

FREE

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2004

Volume 3, Issue 175

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

3 4 12 30 34

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 8 1 3

Evening picks: 3 7 0

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 11 Money Bags

2nd Place: 07 Eureka

3rd Place: 12 Lucky Charms

Race Time: 1:43.98



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

■ Even after it had learned that its chief technology officer's claim of a college computer sciences degree was bogus, the Washington, D.C., Elections Board declined to fire her, reasoning that such a degree was not important to her job (January).

■ In January, a government audit revealed that the district last year had failed to use (and therefore had lost) \$5 million from federal grants for breakfast and lunch programs for low-income children because it could not figure out how to spend it.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

Summer's almost gone
Summer's almost gone
Almost gone,
Yeah it's almost gone
Where will we be?
When the summer's gone?

Jim Morrison
Summer's Almost Gone



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A tangled web



Nicky Five Aces/Special to the Daily Press

Seven-year-old Karaline Rada looks on intently as her cotton candy is prepared Thursday afternoon on the pier. Rada and her family are visiting from Tucson, Ariz.

Interrogation tapes of former NFL player shown

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

LAX COURTHOUSE — Jurors here on Thursday were shown taped recordings of the interrogation of a former NFL player who allegedly set fire to a Santa Monica business in what prosecutors describe as a rage-filled act of revenge.

Anthony Wayne Smith, 36, a defensive end for the Los Angeles and Oakland

Raiders in the 1990s, repeatedly denied responsibility for the February 2003 blaze, which gutted Simply Sofas and Lona Antiques on the 2300 block of Lincoln Boulevard, causing more than \$2 million in damages.

Prosecutors allege Smith ignited the blaze after fighting with the business owner over payment for a handful of

See TRIAL, page 5

SMC candidates endorsed

BY BENNETT TOMLINSON

Special to the Daily Press

SMC — A group formed specifically to alter politics at Santa Monica College has announced it will endorse two candidates they feel will be catalysts for change.

The joint committee known as Santa Monica's Education Team was formed earlier this year to prop up candidates for the upcoming November election on both

the local school district and the SMC level. Committee members announced on Thursday that they will endorse Doug Willis and Susan Aminoff to serve on the SMC Board of Trustees. There are three open seats on the board. Current board member Margaret Quinones is expected to run for re-election.

Aminoff, a 21-year resident of Santa Monica, is a professor of sociology at Los

See SMC, page 6

Samohi coach arrested for unlawful sex

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

SAMOH — A Santa Monica High School coach was arrested Wednesday for allegedly having unlawful sex with a minor.

Michael David Hearn, 37, was arrested for the alleged statutory rape of a student, who school officials say is enrolled outside of the Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District.

"The alleged victim is not or was never in the district," said SMMUSD Superintendent John Deasy.

Santa Monica Police detectives arrested Hearn at Samohi, 601 Pico Blvd., at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday without incident. He also was booked for traffic warrants. His bail was set at \$42,174. He was released from the Santa Monica Jail at 1:30 a.m. Thursday after posting bail, police said.

One count of unlawful sex with a minor was filed against Hearn with the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office on Thursday. Hearn will be arraigned in the next several days.

It's unclear what led authorities to Hearn, but detectives have been on the case for nearly a month.

"The investigation was three weeks long," said SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega.

Hearn is described as a "low-level" assistant football coach and the coach of the junior varsity basketball team at Samohi, said Jeanne Wells, who works in Deasy's office.

Hearn — whom sources said is a community member and reportedly has children who attend schools in Santa Monica — is not a teacher in the district, only a coach.

Hearn is on "home assignment" while the investigation continues, Deasy said, adding he will not be returning to the campus until the matter is resolved. Hearn has been employed in the district for a few years, sources said.

Deasy said he is disturbed and distressed over the arrest. "We need the facts and will help the police department however we can," he said. "I think it is a very unfortunate situation."

Bank robber caught by police

By Daily Press staff

POLICE HDQTRS. — Local police on Wednesday nabbed a Venice man after he allegedly robbed a downtown Santa Monica bank.

Robin Bradley Cook, 38, was arrested by Santa Monica Police four blocks away from where he allegedly held up Citibank, 501 Santa Monica Blvd.

After responding to an armed robbery call at 9:17 a.m., Santa Monica Police officers saw Cook on foot in

See HOLD UP, page 5

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Upcoming Headliners

FRIDAY JUNE 4

Dempsey
Kanan

SATURDAY JUNE 5

Jimmy D Presents
Wicked World (Black Sabbath Tribute)
Bonfire (AC/DC Tribute)
Night Train (Guns & Roses Tribute)

SUNDAY JUNE 6

House of Vibe All Stars



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Scorpio, go to a favorite spot



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)

★★★★ Your take-charge attitude saves the day. You will know when to charge in and when to pull back. Your instincts work overtime, as you will, too! Don't make a big deal about what is happening. Kick back and relax. Tonight: Count on it being a late night.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Reach out for someone at a distance who means a lot to you. Find experts. The unexpected could floor you. Question what a loved one or child is up to. Laugh and enjoy yourself to the max. Tonight: Express your light-heartedness.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Once more, working with others proves to be unduly exciting. You might feel a lot better than many in the midst of unpredictability. Fortunately, you are anchored. Schedule time with a trusted adviser. Tonight: Opt not to be one of the crowd but one of two.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Others seek you out. You might not like all the requests, but on the other hand, you could be quite flattered. Make calls and return all messages. Clear your desk so you can truly enjoy a playful few days. Tonight: Don't be surprised if you're tired.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Surprise of surprises — once more a partner does the unthinkable. You can deal with this matter head-on. Think positively and in terms of both of you benefiting. Review an idea carefully that involves your funds. Sometimes you give way too much of yourself. Tonight: Do for yourself.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ You cannot and will not be suppressed. Understand more of what could happen if you become a little overly enthusiastic. Allow your imagination to flow; just be careful where you direct this energy. Tonight: Now, let go.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Work creates a lot of uproar, as the unexpected comes forward. You deal with matters calmly. Know that whatever goes down, you will wind up in a good spot. At times, you might not see the promise of an upsetting event. Tonight: At home.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Reach out for others, especially if you want to zero in on what you desire. Groups, meetings and networking all point you in a positive direction. Allow greater flow of your ideas and more understanding. Tonight: At your favorite Friday spot.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You might not know which way to go or what needs to happen, and you could feel unduly pressured and not sure what you want to do. Be more in touch with your feelings and what you care about. You glow in public appearances. Tonight: Treat yourself first.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Your smile helps you skip past many issues. You roll through mixed messages, a change in plans or general confusion. Allow greater understanding. Your sense of humor emerges when others' nerves are fried. Tonight: What makes you happy?



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Your intuition flows. Stay in touch with your feelings, knowing what you want. A hunch about money might be right-on, but don't risk anything you cannot afford to lose. Play it conservatively. Clear out extra work, even you must close your door. Tonight: Take some time to yourself.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Quick changes work in your favor, but an identity crisis could still be raging within. You need to follow through on what you want. A flirtation or new friend might not be all you think he or she is. Check this person out. A child could act up. Tonight: Follow your friends.

Santa Monica Daily Press

Published Monday through Saturday

Phone: 310.458.PRESS(7737) • Fax: 310.576.9913

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Learn how to care for others

By Daily Press staff

During these busy times, many people are finding it difficult to find time to take care of themselves, let alone someone else. But it doesn't have to be one or the other.

The Westside Caregivers' conference: "Caring For Yourself As You Care for Your Loved Ones," is a free event dedicated to teaching people how to give care to older people. The event will be held on Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Emeritus College, 1227, Second St.

Co-sponsored by Santa Monica's Older Adult Task Force, in collaboration with numerous community organizations, including UCLA Healthcare, Jackson Federal Bank and Sunrise Assisted Living, the event will feature a resource fair, assistive-technology exhibits, seminars on caregiving topics and professional consultations.

To make reservations, or more information, call 1 (800) 516-5323.

santa-monica.org gets site lift

By Daily Press staff

City Hall has launched a modern new Web site with a revised organization, multiple navigation schemes and new graphics.

The primary navigation menu is organized around the type of user who may be using the site: Visitors, residents, business people, those familiar with the government structure or those looking for a particular service.

There is a new and extensive customer services directory and "City Hall on Call" also is featured on the site, matching online more than 300 informational messages about city services, programs and activities that are available around-the-clock on a telephone-based system by calling (310) 458-8999.

The site also features a wealth of information for those wishing to conduct business in the city. A searchable online business directory lists Santa Monica business license holders organized by category. There is an ample reference section online to assist business owners with information about the business climate, fees, regulations, taxes, special districts, zoning, plus more. There also is an E-pay center at bill-pay.santa-monica.org that enables online payments for utility bills, business licenses, recreation classes and parking citations.

City Hall offers more than 20,000 web pages of information and services online.

Tour the West Adams section of town

By Daily Press staff

Come discover the heart of the West Adams section of Los Angeles by visiting 10 historic properties in Arlington Heights Village. A 1907 church and a 1923 commercial building are among the establishments that have never before been opened to the public.

This self-guided walking/driving tour will take place on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visitors must check in at the Gramercy Housing Group, 1824 4th Ave., at Washington Boulevard. Tickets will be available at the door until 3 p.m. for \$22. For more information, contact HeightsTour@aol.com.

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Santa Monica Daily Press



SURF REPORT

Look for SW swell to hold solid surf on Friday as it mixes with some small NW wind swell. For Northern LA County look for many spots to see surf in the chest- to head-high range, while standout breaks see over-head sets. Spots in the north half of the South Bay also pull in some of the energy in the 3-4-5' range.

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

Today the water is:

68°



LOW TIDES

HIGH TIDES

	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	12:35	1.5	12:07	0.8	6:07	3.7	6:45	5.2
SUNDAY	1:21	0.7	12:46	1.0	7:12	3.8	7:14	5.7
MONDAY	2:05	-0.1	1:24	1.3	8:12	3.9	7:48	6.2
TUESDAY	2:50	-0.9	2:04	1.5	9:08	3.9	8:25	6.7
WEDNESDAY	3:37	-1.4	2:45	1.8	10:04	3.9	9:06	6.9
THURSDAY	4:26	-1.7	3:29	2.0	11:00	3.8	9:50	6.9
FRIDAY	5:17	-1.8	4:17	2.3	12:00	3.8	10:38	6.8

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The Q Line

While pouring over the upcoming year's \$377 million budget, the Santa Monica City Council this week noticed a key expense missing: The living wage.

Council members want to mandate that City Hall workers make a minimum of \$11.50 an hour, and that would include all contractors who have \$25,000 projects or more with the city. The additional cost to City Hall would surpass \$1 million.

City officials already have cut \$2 million from the budget and found ways to increase revenues to close a \$4 million budget short-

fall. Belt tightening is expected for a couple of more years.

So, this week Q-Line wants to know, "Do you think City Hall should pursue a living wage for its employees despite its budget crunch? Why or why not?"

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

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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A case of mistaken identity

Editor:

The congratulatory messages I'm getting about conducting the Santa Monica College Concert Band on Sunday, based on a story in the Daily Press "Politics as unusual at SMC Concert," June 2, page 3), are wholly underserved. The band will be conducted not by me, but by Kevin McKeown.

The other Kevin McKeown and I have both lived in Santa Monica for many years. I was surprised by the giggly teen-age girl admirer messages on my phone machine when Kevin McKeown was a student at Samohi and later drum major for the UCLA Marching Band. I'm sure Kevin McKeown was equally surprised when lawn signs appeared around town six years ago announcing that "he" was running for City Council.

To make our confusion even more confounding, both Kevin McKeown and I currently work for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

Kevin McKeown is an accomplished musician who has conducted many times before, including at the annual SMMUSD "Stairway to the Stars" concert. The pops concert Sunday at Santa Monica College will be a wonderfully enjoyable afternoon due to Kevin McKeown's baton, not mine.

Kevin McKeown
Mayor pro tem
Santa Monica

Petco should be muzzled

Editor:

We at People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) congratulate the honorable Steve Cooley, Los Angeles District Attorney, for his role in forcing Petco to pay more than \$900,000 to settle lawsuits accusing the company of mistreating animals and overcharging customers.

In the past three months alone, PETA has received 204 complaints from Petco customers and employees regarding 179 different Petco stores around the country. Lawsuits against Petco are pending in other municipalities and PETA has filed a complaint with the Securities and Exchange Commission, alleging that Petco failed to disclose animal deaths, customer complaints, and legal actions filed against the company to its stockholders. PETA has also filed a shareholder resolution calling on Petco to stop selling animals.

Petco could better meet the needs of people with companion animals — PETA members included — if it sold only food, toys, and other supplies. Since animal sales make up a small percentage of Petco's annual sales, it is not unreasonable for the company to stop selling them. Until then, animal lovers nationwide should continue to boycott Petco. For more information, please visit PetcoCruelty.com.

Heather Moore
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

Seeing green?

Editor:

I'm wondering what criteria former mayor Denny Zane used when he made his latest claim that Santa Monica was the greenest city in America. We have been in the "sustainable city" mode for about a decade and yet Santa Monica has become ever less pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

While Pico, Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards have become safer for walkers because the medians offer a respite from traffic, cyclists have been dangerously squeezed against parked cars. Two elderly women were killed while in a crosswalk by a woman talking on a cell phone while driving, and yet the city refuses to deal with this issue. In fact, I've seen many city employees, including police doing this very same thing. Numerous studies have shown that this practice is equivalent to driving while drunk in its effect on reaction time. This shouldn't be any surprise given that Santa Monicans For Renters Rights has been driving the city while dangerously self intoxicated for more than two decades. Speaking of dangerous, those picturesque curb extensions on 23rd Street in combination with the medians have made cycling there so downright hazardous that I have been forced to violate the law by riding on the sidewalk. Has anyone measured the greenhouse gasses generated by the vast increase in traffic that City Hall has embraced because of the revenues it generates? Yes, they have embraced all this traffic to the tune of nearly \$100 million for downtown parking. Despite all these and many more contradictions, Denny has managed to turn his political clout into a thriving consultancy. Isn't that how the Republicans operate? Green my butt.

Steven Keats
Santa Monica

A lesson on how to lose an election and offend voters



With elections five months away, my sources on both sides of the political spectrum have told me repeatedly that the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce and the business community is seriously considering backing a man who ran for City Council in 2002 (and lost) as the person they want to build their slate around in the 2004 municipal elections.

Could this be the same candidate who pursued a Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights endorsement in 2002 and was turned down? And who, a source tells me, has hinted he'd "bridge the gap" if endorsed by SMRR this time around?

Is this the same man who supported the living wage in 2002? The same man who campaigned then for more services to the homeless including showers and restrooms on or near the Third Street Promenade? Is this the same man who was, at best, ambivalent about a homeowner historical preservation initiative — something the chamber's current Political Action Committee chair fought long and hard for last year?

In light of shrinking revenues facing City Hall two years ago, could this be the same person who asked for city funding of early childhood development, more programs for seniors and more affordable housing, according to his campaign literature? While he boasts that he's an "independent voice" and has "vision," I still wouldn't think the business community would buy it for a second. The business community backing a SMRR-clone in sheep's clothing? Tell me it isn't so.

Running successfully for City Council takes major backing and lots of money — about \$150,000 or more. There are two players in town with that kind of cash and organization: SMRR with their labor allies, and the Chamber of Commerce and related business interests, including the deep-pocketed tourism industry.

There's a solid roster of SMRRs ranging from seated city council members, school board members, Santa Monica College Trustees and Rent Control Board members to run for office. SMRR is like a baseball club, only they have plenty of political appointees on city boards and

commissions warming up in the bull pen instead of pitchers.

It's like bringing in a kid from the farm club to play in the major league when they support a school board member or college trustee's run for City Council. Or, a hand-picked planning commissioner or Bayside District Corporation director's run for elected office. Many SMRR faithfuls earn name recognition sitting on advisory boards, commissions and task forces while waiting for the "nod" from party leaders.

The opposition is the business community who seems to go out of its way to exclude neighborhood groups, independents, moderates such as myself and unfiliated community activists. Business leaders need to realize that non-SMRR residents outnumber businessmen voting locally by at least 10 to 1. But instead of being inclusive and open, they operate in secret and alienate people. It's why many residents view the chamber as just another special interest clique.

The failure of the business community to unite various non-SMRR factions is a big factor in its inability to win elections. Being unable to identify and capitalize on issues of concern and interest to voting residents is also a big nail in their coffin. Their failure to find and back strong, independent candidates with a history of local political involvement in something else besides school tax increases and fundraising is another strategic error.

An "independent" candidate is not electable without support from SMRR or the business community. Without the ability to mail flyers citywide, operate phone banks and walk precincts, acquire key endorsements or advertise, you're dead in the water. Key endorsements, such as the Peace Officers Association and Firefighters union, are decided in part on whether a candidate can win.

Free candidate profiles in this newspaper and other news media, public political meetings and debates televised on Adelphia Cable reach relatively few voters. Political success in Santa Monica is dependent on blitzing 55,000 politically naive voters over and over again with a message and that takes mucho dinero.

Let's hope the business community wakes up and smells the coffee. Until they learn how to build bridges, they will surely lose, and lose again. In the end, all we'll get is more lousy government unresponsive to resident's needs.

(Bill Bauer is a longtime Santa Monica resident and a freelance writer).

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

CREATE SOME DIALOGUE. YOUR OPINION MATTERS!

Please send letters to: **Santa Monica Daily Press**
Att. Editor: 1427 Third Street Promenade Suite 202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • sack@smdp.com

LOCAL



NFL player expected to take the stand today

TRIAL, from page 1

items he left at the store on consignment. Smith's name and address were found on partially burnt pieces of mail wedged into over-sized water jugs, which were filled with gas and used as fire bombs.

During the interrogation, Smith said it would be stupid for him to start the fire over just a few hundred dollars. As to the evidence against him, Smith said he has shredded all of his mail since his identity was stolen and millions of dollars was spent against his credit.

He had no explanation for the magazines, catalogs and other items bearing his name found in the bomb, which were several years old.

"I'm a college graduate, I'm not dumb enough to throw a fire bomb in a place and put my stuff in it," Smith told Santa Monica Police Department Sgt. Robert Almada in a July 7, 2003 interview. "I don't solve my disputes that way, I don't do it ... Listen, I'm as blown away as you are. I am. I'm blown away."

Michael Houchin, Smith's lawyer, has suggested the documents were picked up by a third party after being mistakenly left by Smith, who was moving out of a storage space at the same time he dropped off some items at Simply Sofas.

Smith also indicated in the taped interviews he would be willing to take a polygraph test, but only on the condition that Almada drop the investigation if he passed the test, something Almada couldn't guarantee.

Throughout the investigation, Smith sounded cooperative and repeatedly said he was willing to answer any question,

though he grew agitated when Almada pressed him on the financial details of his arrangement with Marilyn Nelson, the owner of Simply Sofas and Lona Antiques.

The second interview, filmed July 15, 2003, ended with Smith's arrest.

Prosecutors declined to comment on the interviews, which together lasted about an hour. Houchin said the tapes didn't do much for the prosecution's case because Smith didn't react to repeated prodding.

"He looked OK," he said. "I'd have gotten a little more pissed than that."

Religious leaders from St. Augustine's By-the-Sea, an Episcopalian Church on Fourth Street in downtown Santa Monica, have attended much of the trial. On Thursday, two friends of Smith's were present in the courtroom. Smith was a regular church goer who volunteered his time for several local charities.

Smith and his wife are expected to testify in the trial today, before lawyers make their closing arguments and hand over the case to jurors. If convicted, Smith, who is being held in lieu of \$1 million bail, faces a maximum of nine years behind bars.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Keith Schwartz, who is presiding over the trial, ordered a doctor visit for Smith Thursday night after Houchin said he was suffering from diarrhea and feeling ill. Houchin had asked the judge to delay Smith's testimony until today, adding Smith didn't eat his lunch and wasn't able to articulate when the two discussed the case.

"My concern is what his demeanor may be before a jury," Houchin said. "My concern is that he may not have the best appearance at all."

Suspect convicted of prior bank robbery

HOLD UP, from page 1

the 1300 block of Lincoln Boulevard. He attempted to flee but was contained by officers, police said. Witnesses positively identified Cook as the suspected robber.

Police recovered an undetermined amount of money that Cook was allegedly carrying. Cook was booked at the Santa Monica Jail and charged with bank robbery.

His bail is set at \$100,000. Cook is currently on federal probation for a bank robbery that he committed in Santa Monica in 1997.

Anyone having additional information regarding this incident is encouraged to call the robbery/homicide unit of the Santa Monica Police Department at (310) 458-8451.

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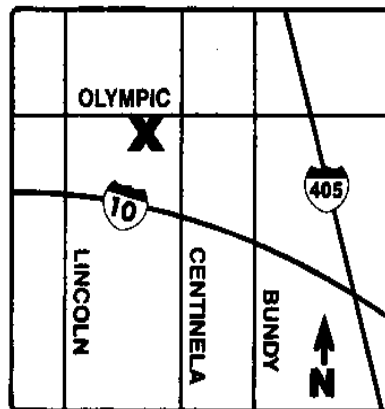
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LOCAL

Candidates picked after ‘round robin’ of questioning

SMC, from page 1

Angeles Pierce College and appointed chairperson of the Joint Labor-Management Benefits Committee whose model she hopes to take with her to the board. This is her first political venture.

Willis, who is on the Santa Monica Rent Control board, has been an accountant at UCLA for 27 years. He is active in local politics.

It’s the first time that endorsements have been made by the SMC Faculty Association and the Santa Monica Malibu Classroom Teachers Association, which are the unions that comprise the team.

The candidates endorsed were selected from a group of qualified applicants derived from questionnaires distributed in May, then subjected to a “round-robin” of targeted questioning, which determined the committee’s final decision.

“It’s vital to have a strong elected board supporting students from kindergarten through high school,” said Lantz Simpson, a professor of English at SMC and president of the SMC Faculty Association. “And we’re pleased that our community’s teachers understand our need for a board of trustees at the college that is responsive to students and faculty.”

It is paramount in the minds of the

team to elect “pro-academic, pro-student, pro-teacher members” who are concerned about specific programs at SMC that provide equal educational opportunity.

Individuals were chosen to respond to the fall-out of several events at SMC this past year, specifically what union officials call the unnecessary elimination of eight programs — fire technology, emergency management, administration of justice, architecture, auto body and auto tech, geographic info services, tourism and hospitality and recreation — which has disproportionately affected the student community, particularly Hispanic males, union officials said.

The removal of the automotive program has been frustrating to most given its role in supplying Santa Monica businesses with employees and recent students with jobs, union officials said.

Willis and Aminoff were endorsed because they showed a strong interest in restoring those programs, team members said.

Although the election is five months away, committee members felt it’s important to deliberate their joint endorsements now and allow themselves enough time to choose appropriate candidates since many school officials will be unavailable during summer vacation.

Graham Pope won’t seek election for SMC board

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica College trustee Graham Pope has announced he will not seek election to keep the seat he has held for the past seven months.

Pope’s seat is one of three open in the Nov. 2 election.

“I have been very appreciative of the support of SMC President Piedad Robertson and fellow board members during my period of service,” Pope said. “I also wish to commend the president and the board for their efforts on behalf of the college and the community at large during these difficult financial times.

“However, increased business commitments and other matters have steered my decision not to seek election,” he said.

Pope — a certified public accountant and business leader with extensive ties to SMC — was appointed Nov. 3, 2003 to the college’s board of trustees for one year to fill the unexpired term of former trustee Patrick Nicholson.

“Graham Pope has been an outstanding trustee whose financial acumen and deep commitment to the college have been great contributions,” Robertson said. “He will be very much missed.”

Long affiliated with the college, Pope was a board member of the SMC Foundation, serving as its president for two years, and was the first chair of the SMC Citizens Bond Oversight Committee, which

GRAHAM POPE

oversees the college’s implementation of Measure U, the 2002 voter-approved bond for facilities.

He also was treasurer of the Measure U campaign committee — a \$160 million bond measure passed by voters. Pope also served on SMC’s 1995 Presidential Search Committee and on the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Budget Advisory Committee. He is a member of the Rotary Club.

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WHAT’S NEW THIS WEEK

REVIEW
MUSIC
Q&A

HARRY POTTER
KATIE MELUA [PAGE 9]
ALFONSO CUARON

WHAT’S PLAYING

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW
Hampered by galumphing human interest stories, but filled with enough edge-of-the-seat action to make it worth the price of admission.

RAISING HELEN
In the wake of a recent spate of similar slush — “Jersey Girl” and “Uptown Girls” come to mind — I offer this: Give it a rest, please.

SAVED!
This cheeky indictment of religious fundamentalism is at times engaging, but suffers from an almost fanatical aversion to subtlety.

BAADASSSSS!
A film that really lives up to its name. Has the raw look and feel that marked the coolest flicks the blaxploitation era had to offer.

SOUL PLANE
The soundtrack kicks, the Cristal flows and crass comedy is in full effect in this urbanized take on the “Airplane” spoofs.

SHREK 2
There are oodles of gut-busting gags for all ages in a sequel that not only does its predecessor proud, but ranks among the funniest animated features ever.

TROY
A spirited throwback to the sprawling war epics of yesteryear. Brad Pitt’s muscular performance as Achilles is nearly unassailable.

BREAKIN’ ALL THE RULES
A mediocre WB sitcom disguised as a big screen sex farce; wastes decent talent on pablum that relies far too heavily on unlikely coincidence and lots of mistaken identity.

COFFEE AND CIGARETTES
A thoughtful collection of eleven deadpan comedic vignettes from indie icon Jim Jarmusch. A black and white gallimaufry of talent and abstraction.

VAN HELSING
The most extortionate B-movie ever produced; a ghoulish goulash of CGI overkill peppered with stilted dialogue and a host of historical inconsistencies.

NEW YORK MINUTE
Girls, boys and — no doubt — dirty old men are invited to Mary-Kate and Ashley’s big screen sexual awakening and, ugh!, is it ever unseemly.

GODSEND
Director Nick Hamm struggles to maintain control over a convoluted story and veteran cast making dubious choices.

LAWS OF ATTRACTION
Offers little in the way of convincing conflict. The script gives character development such short-shrift that even a prodigious talent like Moore struggles to locate her arc.

MEAN GIRLS
Some funny stuff up front, but as things move along, the laughs are harder and harder to come by.

13 GOING ON 30
Has its moments, but is hampered by several conspicuous shortcomings, not the least of which is that it replaces one dubious lifestyle fantasy with another that is just as chancy.

MAN ON FIRE
A by-the-numbers revenge thriller that benefits from strong performances by Denzel Washington, Christopher Walken and Dakota Fanning.

I’M NOT SCARED
Director Gabriele Salvatores enchants and unhinges us in this gorgeous, disturbing reflection on the loss of innocence.

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Emile Hirsch and Elisha Cuthbert bring a genuine vulnerability to their roles and, despite a paucity of previous comedy experience, prove to be quite adept at delivering the laughs.

Warner Bros. gambles on Alfonso Cuaron

Q&A
BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Certainly more than a few eyebrows were raised when Warner Bros. tapped Alfonso Cuarón to direct the third installment of its most popular franchise, “Harry Potter.” Though Cuarón, 42, wowed critics in 2001 with “Y tu mama tambien,” a risqué Mexican indie made for under \$5 million, nothing on his resume suggested he was fitted to helm the \$130 million, kid-friendly spectacular that is “Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban.” Of course, skeptics also abounded back when a virtually unknown New Zealander named Peter Jackson was handed the reigns to “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy, and we all know how that turned out. Expect similar good fortune here, because replacing Chris Columbus (who is still on board as a producer) appears to be an ingenious gambit that has reenergized the “Potter” series (see review this page), and suddenly made Cuarón the town’s hottest filmmaker.

QUESTION: What sort of input, if any, did you get from “Harry Potter” author, J.K. Rowling?
ALFONSO CUARÓN: The first thing she told me was don’t be literal with this book. Be faithful to the spirit of the book, but don’t try to be literal. She has such a great respect for the filmmaking process, and she’s not the type of person who is going to say “I like” or “I dislike.” She would say “that makes sense in this universe” or “that doesn’t make sense.”
Q: Did she hang out on the set?
AC: No, not at all. She’s too busy writing books and being a mom.
Q: Were you surprised at being picked to direct “The Prisoner of Azkaban”?

AC: I was (very) surprised. I’ve done “A Little Princess” before, but my recent movie was a Mexican movie with quite a lot of sex. So in that sense, I think Warner Bros is so courageous. They have the biggest franchise in their history and they handed it to (me).
Q: Can we expect any racy scenes in the director’s cut of “Azkaban?”
AC: (Laughs). Sure, but very quick. Do you have freeze frame in your remote control?
Q: This film is a bit darker than the previous two. Did the studio express any reservations about the shift in tone?
AC: If anything, I was encouraged to go even darker. The amazing thing is, I had such a creative freedom here. In Scotland, we had bad weather and we fell behind in the schedule. I talked to (an executive) at the studio and said in order to catch up, I might cut such-and-such scenes. He told me not to ever think schedule here. He didn’t want me to make any decision that wasn’t a creative one. I was as free doing this movie as I was doing my previous ones, and I feel very lucky.
Q: How much exposure did you have to “Harry Potter” before signing on to make this movie?
AC: I hadn’t read the books, and I hadn’t seen the movies. I knew about Harry Potter, obviously, but for some reason I was not into it. I didn’t know what it was about — I thought it was something really silly.
Q: What changed your impression?
AC: I got the script and read it. Then I read the book, and I thought I better do this. It’s so awesome, and so layered. I don’t care if they are wizards, they have real human emotions. You don’t need to see this just as an adventure, you can see it as a metaphor about racism, classism, power, friendship and loneliness.



Director Cuaron saves the Harry Potter series

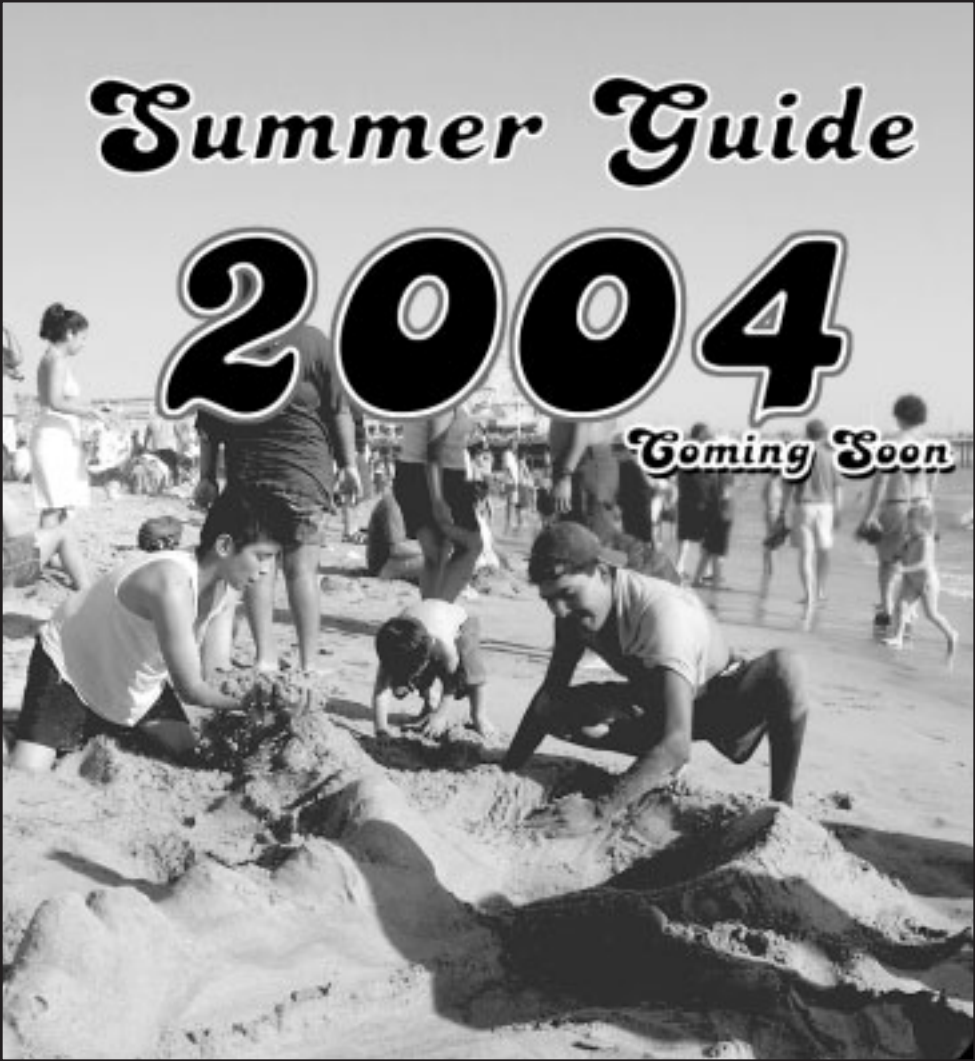
Review
BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Under the direction of Chris Columbus, the first two films based on J.K. Rowling’s literary juggernaut, while technically sound, lacked charisma. Ever conscious of the Potter series’ legion of dedicated young readers, Columbus played it carefully by-the-book, but the soaring spirit of Rowling’s enchanted universe got lost in such strict translation. In what will no doubt go down as one of the more inspired Hollywood hires in recent memory, Warner Bros. handed its lucrative franchise over to little-known Mexican director Alfonso Cuaron (“Y tu mama tambien”) and gave him near-unlimited creative freedom (and \$130 million) to make “The Prisoner of Azkaban.” While a Potter

film is virtually guaranteed to be a financial success regardless of who is at the helm, in allowing Cuaron to explore the story’s dark fringes, the studio netted itself a momentous motion picture that effectively evokes Rowling’s bookish magic. This is a teet on the cash cow they should be proud to milk for all its worth. Cuaron’s adaptation is not only more visually appealing than its forebears, it is decidedly more mature and interesting. Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), Hermione (Emma Watson) and Ron (Rupert Grint), are growing up fast, and with Cuaron leading the way, so too is this series.
As a service to the two or three folks out there who haven’t read the book, here’s what’s happening with Harry: At 13, our hero still isn’t getting any love from his reluctant caretakers, the Dursleys. This

time, however, Harry finally stands up for himself in a very funny opening sequence in which a windbag aunt gets a fitting comeuppance. Harry runs away from home, but is quickly picked up and whisked to safety at the Ministry of Magic. There he learns he’s being pursued by a mysterious and dangerous wizard named Sirius Black (Gary Oldman), the first-ever escapee of Azkaban prison, and that the Hogwarts school will be guarded by terrifying spirits called Dementors. Harry and his pals continue their education in sorcery while learning a thing or two about the unique challenges of young adulthood. There are other plot twists and turns, of course, but space limitations preclude us from detailing them here. Suffice it to say that “The Prisoner of Azkaban” is superior to Potter parts one and two in practically every area. Even the transition from the late, great Richard Harris to Michael Gambon as Dumbledore is seamless. Here’s hoping Mike Newell (“Mona Lisa Smile”), who is currently directing the next Potter flick, picks up where Cuaron leaves off.

(Rated PG for frightening moments, creature violence, and mild language. Running time: 142 minutes)



ENTERTAINMENT



Katie Melua plans to jazz it up in Los Angeles



Review

By Daily Press staff

At 19 years old, musician Katie Melua has done what many musicians can only dream of.

Her album, "Call Off The Search," already has sold 1.2 million copies in the UK alone, stealing the top spot on the charts from Norah Jones. On June 10, Melua brings her bluesy, jazzy, soulful brand of talent to LA at the Roxy in West Hollywood.

Melua, (pronounced mellow-a), was born in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia and grew up with a diverse background of musical influences from Georgian folk music to Queen. Growing up on the Black Sea Coast, Melua described her life in the former soviet republic as "not without a lot of freedoms." Melua moved to Belfast, Northern Ireland, about 10 years ago and finally settled in the

south of London where she attended the Brit school, a music standard famous for developing young talent.

Melua's big break came when London DJ Terry Wogan — who is noted for breaking in the late Eva Cassidy — played her single "The Closest thing to Crazy." Shortly thereafter the switchboards became complete insanity.

With the BBC playing her tunes, Melua was invited to perform for the Queen on the Royal Variety show, the UK's most prestigious annual TV show. The Queen told Melua, "I've heard your record on the radio, it's great isn't it?"

Melua's music is groundbreaking in the modern age of an industry that is highly driven by mass produced, and manufactured lyrics and beats. Her style takes listeners back to a time when mellow blues and heart-felt jazz was the standard. The comparison to Norah Jones can't be helped, although Melua insists on the importance of developing her

own sound. Melua favors "melodies and lyrics that are good without production." She succeeds in her own brand of comfort music with a sultry, soulful edge.

Along with a voice mature beyond her years, Melua's sense of identity and humility is incredible.

"I strongly believe that great artists are artists who are original and talented in their music and performance," she said. "Music should be performed live. It is offensive to the audience if you mime. I always get a warm feeling when I see someone holding a guitar case or a violin case on the street — it's like I know I'd get on well with that person and I always smile or say 'hi.'"

Melua's album "Call Off The Search" is set to be released June 8 by Dramatico/Universal. Doors for the June 10 show at the Roxy are open at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$12.50 and available through the box office at (310) 278-9457.

Thoroughly Modern Millie is thoroughly entertaining

Review

BY CHRIS ALLEN

Special to the Daily Press

The Ahmanson Theatre has done it again with an absolutely fantastic performance with Thoroughly Modern Millie — 2002's most awarded new show on Broadway and the winner of six Tony Awards, including Best Musical, Best Choreography, Best Orchestrations and Best Costume Design.

This bright musical, based on the Richard Morris film of the same name in 1967, has new music and lyrics by Jeanine Tesori and Dick Scanlan. It features songs from the movie, a few 1920s standards, and nine brand new ones by Tesori.

This wildly fun musical is written with style and flair, telling a story of outward appearances and inward intentions. Millie Dillmount, played

wonderfully by Darcie Roberts, is a Midwestern girl looking to be a modern-1920s woman in New York City. She plans to make it big with her modern-vogue ideas of love and money. She meets many great characters on her adventure — many of whom are not what they appear to be. The success of this show is the culmination of fabulous stylized costumes and great choreography that sends us back to the '20s when women had bob cuts and short skirts were just above the knee, and men's accessories included vests and fedoras with a suit.

Michael Mayer directs this production brilliantly. Mayer makes it easy for the audience to follow along with the action so that they don't miss a single moment. Best of all, the audience won't even feel that they are being guided through the production. Instead, they are making this journey on their own.

The dialogue of the show is written with the perfect blend of simple one-liners and character-driven humor. The result is non-stop hilarity and cliff-hanging excitement. Like all great musicals, the songs are catchy, leaving people with melodies that will run through their heads for days until they buy the soundtrack. Let's not leave out the second-most important part of a great musical, the choreography. Millie is stock full of fun, jazzy '20s inspired music with great ensemble and tap numbers that leave you begging for more flapper dresses and pin stripe suits.

This is a show that's great for all ages. Thoroughly Modern Millie is playing at the Ahmanson Theatre in downtown Los Angeles. The performances run through July 25 and you can purchase tickets online at www.taper-ahmanson.com, or by calling the box office (213) 628-2772.

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Defeated Calif. governor crafts image as lovable loser

BY BETH FOUHY
Associated Press Writer

SAN JOSE — “Oh, you’ll appreciate this one,” former California Gov. Gray Davis says of his latest exercise in self-deprecation.

The 61-year-old Davis, still casting about for a career after being booted from office by Arnold Schwarzenegger, appears in a new promotional spot CBS created for advertisers after Janet Jackson’s “wardrobe malfunction” and other network problems. Davis appears commiserating with disgraced baseball star Pete Rose and other down-on-their-luck celebrities.

“You guys think you had a bad year?” Davis tells the group. “I was replaced by the guy who starred in ‘Conan the Barbarian.’”

Last year was most definitely a bad one for Davis, who became just the second governor in U.S. history to be recalled by the voters.

But seven months later, Davis — a career politician known to most voters as a humorless, cardboard-stiff policy wonk — has exploited his own misfortune and crafted a funny new image as a lovable loser.

Davis has joked with Schwarzenegger and Jay Leno on the “Tonight” show and made a cameo appearance on the sitcom “Yes, Dear,” playing himself. He also stars in a series of ads for Yahoo!, saying

“There’s no envy there. I’m grateful for the 30 years I had. It was a long ride. But I didn’t appreciate how much stress I was under. Now, I’m just taking life as it comes.”

— GRAY DAVIS
Ousted California Governor

he can use the search engine to find an agent now that he is out of a job.

“An actor got to be governor; maybe a former governor can go into acting,” Davis quips in the ad.

Yahoo spokeswoman Nissa Anklesaria says: “He was great, really charming, and all the feedback we’ve gotten has been really positive. We’re really happy with it.”

With his foray into comedy, Davis is showing a part of his personality few people got to see before.

“That’s always been a part of me, but I’ve never been able to reveal it,” Davis says, adding that he has hired an agent to field offers. “If people are willing to continue with the self-deprecating tone that I like, then I’d be interested.”

If only he had shown such levity before, says Phil Trounstine, who was

Davis’ communications director and now runs the Survey and Policy Research Institute at San Jose State University.

“Had he demonstrated a lighter touch and a greater sense of the interests of other people while he was governor, we might not have Gov. Schwarzenegger,” Trounstine says.

Davis insists he is not obsessing over his downfall. Publicly stoic, he says that losing his office to Schwarzenegger was part of the rough-and-tumble of politics.

“There’s no envy there,” says Davis, who talks regularly with Schwarzenegger. “I’m grateful for the 30 years I had. It was a long ride. But I didn’t appreciate how much stress I was under. Now, I’m just taking life as it comes.”

That means taking trips with his wife, Sharon, and allowing himself to do some-

thing virtually unheard of in his old life: have fun.

“We went to Napa for four days, and it was so beautiful,” Davis recalls, describing a trip through California’s wine country. “Before, every time I went to Napa Valley, I was always on the phone and my nose was in a speech — I didn’t ever take in all the beauty. But this time we played golf, did some wine tasting, and hung around. It was spectacular.”

Nevertheless, the new Davis looks a lot like the compulsive and workaholic old one. He still favors conservative navy suits and drinks a tofu shake for breakfast each morning; his lean frame reflects the daily 90-minute workout he never misses.

A lawyer by training, he will probably join a law firm or an investment bank in the fall, and may do some teaching on the side. He will be a delegate to the Democratic convention in July and is helping John Kerry rake in contributions across California.

As someone who failed to project much personality to voters, Davis offers some hard-won wisdom to Kerry.

“I think he needs to capture some of the excitement and energy that Howard Dean brought to the campaign,” Davis says. “I would recommend he find a role for Dean. Have him out there actively campaigning.”

Hutchinson touts border security, says program is not at full strength

BY ARTHUR H. ROTSTEIN
Associated Press Writer

ARIVACA, Ariz. — The undersecretary of Homeland Security, Asa Hutchinson, conceded this week that the ambitious Arizona Border Control Initiative hasn’t reached the scale expected by this week. But he said the department remains fully committed to the project.

“This is a work in progress” that is not halfway through its Sept. 30 time frame, he said.

The increased border security, which among other things was expected to add 260 Border Patrol agents, four helicopters and two unmanned surveillance drones, has proven more expensive than first thought when the \$10 million initiative was announced in March.

“The promised investment has been fulfilled and has been exceeded,” Hutchinson said. So far, 110 agents have arrived in the Tucson sector, “and we are

moving to get the rest in place.”

The program is to run through Sept. 30, when Homeland Security officials will determine whether and how it is to continue, he said.

The drones, originally expected to be flying this week, won’t start until at least the end of the month.

Hutchinson said that not enough of the Arizona border is under the Border Patrol’s operational control — a term the agency uses to describe the ability to identify and respond to any border incursion.

Still, he said there have been successes under the initiative already, including disruptions of drop houses used by smugglers to temporarily keep illegal immigrants in transit to other parts of the country.

He also said that Tohono O’odham police officials have reported seeing reductions in the number of smuggling-related abandoned cars and in crimes on the reservation.



Lawmakers sparring over immigrant driving bill

BY JIM WASSERMAN

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Drivers' license applicants from among California's estimated 2 million illegal immigrant adults would have to undergo fingerprinting, background checks and other security measures to ease concerns of opponents including Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, under a new legislative proposal Wednesday.

The latest proposal by Sen. Gil Cedillo, D-Los Angeles — the fourth in two years — is once again triggering a clash with popular opinion in California. Schwarzenegger capitalized on public opposition last fall, campaigning against licensing illegal immigrant drivers and quickly persuading lawmakers to repeal a new law allowing the practice.

The latest attempt would have to pass the Legislature before Aug. 31 and be signed by Schwarzenegger by Sept. 30 to become law. It would require illegal immigrants to pay \$146 for licenses, thereby financing the costs of state and federal background checks and a new system of citizenship classes that recipients would have to attend before having their licenses renewed.

Immigrants would be able to get their drivers' licenses by showing a federal taxpayer identification card or identification cards from their consulates. The bill does not apply to commercial licenses.

But a Schwarzenegger spokesman said Wednesday the newest proposal still falls short, and suggested the senator "may have to show a little more patience politi-

cally." Schwarzenegger promised late last year to work with Cedillo on a new approach, saying he approved of providing licenses to immigrants "the right way."

The newest legislation comes just months after legal licenses for illegal immigrant drivers became a leading issue in the recall campaign against former Gov. Gray Davis.

Davis refused to sign the bill in 2001 and 2002 over security and terrorism concerns, but then signed a drivers license bill in 2003, triggering political accusations that he was pandering to the state's Hispanic voters.

Nationally, 40 states and the District of Columbia require drivers to prove their legal residency before getting licenses, according to the Los Angeles-based National Immigration Law Center. Most of California's neighbors, including Oregon, Washington, Utah and Hawaii, don't have the requirement.

California began demanding proof of legal residency for drivers' licenses in 1994.

Cedillo, flanked by Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton, Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles, and Assemblyman Marco Firebaugh, another Los Angeles Democrat who heads the Legislature's 24-member Latino Caucus, called his new bill a six-month product of focus groups, town hall meetings and polling that "would resolve the issue once and for all."

Backers say drivers' licenses for illegal immigrants will make the state's highways and streets safer as applicants take drivers' tests and become insured. Bratton said Los Angeles has a "very significant problem with hit and run" accidents

where unlicensed drivers flee the scene.

But opponents call licenses a reward for people living illegally in California and maintain terrorists could use a license law to blend into the state.

Bratton called the terrorist arguments unwarranted.

"The idea that we seem to be pushing this thing back because of concerns about terrorism more than anything else, I just don't see it," he said. Under the bill, residents of nations considered by the U.S. Department of State to be state sponsors of international terrorism — including Cuba, Libya and North Korea — would not

be eligible for drivers' licenses.

Bratton also differed with the Schwarzenegger administration over requiring that licenses indicate the holder is not a legal resident of California.

"I think that's very inappropriate," he said. "It harkens back to the era when Jews were required to wear yellow arm-bands. It harkens back to Puritan times in my home state when we branded people with scarlet letters."

Stutzman called the chief's comparisons "absurd and hyperbole. We're talking about granting licenses to undocumented aliens," he said.

Las Vegas area land prices boom at BLM auction

BY KEN RITTER

Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — Prices boomed to nearly \$280,000 an acre at a Bureau of Land Management auction Wednesday, with 2,532 acres of formerly federal land purchased by developers in fast-growing Clark County.

The largest parcel — 1,940 acres in the Henderson hills that received no bids in November — sold for \$557 million to the Focus Group, a southern Nevada developer that is earmarking it for a master-planned community.

"When you sell a piece of property for

half a billion dollars, it's shocking," said Mark Morse, BLM Las Vegas manager. He attributed the spike in land prices — from an average of \$173,245 per acre in November to \$279,298 per acre Wednesday — to a continuing building boom in the Las Vegas area. Las Vegas is in Clark County.

In all, bidders pledged to pay the BLM more than \$707 million for 71 parcels that had been appraised at almost \$310 million. Most parcels were in developing areas northwest and southwest of Las Vegas.

BLM officials said 454 bidders posted deposits ranging from \$10,000 for smaller 1 1/4-acre parcels to \$50 million for the

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Education of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District will conduct a public hearing and adopt a resolution on the matter of a Special Tax (Proposition Y) for 2004-05.

The public hearing will be held on **June 24, 2004 at 8:00 p.m.**, in the Board Room of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District at 1651 16th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404-3891.

Subsequent to the public hearing on **June 24, 2004** at the regularly scheduled meeting, it is the intention of the Board of Education to adopt a resolution to levy the tax at the rate of \$106.52 per parcel, which includes a 2.3% CPI adjustment. The CPI-U for Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, base year 1982-84=100, from April, 2003 through April, 2004, was used to calculate the adjustment.



NATIONAL

Colorado voters asked to take landmark stand on renewable energy

BY JUDITH KOHLER

Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Colorado voters could become the first in the nation to require electricity from renewable energy if a ballot campaign launched Wednesday succeeds at the polls this fall.

The 14 states that have requirements for renewable energy established the standards through legislation or regulations. Similar efforts have died in the Colorado Legislature the last three years.

State House Speaker Lola Spradley, R-Beulah, who sponsored the legislation, said she is optimistic voters will endorse the proposal that she, environmentalists and Colorado farmers and ranchers want to place on the November ballot.

"It's a common sense solution both for industry and consumers," said Spradley, who, along with Rep. Mark Udall, D-Colo., is heading the initiative campaign.

The proposal by the Coloradans for Clean Energy coalition would require utilities with at least 40,000 customers to produce 3 percent of their electricity from renewable energy by 2007, 6 percent by 2011 and 10 percent by 2015. The requirement would apply to seven utilities in Colorado, including Xcel Energy Inc., the state's largest power provider.

Energy sources could include wind and solar power, hydropower and biomass. The coalition says just under 2 percent of the electricity sold in Colorado comes from renewable sources.

Support for renewable energy is strong among residents of eastern plains, where the state's largest wind farm began operating in December and farmers and ranchers supplement their income by leasing

land for wind turbines.

Area ranchers make from \$2,500 to \$6,000 a year from the leases, Spradley said.

"Eastern Colorado needs jobs. Eastern Colorado needs opportunities," she said. "This does it."

The technology exists to harness Colorado's abundant wind and sun power, said David Bowden, president of the Colorado Renewable Energy Society. He acknowledged that gathering 67,820 signatures of registered voters by Aug. 2 to make the ballot "is going to take a great effort."

The group will try to collect about 100,000 signatures in case some are invalidated.

Organizers, though, said a recent survey showed that 75 percent of Coloradans would vote for the plan. The poll in April and May of 603 likely voters by Boulder-based Harstad Strategic Research Inc. had a sampling error of 4 percentage points.

The Rocky Mountain Farmers Union lobbied for the renewable energy bills in the Colorado Legislature, and will vote whether to endorse the initiative. John Stencel, the group's president, expects the union's board to support it.

New Mexico joined the states with a minimum standard for renewable energy in March when Gov. Bill Richardson signed legislation requiring 10 percent of utilities' sales to come from renewable energy by 2011.

Spradley said similar bills failed in Colorado because some lawmakers didn't want to impose mandates on utilities.

"But utilities have an obligation to serve," Spradley said. "They have a franchise and they submit themselves to regulation."

Meteor lights up sky over Western Washington

BY TIM KLASS

Associated Press Writer

SEATTLE — A meteor about the size of a computer monitor lit up the Northwest sky early Thursday morning, setting off sharp booms as it flashed across the sky.

"There was some question as to whether it was a piece of space junk burning up, but it was not," said Geoff Chester, a spokesman for the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C. "People always want to know, was it something we put up there coming down again? As far as I've been able to figure out, it was simply a rock falling out of the sky, as they are wont to do on occasion."

Chester said it was a type of meteor called a bolide, one which appears bright like a fireball in the sky.

Nothing unusual was detected on National Weather Service radar, and authorities also ruled out aircraft problems or military flight tests.

Toby Smith, a University of Washington astronomy lecturer who specializes in meteorites, said the skybursts were report-

ed over a wide area around 2:40 a.m.

Witnesses along a 60-mile swath of the Puget Sound region from the Tacoma area to Whidbey Island and as far as 260 miles to the east said the sky lit up brilliantly, and many reported booms as if from one or more explosions.

Jay Neher, a weather service meteorologist, said the agency's radar on Whidbey Island showed nothing unusual but added that the dish could have been pointed at another part of the sky at the time and could not detect objects above about 20,000 feet.

Civilian pilots reported seeing the flash from Ellensburg, east of the Cascade Range, said an FAA duty officer who did not give her name.

At Whidbey Island Naval Air Station about 40 miles north of Seattle, Petty Officer Andrew Davis said he and others saw the skyburst.

"It made a pretty big bang," Davis said. "We thought it could maybe be a meteorite or something."

In Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, about 260 miles to the east, Dick Haugen said he was driving to work at KVNI Radio when he saw a flash that he took to be lightning about 2:40 a.m.

NATIONAL



Some air tankers could be back in air this summer

BY MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Some large air tankers that were grounded over safety concerns could be back fighting fires this summer if their private operators can prove they are safe to fly, federal officials said this week.

The Forest Service grounded the 33-plane fleet last month because it had no way to tell if the aging planes were safe. But officials said Wednesday they have worked with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop guidelines to assess the planes' airworthiness.

The private companies that operate the military surplus planes will be asked to supply detailed records showing each plane's flight history, maintenance and other information, said Mark Rey, the agriculture undersecretary who oversees the Forest Service.

Once that information is received, the Forest Service will work with the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board to determine what planes can be returned to service, Rey told the Senate

Commerce Committee. Officials canceled \$30 million in contracts for use of the large air tankers last month, citing safety concerns after two planes broke up in midair in 2002, killing five people.

Pressed by lawmakers when the planes could be back in use, Rey said some will probably never return. But others could be returned to service in about 30 days, he said.

"If they have the records, and if the records are adequate, and if the records indicate the planes are airworthy," then some could be returned to service, Rey said, adding: "That's three ifs."

Western lawmakers welcomed the possible return of the air fleet but fretted that bureaucratic delays could cause the planes to miss the crucial summer firefighting season.

"Some faceless little person ... can give us the run-around and we won't get the planes off the ground and put out fires," said Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont.

Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., also was dubious.

"The bottom line is, I have no confidence you have any intention to allow

these tankers to do their job," she told Rey, adding that firefighters in California have complained that the Forest Service underestimates the value of large tankers in suppressing wildfires.

In a lengthy rebuke, Boxer told Rey he did "not exhibit the attitude of a can-do person."

Rey assured Boxer he would put the planes back in the air if they are proven to be safe.

"I will be as can-do as I can be," he said.

Even if the tankers are not restored, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have adequate resources to fight fires this summer, Rey said. The two agencies said Tuesday they plan to add nearly 130 more aircraft to their 700-plane fleet as soon as possible.

Private companies will supply up 48 smaller air tankers, and 71 large and medium-sized helicopters to take up the slack, officials said. Eight military C-130 aircraft also will be used. The extra firefighting help will cost about \$66 million.

Mark Timmons, owner of Neptune

Aviation Services in Missoula, Mont., complained that the Forest Service grounded seven of his planes without warning and without ever visiting his company, which he said keeps extensive records and has a top safety record.

Timmons said he and other aircraft companies cannot afford to miss an entire fire season while government officials decide whether their planes are airworthy.

"These companies don't have the luxury of hanging around for a year, year-and-a-half," he said, noting that many have already laid off employees and are borrowing to meet payroll.

Meanwhile, the Government Accounting Office released a report Wednesday criticizing Forest Service budget practices. The report says the agency repeatedly underestimates the money needed to fight fires, then borrows from other accounts to pay for firefighting.

"Year in and year out, we fight for adequate resources for fighting and preventing wildfires. Year in and year out, those resources are cut out of the budget," said Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore.

Hawaii governor signs bill to increase renewable energy use

BY MATT SEDENSKY

Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU — Gov. Linda Lingle signed legislation Wednesday requiring that 20 percent of all electricity sold in Hawaii come from renewable sources by the year 2020.

Under the new law, Hawaii electric companies must have 8 percent of their net electricity sales come from renewable sources such as solar, wind and wave

power by the end of 2005; 10 percent by Dec. 31, 2010; 15 percent by Dec. 31, 2015, and 20 percent by Dec. 31, 2020.

An estimated 7 percent to 8 percent of Hawaii's electricity is already derived from renewable sources, officials said.

Robbie Alm, a spokesman for Hawaiian Electric Co., the state's largest electricity provider, said the bill would have its challenges, though, because the number of customers and the amount of electricity they use continues to rise,

reducing the proportion from renewable energy.

The Republican governor signed the bill at Hawaiian Electric's fuel cell testing facility, saying it fulfilled a campaign promise. But visibly absent were Democrats who worked on the bill and who said Lingle was taking credit for their success.

"The governor may try to claim it as an administration initiative, but it's something that has been discussed in the

Legislature for the last five years," said Rep. Hermina Morita, chairman of the House Energy and Environmental Protection Committee and one of the bill's sponsors. "It's nothing new."

But she shrugged off the snub, saying: "It's an election year."

Lingle said majority Democrats were more a hindrance than a help in getting the bill passed, and that's why she excluded them from the bill signing.



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NATIONAL

Monumental attractions still draw tourists

BY JOHN K. WILEY

Associated Press Writer

GRAND COULEE DAM, Wash. — It may be considered a fat target for terrorists, but the Grand Coulee Dam, one of the largest concrete structures in the world, is still a magnet for tourists.

Standing 550 feet tall and nearly a mile wide, the dam has the largest power-producing capacity in the United States.

It has been a tourist attraction in north-central Washington State since it was built in the late 1930s, with more than 363,000 people touring the dam's visitor center last year. Tourism industry officials expect as many or more this year.

"I think we're more worried about if it's going to rain this weekend than we are about terrorism," Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce executive Susan Miller said.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, security has been increased at federal hydroelectric dams across the West. But despite warnings and restrictions at dams and other engineering marvels, tourists still come.

Interior Secretary Gale Norton recently announced that portions of the Statue of

Liberty, closed since the 2001 attacks, would reopen to tourists this summer after safety and security upgrades.

Tourists are returning to Hoover Dam on the Colorado River between Arizona and Nevada. Paid visits dropped from 1.2 million to about 850,000 after 2001, spokesman Bob Walsh said. This year, more than 960,000 visitors are expected.

"It's coming back," Walsh said. "As the economy has picked up and tourists return to Las Vegas, ours has gone up accordingly"

Visitors to San Francisco still put the Golden Gate Bridge atop their must-see lists.

The San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau estimates that three-fourths of visitors to San Francisco go to the Golden Gate bridge.

Bridge spokeswoman Mary Currie said it is difficult to determine how many visit the Golden Gate because no admission is charged, but tourism appears to be gradually coming back after 9-11 and the area's dot-com demise.

Traffic across the tops of larger dams — such as Grand Coulee and Hoover — has been restricted or banned. Boats patrol

waters nearby and formerly public areas have been reduced.

At Grand Coulee, vehicles are no longer allowed to drive across or park atop the dam and armed security guards keep constant watch over an operation that provides electricity to 11 western states.

Guided tours of the giant Third Powerhouse are still operating, although tourists can no longer wander through other areas of the dam. Backpacks and other packages are no longer allowed into the dam's visitor center, spokesman Craig Sprankle said.

But despite the restrictions, people still flock to the structure dubbed "the eighth wonder of the world" when it was completed in the early days of World War II.

"Our goal is to make the facility safe for the workers and for the visitors," Sprankle said of new security measures. "We worked to be able to accept visitors."

Many come for the laser light show that plays across the face of the dam nightly from Memorial Day through the summer.

Others come to play on 130-mile-long Lake Roosevelt and on Banks Lake, a 30-mile-long reservoir pumped from Lake Roosevelt, which serves as the headwaters

for the 500,000-acre Columbia Basin Irrigation Project.

Still others are attracted by the area's spectacular geology, carved by massive Ice Age floods.

Gary Heit, owner of the Coulee House Motel in Grand Coulee, said bookings fell off after Sept. 11, 2001, but have been building steadily since.

Few guests ask about potential terrorism, but some have questions about parts of the dam that have been off-limits since the Sept. 11 terror attacks, he said.

"People realize what's happening," he said. "They get to go down to the powerhouse and see the dam and that's what they hoped to do."

Tourist visits to the dam dropped 20 percent after September 2001, but have slowly climbed back to pre-attack levels, Sprankle said.

This year, tourism officials are most worried about high gasoline prices that could keep vacationers closer to home, he said. "People are still coming to Washington state," chamber executive Snow said. "When you visit, you've got to come to Grand Coulee."

Man, daughter who lived four years in city park disappear

By The Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — A man and his daughter who were discovered after living for four years in the depths of a Portland city park have disappeared again.

The story of the pair — found in the park clean and healthy, the girl well-spoken and educated — spread nationwide, especially after Portland police Sgt. Michael Barkley found the two a new home.

But the man, known only as Frank, was uncomfortable with the publicity that

accompanied their story, and feared that television-news helicopters were circling in the sky above his new home.

If there were helicopters trying to find the pair, they didn't belong to any of Portland's news stations, according to news directors. None of them tried to track down Frank and his daughter, Ruth, from the air.

Barkley told The Oregonian that their departure was more of a flight than a disappearance. Last Monday, Frank and Ruth

gathered their belongings from the mobile home, expressed their thanks to the owners and left.

"I have a feeling they have gone under again," said the Rev. Ronald McCallum, pastor of Emanuel Lutheran Church in Cornelius, which the pair had been attending. "They're trying to stay private. And if they stayed in Forest Park for four years, they could be almost anywhere."

The father and daughter were discovered in late April by runners in Forest Park.

They told police they had lived at their camp dug into a hillside for four years, and that the daughter had been home-schooled using thrift-store encyclopedias.

A physician and state child-welfare investigators found no evidence of abuse, according to police reports examined by the newspaper.

Their story prompted people around the country to donate money, about \$6,500 in total. Barkley said it is impossible to know if Frank has withdrawn any of it.

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INTERNATIONAL



Bush looks to World War II for spirit of unity

BY TERENCE HUNT

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON — President Bush on Thursday got a renewed vote of confidence from Australian Prime Minister John Howard, who gently warned European allies that “it is the worst time imaginable” for them to waver on Iraq.

Bush assured Howard that the United States would treat fairly the two Australians currently detained in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and said the U.S. military would fully investigate any allegations of mistreatment of people held there.

Howard welcomed that assurance, and said his country would keep its 850 troops in Iraq.

“We will maintain a presence in Iraq until the job ... has been completed,” Howard said. “This is not a time, it is the worst time imaginable, for allies to be showing any weakness in relation to the pursuit of our goals in Iraq.”

The two leaders met shortly before Bush’s departure for Rome, the first leg of a three-day trip to Europe to mark the 60th anniversary of D-Day, the end of World War II. While in Europe, Bush will encounter some of his fiercest critics on Iraq as well as some of his most stalwart supporters.

When asked whether Australia’s commitment to Iraq would change if a different prime minister were to be elected later this year, Bush replied, “It would be a disastrous decision for the leader of a great country like Australia to say, ‘We are pulling out.’”

Howard, who has served three terms as prime minister, is expected to call an elec-

tion before one is held in the United States in November. His likely opponent, opposition Labor Party leader Mark Latham, has accused Howard of leading Australia into a fruitless conflict by sending troops to Iraq.

Pulling out of Iraq, Bush said, sends the wrong signals both to the Iraqi people and to terror operatives looking for a foothold in the country.

“It would dispirit those who love freedom in Iraq,” Bush said. “It would embolden the enemy who believe that they can shake our will. ... They think that the Western world, and the free world, is weak, that when times get tough we will shirk our duty to those who long for freedom and we’ll leave.”

Bush’s European visit opens a month of intense global diplomacy focusing on Iraq, the Middle East and the future of the NATO alliance. When he returns home from Normandy on Sunday night, Bush will fly directly to Sea Island, Ga., where he will welcome seven world leaders for the annual summit of industrialized nations. In late June, the president will return to Europe for a summit in Ireland with European Union leaders and then travel to Turkey for a NATO summit.

Five months before the presidential elections, Bush’s advisers hope the emphasis on foreign policy will highlight his status as commander in chief, restore confidence in his handling of Iraq and lift his approval ratings from the lowest point of his presidency.

Bush’s first stop is in Italy to mark the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Rome, and his first appointment is with Pope John Paul II, a prominent critic of

the Iraq war. Vatican officials say the meeting is intended to be forward-looking and that the pope supported efforts to restore sovereignty to Iraq. The president also will see Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

Bush has been sharply questioned by world leaders about whether the United States intends to allow Iraq to take complete control of its affairs. The United States plans to keep 135,000 soldiers in Iraq even after the June 30 handover of power by the U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority, raising questions about the new Iraqi government’s authority. Bush says the interim government will have full authority.

In a televised interview with TV-3 France, Secretary of State Colin Powell said he was confident a way will be found to satisfy all members of the U.N. Security Council on the wording of a resolution to recognize Iraq’s full sovereignty.

Powell disagreed with French President Jacques Chirac’s position that the resolution proposed by the United States and Britain should be more specific about military arrangements.

“It’s not a matter, it seems to me, for the U.N. to work out in a resolution; but let the sovereign government work it out with the Coalition Authority that there is the consent of the sovereign government,” Powell said.

From Rome, Bush will go to Paris to try to narrow differences with French President Jacques Chirac, who led the opposition to the Iraq war but seems interested in improving relations.

On Sunday, Bush will stand at the

American cemetery at Normandy on a cliff overlooking Omaha Beach and the English Channel. The cemetery contains the graves of 9,386 American military dead, most of whom gave their lives during the June 6, 1944, landings and ensuing battles of World War II. Bush will join a gathering of world leaders that will for the first time include a German chancellor to mark the D-Day landings.

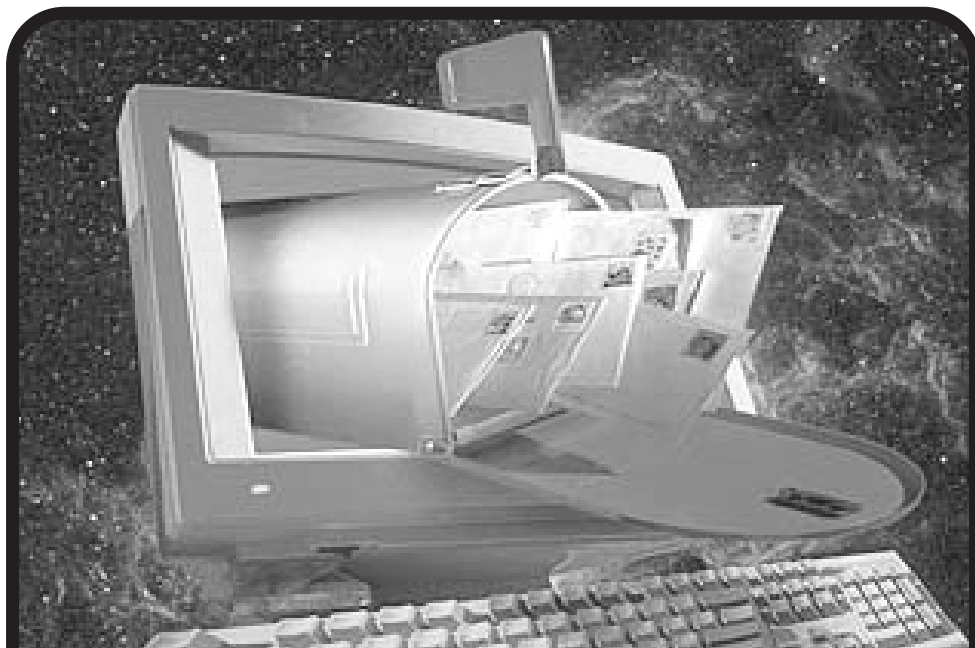
Bush said Normandy was “a place where the fate of millions turned on the courage of thousands.”

“In these events we recall a time of peril and national unity and individual courage,” Bush said Wednesday in a commencement address at the Air Force Academy in Colorado. “We honor a generation of Americans who served this country and saved the liberty of the world.”

Just as events in Europe determined the outcome of the Cold War, events in the Middle East will determine the fate of the fight against terrorism, Bush said.

He said that beyond jailing terrorists, free nations must nurture openness in oppressed societies to head off the resentment and anger that breeds violence.

“If that region is abandoned to dictators and terrorists, it will be a constant source of violence and alarm, exporting killers of increasing destructive power to attack America and other free nations,” Bush said. “If that region grows in democracy and prosperity and hope, the terrorist movement will lose its sponsors, lose its recruits and lose the festering grievances that keep terrorists in business.”



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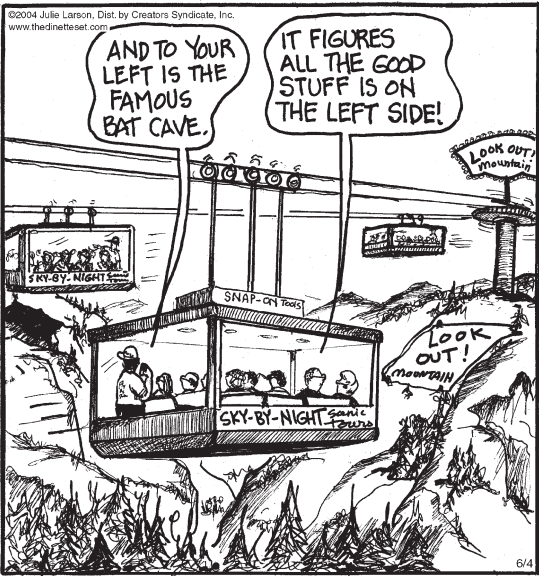
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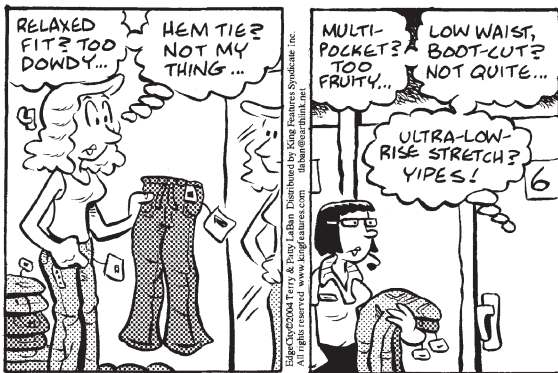
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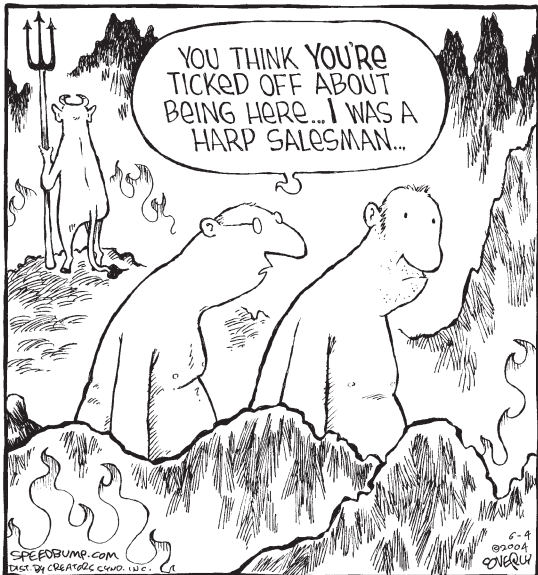
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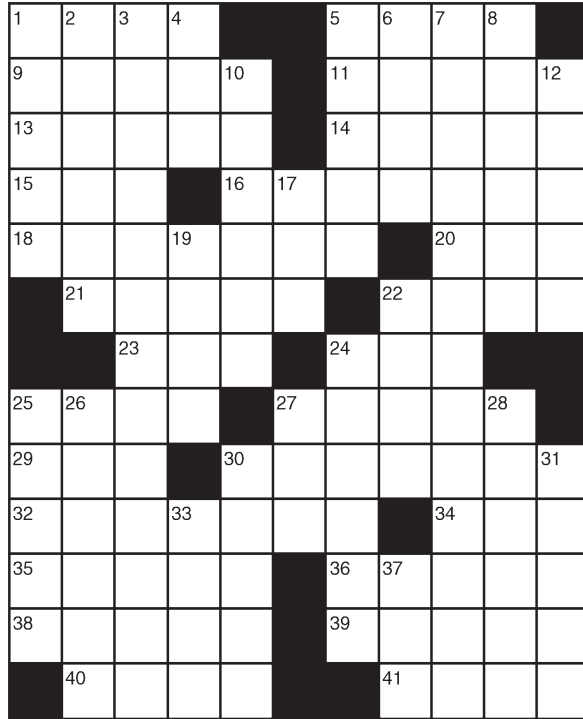
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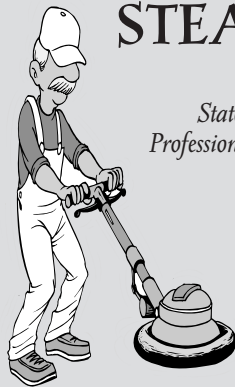
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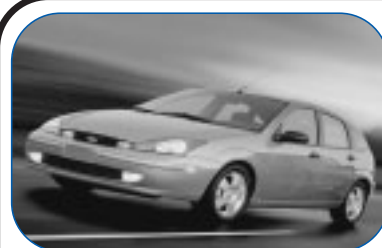
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