russ Bradley, a Point Reyes Bird Observatory researcher who monitors seabird breeding on the islands. "It's right on San Francisco's doorstep."

Only a handful of bird researchers and maintenance workers are permitted to set foot on the 211-acre archipelago at any given time. Such restrictions have allowed wildlife to flourish in a predator-free environment at the edge of the continental shelf, where ocean upwellings provide an abundant food source for fish, birds, whales and marine mammals.

Once devastated by hunting and a long military presence, wildlife has rebounded on the Farallones. The four main islands and dozens of craggy outcroppings are home to five species of marine mammals and 12 species of seabirds, totaling 300,000 or 30 percent of California's breeding seabirds.

The islands, which can be seen from San Francisco on clear days, aren't exactly conducive to visitors. Because of stormy seas and steep dropoffs into the ocean, there are no docks. After a rocky 2 1/2-hour boat ride from San Francisco, authorized visitors must approach the main island in a small raft, then get hoisted onto the island by a 30-foot crane.

Visitors are greeted by a deafening chorus of shrieking gulls — so loud that some researchers wear earplugs. A hike to the solar-powered lighthouse on the 350-foot peak of Southeast Farallon Island offers stunning views of the archipelago.

But the best views of thick colonies of nesting murre and cormorants can be had from the sea — and whale-watching boats carrying tourists on daylong trips regularly approach the islands from a safe distance.

Starting next week, the Fish and Wildlife Service will begin seeking public comment on a 15-year conservation plan that will address public access, among other issues. The agency is considering allowing small groups of naturalists to visit, but probably not tourists.

"We're looking for creative ways to increase the public experience of the

refuge without necessarily having them step foot on the islands," said refuge manager Joelle Buffa.

Earlier this year, two senior congressmen proposed legislation that would have opened up the Farallones and two other protected uninhabited islands in the Caribbean to once-a-year visits by nonre-

Visitors are greeted by a deafening chorus of shrieking gulls — so loud that some researchers wear earplugs.

searchers securing special permits.

The bill — sponsored by House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo, R-Calif., and Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va. — raised fierce opposition from biologists who feared even limited public access would threaten the islands' wildlife, and now appears all but dead.

"Public access would have caused disturbances that could have exposed seabird eggs and nestlings to predatory birds and potentially harmed their success at producing their young," said Glenn Olson, executive director of California Audubon Society.

The bill was intended to allow amateur ham radio operators, who compete in broadcasting to and from remote locations, to visit under strict supervision. However, opponents said the language was "vague enough to lead to unfettered access to the general public," said Brian Kennedy, spokesman for the House Resources Committee.

"The members thought it was an innocuous, reasonable thing to do," Kennedy said. "It was a surprise to all that there was this much protest."

Amateur radio operators were disappointed. "It appears to me that they could accommodate visitors on the island within certain guidelines," said Bob Vallio, a ham radio operator in Castro Valley.

While the Farallones are too close to shore to be as biologically unique as Ecuador's Galapagos Islands, scientists here worry that opening the refuge to tourists could disturb skittish nesting birds and the endangered Steller sea lions. In fact, nearly every nook is occupied by animals or nests holding eggs, which can be easily crushed by a visitor's misstep.

Before President Theodore Roosevelt established the refuge in 1909, sealers wiped out 50,000 resident northern fur seals in the early 19th century. The common murre population plummeted during the Gold Rush, when "egggers" collected seabird eggs to sell in San Francisco. And during the 20th century, the military had as many as 70 people living there.

In 1969, access was strictly limited to a small group of researchers who live in two wooden houses that once housed Coast Guard families, and biologists say the island wildlife is healthier than it's been in years.

"It's slowly recovering from the impact of past actions and disturbances," said Buffa. "We're letting nature take its course."

STATE



Governor says election gives power to people

BY TOM CHORNEAU
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — In his strongest terms yet, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger indicated Thursday he would call a special election this fall, saying the magnitude of the changes he is seeking are almost certain to require voter approval.

"We are going to call the special election no matter what. I can guarantee you that," Schwarzenegger said on KFBK-AM in Sacramento. "... I cannot think of a compromise that I can come up with that will make us happy because in order to change the budget one has to literally have the vote of the people. In order to change redistricting the way it is right now, we need a vote of the people."

Schwarzenegger has yet to sign an official proclamation calling for the election and said during the same interview that he remains interested in negotiating with lawmakers.

His spokeswoman, Margita Thompson, said it is still possible that the state could avoid an election, although the options for doing so are dwindling as the mid-June deadline approaches.

"The governor was saying that it looks increasingly likely that the Legislature is not going to come to any agreement," Thompson said. "They've not shown any inclination they want to compromise."

The governor's comments come as his administration and the Democrats who

control the state Legislature embark on a war of words over the need for a special election and the prospects for compromise. Democrats say the issues the governor wants to address could be handled through negotiations or at the ballot box next year, rather than in a special election estimated to cost between \$70 million and \$80 million.

"It's a total waste of \$80 million, when the same issues can be resolved several months later at no extra cost," said Steve Maviglio, spokesman for Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles.

Maviglio noted that the next regular statewide election is scheduled for June 2006.

Schwarzenegger held a round of interviews Thursday with radio stations throughout the state, a method of connecting with the public that he has favored since winning office during the 2003 recall election.

In yet another sign that he is serious about promoting his agenda, Schwarzenegger is due to leave Thursday night or early Friday for an out-of-state fund-raising trip. He is scheduled to attend private Florida events in Tampa, Orlando and Miami on Friday and Saturday, and will visit Chicago and Dallas on Monday. His chief political strategist, Mike Murphy, said the governor and his supporters could spend \$50 million on a special election campaign.

Democrats have criticized

Schwarzenegger's aggressive fundraising, saying he should spend the time negotiating with them instead.

The governor has until mid-June to call a special election on his package of proposed initiatives: increasing the length of time it takes teachers to get tenure; changing the way legislative district boundaries are drawn; and implementing a spending cap.

He dropped earlier proposals to reform the state's pension system and tie teacher pay to merit rather than tenure.

A special election ballot is likely to

include a number of other initiatives, as well, including a requirement that minors notify their parents before getting an abortion and a measure targeting the ability of unions, a staple of Democratic campaign contributions, to raise money from their members.

Since proposing his package in January, Schwarzenegger has urged — sometimes challenged — Democratic leaders to negotiate with him on alternative solutions that may or may not require voter approval.

Counties concerned as projected cost of special election grows

BY BRIAN MELLEY
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — A group representing counties sent a letter to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Thursday asking the state to pay for a special election he wants to call this fall.

The California State Association of Counties asked the governor to help out the fiscally strapped counties that are still recovering from three straight years of statewide elections and the cost of installing new voting equipment required under federal laws.

"The issues have placed escalating financial demands on counties," said James Keene, executive director of the organization.

The 2003 recall election, for example, cost nearly \$55 million, "a fiscal hit that still reverberates through county budgets as they struggle to provide critical services while balancing an array of urgent budget needs," Keene said.

The governor is supporting several ballot initiatives and said he will go to the polls if lawmakers don't negotiate to help him achieve his agenda. Democrats have denounced the move and targeted the estimated \$80 million cost.

Schwarzenegger has not decided whether to call an election so it's premature to discuss whether the state would pay, said spokesman H.D. Palmer.

Counties, which pay their own election costs, want to be reimbursed as they were following a 1993 special election.

Yolo County's Clerk/Recorder Freddie Oakley has protested the prospect of paying an anticipated \$300,000 to prepare for the election, mail out absentee ballots and

open the polls. If the governor won't discuss footing the bill, Oakley said she will only hold a special election under court order.

"The saloon is open and the governor is welcome to belly up to the bar and call for a drink. And he's welcome to pay for it," Oakley said. "I don't want hard working moms and dads making \$10 to \$15 an hour to have to pay for his election."

Yolo County's finances mirror those of other counties around the state. The county furloughed all employees for two weeks without pay at Christmas last year to avoid layoffs.

That move cost the county about \$150,000 to pay sheriff's deputies who protested and won their case in arbitration. A special election would cost the county about twice that much, Oakley said.

Costs per county range from a few thousand dollars in the smallest county to as much as \$10 million in Los Angeles.

While counties unsuccessfully sought reimbursement for the recall election that put Schwarzenegger in office, they said that was held under different circumstances because the citizens called for the vote to oust Gov. Gray Davis.

"I think there's a real distinction between one that is called by the voters," said Conny McCormack, registrar of voters in Los Angeles president of the Californian Association of Clerks and Election Officials. "There is no requirement to call this election."

McCormack's group and the association of counties are asking that if Schwarzenegger calls an election, that it be held Nov. 8, when some counties have local elections planned.

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STATE

Record Hispanic turnout helped elect mayor

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Antonio Villaraigosa was elected mayor with a record 25 percent Hispanic turnout, but his decisive victory over Mayor James Hahn saw him claim significant support across a wide range of demographic and geographic groups, an exit poll found.

The Hispanic turnout, up from 22 percent in the 2001 mayoral election, was influenced by a swell of ethnic pride. When he is sworn in July 1, Villaraigosa will become the first Hispanic mayor since 1872.

But that only begins to explain his 17-point victory over Hahn. The mayor, who defeated Villaraigosa in the 2001 runoff, lost ground across a spectrum of voters compared to four years ago, weakened by an ethics scandal at City Hall and a low-key public image.

Even many of Hahn's supporters expressed reservations about the incumbent, according to a Los Angeles Times

survey of voters leaving polling places. Nearly 60 percent of Hahn's supporters said they considered him the lesser of two evils.

Villaraigosa convincingly captured one of two crucial battlegrounds, the San Fernando Valley, reversing the outcome there from 2001, the poll found. In the other, South Los Angeles, a diverse area with a large black population, Hahn and Villaraigosa split the vote, a sharp contrast from 2001 when Hahn claimed a 2-1 advantage in the area.

Villaraigosa also captured a majority of the vote on the Westside and in central Los Angeles.

"I said from the beginning our goal was to increase participation in every community. The fact that Latinos voted in the numbers that they did is a great thing," Villaraigosa said Thursday at a deli on the Westside.

"The key to America is a strong democracy, and the only way to do that is through participation," he said.

Hahn's victory in 2001 was attributed

to his strong support from blacks and right-tilting valley voters, two groups that deserted him in large numbers this year. Hahn won 80 percent of the black vote in 2001, but the candidates split the black vote on Tuesday.

Some analysts said that in a city with a history of black-Hispanic rivalries, Villaraigosa's ability to pair a large share of the black vote with his Hispanic support, white liberals and others marked a turning point in city politics, forging a new urban alliance.

But others cautioned not to draw too much from a single election.

"It's a beachhead that Villaraigosa made into the black community. It's going to be a real challenging test to make it something that is durable," said Raphael Sonenshein, a political scientist at California State University, Fullerton.

Overall, the mayor-elect had an edge with Hispanics, Democrats, liberals and younger voters. He captured 84 percent of the Hispanic vote.

By contrast, the poll of 3,191 voters

found Hahn slipped even among his core supporters — Republicans, conservatives, Asian-Americans and the elderly.

The exit poll's margin of error was plus or minus 2 percentage points.

The victory by one Democrat over another came more than a decade after Hispanics became the biggest ethnic group in the city. Los Angeles is now 48 percent Hispanic, 31 percent white, 11 percent Asian and 10 percent black.

Sonenshein noted that Hahn was damaged by ongoing corruption probes at City Hall. Additionally, he alienated blacks by supporting the ouster of the city's black police chief in 2002, and turned off white San Fernando Valley voters by opposing the region's unsuccessful secession movement.

For Hahn, "You had a whole network of groups that had a specific gripe and Villaraigosa was an acceptable alternative," Sonenshein said. And with the whiff of scandal at City Hall "voters were reluctant to give him credit for accomplishments because they were alienated and unhappy about the allegations of wrongdoing."

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Witness: Accuser's mom kept from Jackson

BY LINDA DEUTSCH
AP Special Correspondent

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — The mother of Michael Jackson's accuser complained that she and her children were being kept away from the pop star during the time period prosecutors say one of her sons was being molested, the girlfriend of movie star Chris Tucker testified Thursday.

Azja Pryor, a Hollywood casting assistant who has a child by Tucker, said the mother complained to her in early March 2003 that two German associates of Jackson had stepped in to keep her family away.

The time period she cited is critical because prosecutors allege Jackson molested the then-13-year-old accuser between Feb. 20 and March 12, 2003.

When the accuser's mother testified in

the trial she bitterly spoke out against "the Germans" and claimed they were conspiring with Jackson to hold her family captive.

Pryor said the mother "didn't like them. They were rude. They said mean things to her. She didn't care for them at all and they didn't care for her."

"Did she complain about the Germans?" asked Jackson attorney Thomas Mesereau Jr.

"Yes," she said. "I asked, 'Does Michael know anything about this?' She said, 'They won't let us around him because they know the children tug at his heart strings.'"

Pryor said the mother never complained to her about Jackson.

Pryor took the stand after Judge Rodney S. Melville refused to allow the defense to present testimony by CNN's Larry King that attorney Larry Feldman, who once represented the accuser's mother, had told him the mother was "wacko" and out for money.

The judge ruled out testimony by King and another man present at the conversation on grounds they were not able to say the lawyer directly quoted the accuser's mother.

But the judge later handed the defense a victory, allowing the jury to see a video tour of the singer's Neverland ranch.

District Attorney Tom Sneddon vehemently opposed the video, saying much of it was "propaganda." He cited in particular a scene that showed a note written on a chalkboard by one of Jackson's children,

saying "I love you daddy."

The video showed statues and pictures of children at play, amusement park rides, zoo animals, a huge video library including Disney films and hundreds of books including biographies ranging from Elizabeth Taylor to Leonardo da Vinci.

It also showed a crew of smiling maids and other cheerful workers, a lake and fountain, the estate lighted up at night and numerous clocks.

The clock scenes countered testimony by members of the accuser's family that they were not able to keep track of time while allegedly being held against their will by Jackson.

Jackson is charged with conspiring to hold the family captive to get them to make a video to rebut a TV documentary by journalist Martin Bashir in which Jackson said he let children sleep in his bed but that it was non-sexual.

Pryor began her testimony with a few tears, talking about how she met the family at the Laugh Factory club in Hollywood in 2001 when the boy was battling cancer. The owner of the club and comedians there had become involved in fundraising efforts for the family.

Pryor said she and Tucker, who is expected to testify next week, began taking the children places. Tucker took them by private jet to an Oakland Raiders game and invited them to his brother's wedding, she said.

She said the mother, who had become her confidant and talked to her for hours at a time on the phone, never told her that she tried to escape from Neverland.

Stuck in a jam



Fabian Lewkowicz/Special to the Daily Press
Trevor Mosa, on keyboards, jams alongside the band Jah Crew on Thursday at Santa Monica College's Reggae-fest.

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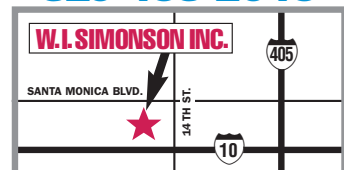
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Alpine Club critical of fee-for-rescue laws

BY DAN ELLIOTT
 Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Three climbers were already dead on Oregon’s Mount Hood when a helicopter coming for survivors crashed and tumbled 1,000 feet down a steep snowfield. The accident, captured on video in horrifying detail, seemed to symbolize the costs and risks of alpine search and rescue.

A new study by the American Alpine Club, however, says such dramatic and dangerous operations are the exception, and argues that state laws allowing climbers to be billed for their own rescues are misguided.

The report, to be released Thursday and provided to The Associated Press, says American mountaineering deaths and injuries are declining, even though the number of climbers is increasing.

Hikers, hunters, boaters and swimmers all require more rescues than climbers, the study says.

The 7,000-member American Alpine Club, based in Golden, Colo., plans to use the report to lobby against fee-for-rescue legislation and to counter negative publicity surrounding spectacular mountain accidents.

"Over the years we’ve come to see a pattern emerge — that after a major climbing accident, there was media coverage that painted climbers as risk-taking daredevils who put tremendous costs on the public and risk on the rescuers,” said Lloyd Athearn, deputy director of the club and author of the study.

He called the 2002 crash on Mount

Hood “exhibit A.”

Three parties of climbers were near the summit of the 11,240-foot peak when the top group tumbled into the others, and nine people plunged into a 25-foot-deep crevasse. Three died and three were seriously injured.

Remarkably, all six crew members survived the crash of the Air Force Reserve helicopter that was attempting to pluck injured survivors from the mountainside.

Five states — California, Hawaii, Idaho, New Hampshire and Oregon — have laws allowing agencies to charge for rescues under certain circumstances. But none of the states has ever billed a climber, Athearn’s study says. Oregon’s law was passed more than six years before the Mount Hood tragedy.

Climbing rescues cost less than many people realize, Athearn said. The military doesn’t charge to help out because it considers the rescues as a training opportunity, and most mountain search and rescue teams are volunteers who don’t expect to be paid.

Their attitude is, “I don’t want somebody’s money because someday they’re going to come and help me,” said Charley Shimanski, a member of the Alpine Rescue Team based in Evergreen, Colo.

The study suggests that charging for rescues could actually worsen the danger for climbers and rescuers because some people might put off calling for help.

Shimanski recalled one Colorado rescue in which the call came in so late that search crews had to grope through darkness to rescue a high-altitude hiker with an injured ankle.

Highlights from report on climbing accidents

By The Associated Press

Highlights from a draft of “Climbing Rescues in America: Reality Does Not Support ‘High-Risk, High-Cost’ Perception,” a report scheduled for release Thursday by the American Alpine Club in Golden, Colo.:

- Climbing deaths peaked in 1976 at 53, according to “Accidents in North American Mountaineering,” the club’s annual compilation. Climbing injuries peaked that same year at 210.
- The number of climbing deaths has remained relatively constant while the number of climbers has risen dramatically.

When the hiker’s wife was told there was no charge, she said, “I wish I’d have known that. I would have called you a lot earlier,” said Shimanski, the education director for the Mountain Rescue Association, which opposes rescue fees.

The Oregon State Sheriffs’ Association supports Oregon’s fee-for-rescue law as a way to reimburse taxpayers for rescuing people who were unprepared or negligent.

“It’s just a tool that’s there. It just doesn’t hurt to have a tool or two in your belt,” said Art Martinak, the group’s executive director.

Athearn also cited humanitarian reasons to make rescues free.

“Someone is in trouble, you help

- In 2003, the National Park Service reported that rock climbing and mountaineering ranked below day hiking, backpacking, motorized and nonmotorized boating and swimming in the number of rescues required.
- Climbing rescues cost somewhat more on average than other types of rescues, but climbers “provide greater volunteer support and pay more directly to offset rescue costs than do virtually all other recreational groups.”
- At Yosemite National Park, a popular climbing destination, climbing rescues cost \$456,000 from 2000 to 2004. Over the same period, day-hiker rescues cost \$762,000 and backpacker rescues \$613,000. Backpacking rescues averaged \$3,800 each; climbing, \$3,100; day hiking, \$1,500.

them,” he said.

Gavin James of Farmington, N.M., who was rescued in January after three frigid nights in the mountains of southwestern Colorado, said he doesn’t believe people should be charged for rescue if they made an honest mistake.

James had skied outside the boundaries of the Durango Mountain Resort and got lost trying to find his way back. He wasn’t billed, but he said he plans to donate “a whole bunch of money” someday to his rescuers.

“From my personal experience, I would have paid any amount of money to get out of the predicament I was in,” he said.



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NATIONAL



Rural Western towns face a grim choice: Grow or die

BY ANGIE WAGNER

Associated Press Writer

CHUGWATER, Wyo. — Take a turn off the main road here, where the constant Wyoming wind blows, and it's almost like entering a faded postcard of Americana. A lonely town hall, a glistening white library and a one-counter post office where no one waits in line.

But Chugwater's main street, with its shuttered businesses and boarded windows, is empty, and the cattle easily outnumber the town's 244 people. Even the River Rocks Steakhouse, once billed as "the most rocking place in Chugwater" is closed.

No grocery store. No traffic. No doctor.

Some worry whether that all adds up to something else: No future.

Here and across the rural West, little towns like Chugwater face big choices: Grow or die. As a population boom sweeps the West, some communities watch their children leave for the cities, their residents age and their towns fall off the map. Others, like Chugwater, feel their rural identities slipping away. They try to hang on to the past, or imagine a future as retirement havens, recreation hubs or suburbs for growing cities.

"It won't be just sort of the ol' cowboy image, the frontier," said William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. "These are going to be sort of suburban cowboys."

"The West is clearly becoming the frontier in a different way now."

A CHILI RECEPTION

Chugwater is just four blocks by seven blocks. It takes longer to get a chocolate milkshake at the soda fountain than it does to walk across town.

You can fill your tank at the gas station at the end of town or grab a bowl of famous Chugwater Chili — the town's claim to fame — but if you're looking for much else, you've probably taken a wrong turn.

"Are ya lost?" a man in a silver pickup truck asks a visitor.

On a recent spring evening, a father pulled his son down the street in a Radio Flyer wagon, the silence broken by a train roaring along the tracks nearby. Kids climbed on the old red caboose parked in a gravel lot, even though they know better. A kitten was stuck on a ledge inside a storefront window of an aging garage and even the mayor tried to figure out how to save it.

"It really has all the stuff you need for a small town," said Lee Marfell, 64, peering out from under his cowboy hat. "Everyone's really quite wonderful."

Chugwater wants the world to know how wonderful it is. And please, bring your kids.

Worried about getting grayer and losing its school some day, the town is offering eight home sites to new residents for \$100 apiece if they agree to build a house and stay at least two years. Preference is given to families.

The program, financed by a grant from the Wyoming Community Development Authority, is generating plenty of interest. Town Clerk Karen Guidice has already sent out more than 100 applications.

"We're going to go down kicking and screaming because we want our town to survive," she said.

Tammie Harris, a single mother of two teenagers in Lander, Wyo., has never even been to Chugwater, but the prospect of owning land for just \$100 was enough for her to apply for a lot. She feels this is her ticket to owning her first home.

"You couldn't ask for anything better," she said. "I don't care if it's out in the middle of Timbuktu. If it's going to be mine, I want it."

Some signs of hope are apparent in this town plopped amid sagebrush and dusty roads under the Wyoming bluffs. The soda fountain is hiring, and the junior class is holding a bake sale to raise money for prom. Around the corner, the junior high and high school track team practiced in the street again; there is no school track.

"Watch out guys!" coach Shelly VanWhy yelled to the runners as the occasional car passed.

Chugwater clearly isn't going to dry up and blow away just yet, but town leaders know too well the cycle that doomed other small towns: young people leave, a main industry is lost, corporate farming and ranching take over and soon the population plunges.

The population here has seesawed since 1960, and actually gained a few people — 52 — from 1990 to 2000.

VanWhy grew up here and always knew she would return. She and her husband just moved back and now have a baby girl.

But she's the exception around here.

Often it's teenagers like Katie Rogers, a 16-year-old sophomore with a long, bouncy ponytail, who threaten small town survival. She loves that she's known everyone here since she was a little girl. But she doesn't plan to return after graduation.

"I kind of want to get away for a while, see how it goes," she said, panting from her sprint with the track team.

Five years ago, young people like Katie were common. Every state had more people under 18 years old than people over 65, census figures show.

But by 2030, 10 states will have more people who are 65 and older, and three of those are in the West — Montana, New Mexico and Wyoming. More than one of every four residents in those states will be 65 and older by then.

That doesn't give small towns much hope for better days to come.

"The communities that are here now, so many of them have the desire to be saved, but again it's going to have to come from within," said Jon Bailey, director of research and analysis for the Center for Rural Affairs in Lyons, Neb.

Chugwater isn't the first town to offer cheap land. Several Midwestern towns have tried so-called "mini-homestead acts." Marquette, Kan.; Kenesaw, Neb.; La Villa, Texas; and New Richland, Minn., have all given away free land.

In Marquette, 23 homes have been built or are under construction, and the population is up more than 100 people from 527 a year ago. The other communities are slowly bringing in new families. Four houses have gone up in Kenesaw; La Villa has seven new ones.

While towns see free land as their saving grace, Frey isn't so sure.

"It's not going to turn a corner for these places," Frey said. "It's just going to slow the drain."

BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD

For all its charm and Norman Rockwell moments, Chugwater got its name from the awful "chug" sound bison made when they hit the ground as Indians drove them off the nearby cliffs.

It's a story of pride around here, and the school mascot is, of course, the buffalo. Rumors often float around that the school, enrollment 92 and the heart of the town, may close, but state and local officials insist Chugwater is safe for now.

The nearby town of Albin wasn't as lucky; it was forced to close grades 7-12 at the end of the 2002-2003 year and students now are bused to other towns.

In communities where everyone shows up for basketball games, the loss of the only high school can be a death sentence.

But for some, the only thing scarier than shrinking is growing. They know that even growth has a price, and small towns have had more of it in the West than elsewhere.

From 1990 to 2003, the growth rate of Western towns with 2,500 people or less was four times the rate for the rest of the country, according to Census Bureau figures. Some of those towns have seen their identities swallowed up by larger neighbors and newcomers who demand city amenities. The transition from ranch town to bedroom community can be painful.

Experts say small communities must maintain infrastructure, schools and local businesses to survive. A one-industry town just doesn't last.

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AP Biotechnology Writer

"We don't have this issue as a priority. We have Iraq and the economy and the price of gas and people aren't thinking of cures for diseases," said Cibelli, a co-author on the scientific paper Hwang published last year disclosing his first cloning success. "The Koreans have the

"I made very clear to Congress that the use of federal money, taxpayer's money, to promote science which destroys life in order to save life _ I'm against that," said Bush, whose administration prohibits federal funding of

"They have put together a very powerful team that is very focused and they have highly trained people," Hall said. "They have very highly trained career technicians. You can't just walk in and create that."

Golf course may turn fairways into condos

Associated Press Writer

Given those scenarios, analysts said, Cedar Links may become one of the first of Oregon's 206 existing golf courses to switch to another use, but it probably won't be the last.

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NATIONAL



Declaration of independence by a more critical First Lady

ABY NEDRA PICKLER

Associated Press Writer

AMMAN, Jordan — Laura Bush is showing her independent side and contradicting the White House.

Newsweek magazine should not be solely blamed for deadly protests in the Middle East, the first lady said Friday. And her husband should have been interrupted to be told about an airplane scare that sent her hurrying for cover in an underground bunker.

Her candid remarks — at the outset of a trip to the Middle East — showed anew Mrs. Bush's willingness to step out more boldly in her husband's second term. Usually deferential to her husband and rarely controversial, she has veered off the White House message only rarely in the past.

But there was no mistaking that her views were at odds with White House officials as she chatted with reporters on her plane as she flew across the Atlantic.

The White House has defended the decision not to stop President Bush on a bike ride last week to tell him of an emergency evacuation that sent thousands of people running from the Capitol and the White House. The scare was triggered by a small plane flying into restricted airspace over Washington. Bush was not informed until he finished his ride in suburban Maryland, about 50 minutes after the evacuation began.

"I think he should have been interrupted," Mrs. Bush declared, hastening to add, "but I'm not going to second-guess the Secret Service that were with him."

Asked about her comment, presidential spokesman Trent Duffy said, "I think the president and the first lady have both said they have full confidence in the Secret Service. He feels that the protocols were followed, he is confident that they were. I don't think that I have anything further."

Mrs. Bush said she hoped her trip would help improve the U.S. image in the Arab world after the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal and the now-retracted Newsweek report that American interrogators desecrated the Quran, the Muslim holy book.

Newsweek at first apologized for its story and then retracted it under heavy pressure from the administration. The White House blamed the magazine's account for triggering anti-American protests in Afghanistan in which police fired on demonstrators and killed about 15 people.

Mrs. Bush said Newsweek can't be held solely responsible for the rioters' violence — her second depar-

"We've had terrible happenings that have really, really hurt our image of the United States. And people in the United States are sick about it."

LAURA BUSH
First Lady

ture from the White House line — even though she considered the report irresponsible.

"In the United States if there's a terrible report, people don't riot and kill other people," she said. "And you can't excuse what they did because of the mistake — you know, you can't blame it all on Newsweek."

Mrs. Bush said the Newsweek report compounded anti-American sentiment stemming from the abuse of Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib. She said that abuse was "not any sort of typical thing from the United States."

"We've had terrible happenings that have really, really hurt our image of the United States," she said. "And people in the United States are sick about it."

Mrs. Bush arrived in Amman late Friday afternoon and had a low-key greeting by Jordan's tourism and antiquities minister and two saluting members of the royal Jordanian guard. Soldiers dressed in camouflage with guns at the ready stood guard along her 25-minute motorcade route into the city.

Mrs. Bush's first public appearance will be Saturday morning at the World Economic Forum, where she will give a speech promoting women's rights.

The first lady said she wants people in the Arab world to know that America is tolerant of people from all religions and that people of all faiths participate in the democracy. She said she will highlight U.S. funding for projects that support childhood education and opportunities for women in the region.

A later stop in Egypt will take her to one place in the region that is struggling to open its democracy. Egypt is allowing multicandidate presidential elections for the first time, though opposition groups say President Hosni Mubarak's ruling party has a say over which independent candidates can run.

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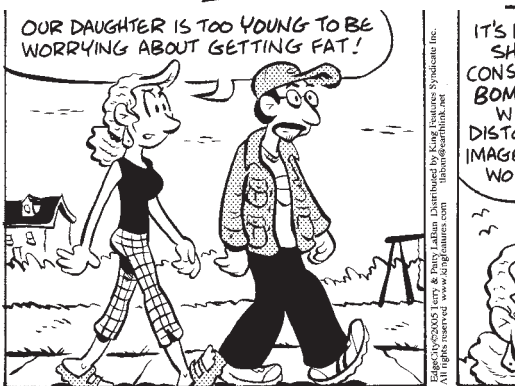
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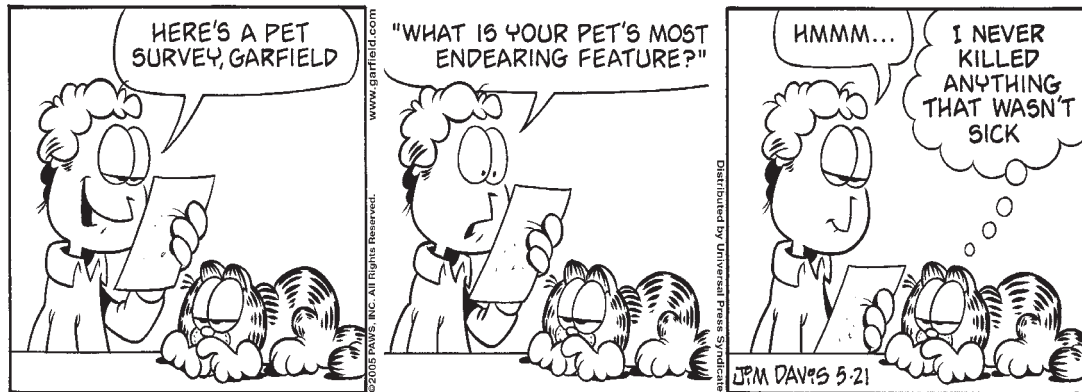
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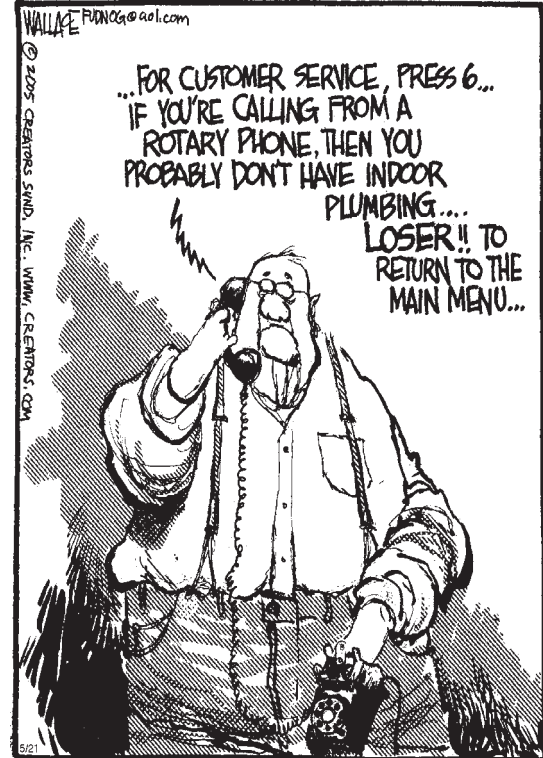


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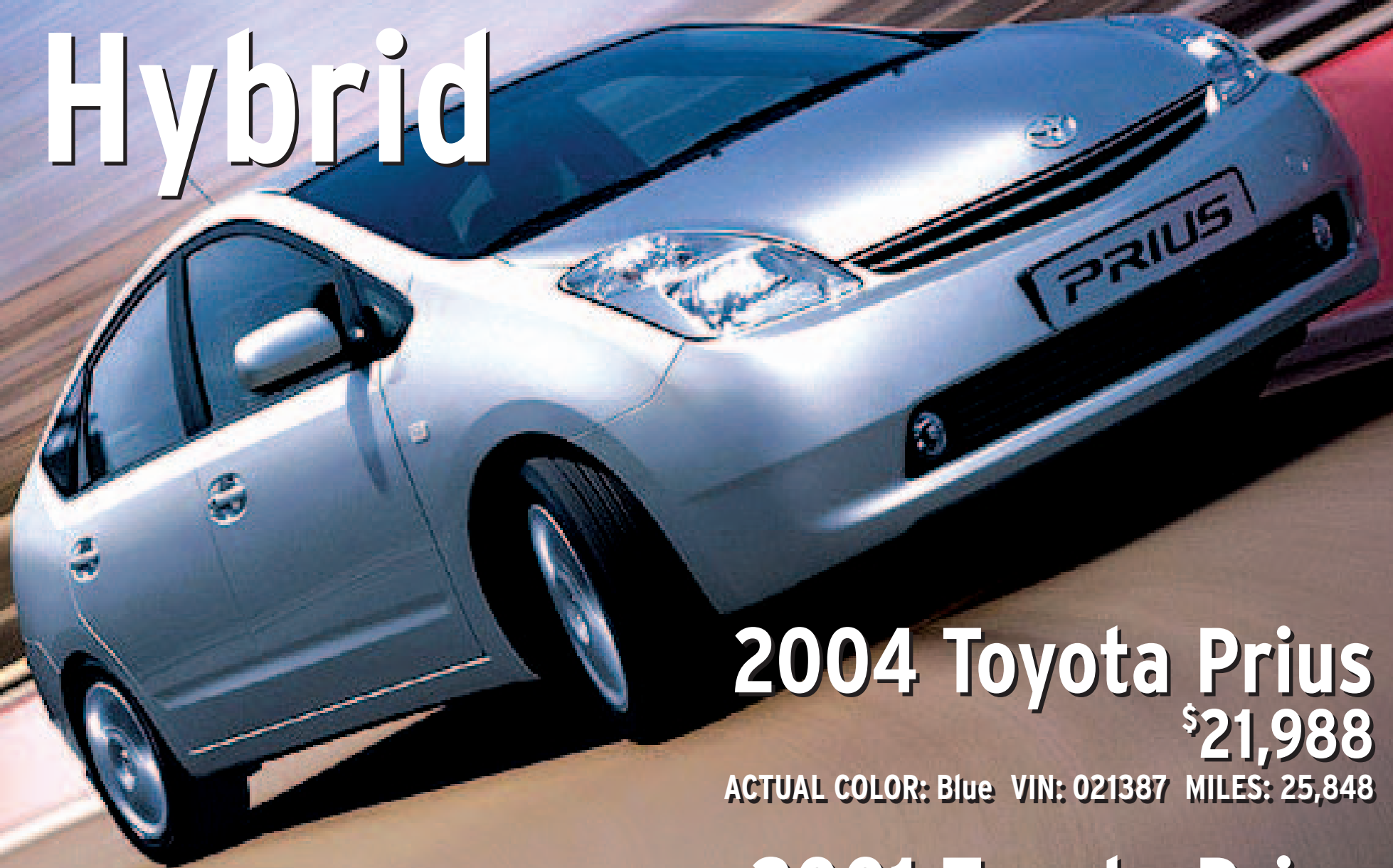
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