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THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2009

Volume 8 Issue 181



Santa Monica Daily Press

DRINK TAX PANNED
SEE PAGE 6

We have you covered

THE SO ROUGH, SO TOUGH ISSUE

Samohi parents upset with pending cuts

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SMMUSD HDQTRS The Board of Education can expect a sizable group of parents at its meeting tonight when it makes a final decision on whether to reduce one house at Santa Monica High School, a measure that has been met with opposition in the community.

The meeting comes amid speculation that Wendy Wax Gellis, the principal of the A House, has been notified that her position will be cut from Samohi, giving her the option of transferring to Malibu Middle School to serve as an assistant principal. Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Superintendent Tim Cuneo said that a house principal has been recommended to fill the vacant position in Malibu, but could not confirm that Gellis is the administrator in question.

The Daily Press on Monday was forwarded a copy of an e-mail originally sent by Gellis to families of the A House, stating that she has accepted the offer at Malibu Middle School. Gellis did not respond to requests for comment.

"Please know I have truly enjoyed our wonderful years together," Gellis said in the e-mail to parents. "I will miss you and (your) children."

Gellis was one of the original house principals when the system premiered in the 2003-04 school year, creating small learning communities on the sprawling campus. The district, which is facing a gaping budget shortfall due to the state fiscal crisis, is proposing to reorganize the structure by reducing one house, saving approximately $700,000 through shifting personnel around.

Parents have expressed outrage that the house principal was reportedly notified of the transfer before the school board takes a vote on the recommendation to reorganize the house system.

Upon hearing the rumors late last week, a group of parents mobilized and held a meeting on Sunday afternoon to brainstorm alternate ways the district could save $700,000. A number of parents are expected to address the board at the meeting.

"I think anyone with objectivity can say this was mishandled," Abby Adams, a parent of a child in the A House, said. "It's not professional, it's not transparent and it's not honest.

SEE SAMOHI PAGE 10



ME, ME, ME!

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Kids from the Environmental Club teach their fellow students about water conservation during PS#1 Pluralistic School's Sustainability Day on Wednesday. The event's goal is to allow kids to learn from each other so that they might impact their families as well as their friends.

SM residents discuss saving neighborhoods

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN Whether it's the 1940s era courtyard apartments in Sunset Park, the tree canopy north of Montana Avenue, or the cultural diversity in the Pico Neighborhood, residents agree that the defining features of their sections of the city should be preserved, no matter what changes the future might bring.

Hearing the message, City Hall on Tuesday held a community workshop dedicated specifically to the conservation of neighborhoods, which geographically make up about 94 percent of Santa Monica. The meeting was part of a series on the Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE), which is the update to the city's general plan and will dictate development in Santa Monica for the next 20 years or more.

Unlike prior LUCE meetings where attendees were randomly assigned to groups during breakout sessions, residents this time split up according to their neighborhoods, discussing the issues of Sunset Park, Ocean Park, Wilshire-Montana, Pico, Mid-City and

SEE NEIGHBORHOODS PAGE 12

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- Educators: Dr. Sylvia Rousseau & Harry Keiley, SMMCTA
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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Caring for feral cats

West Los Angeles Animal Shelter conference room
11361 Pico Blvd., 7 p.m. — 10 p.m.
This free workshop is supported by a grant from PetSmart Charities. The workshop will cover a range of topics concerning responsible feral cat care including humane trapping, post-operative boarding, long-term managed care and adoptions. Sign up ahead of time; spaces are limited. Call (310) 820-4122 for more information.

Prose and poetry

Novel Cafe
212 Pier Ave., 8 p.m. — 10 p.m.
Come read, listen and enjoy free open prose and poetry readings every Thursday. Everyone and all genres are welcome, including poetry, fiction and non-fiction, as long as there is a 1,000 word limit per reader. Visit forthmagazine.com/weeklyreadings.php or call (310) 396-8566 for more information.

Friday, June 5, 2009

A cornucopia of contemporary crafts

Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
1855 Main St., 10 a.m. — 6 p.m.
Open through Sunday, June 7, the Contemporary Crafts Market will showcase more than 230 of the nation's finest artists and their unique works. Considered by some to be the crowning event for one-of-a-kind decorative and functional crafts, the show will feature a range of items including jewelry, glassware, ceramics, hand-painted textiles, furniture, and mixed-media creations. All items displayed will be available for purchase and have been chosen by a process of jury-selection to ensure quality. Admission is $7 for adults, free for children 12 years old and younger. For more information visit www.contemporarycraftsmarket.com.

Got milk, Santa Monica?

Third Street Promenade
7 p.m.
The "Got Milk? Mobile Mustache Tour" returns to Santa Monica as part of a the national "Drink Well, Live Well" campaign, encouraging Californians to take advantage of the health benefits of consuming milk regularly. The campaign will run statewide from June 5 to June 14 and will offer a number of other resources to promote healthy living among California residents. Attendees of the event will find five-minute chair massages, souvenir photos, health assessments from a registered dietitian, and of course, ice-cold milk. Admission is free and those interested can find more information by visiting www.whymilk.com.

Saturday, June 6, 2009

Dog days

Pet Medical Center
1534 14th St., 9 a.m. — 4 p.m.
Come eat great food, play fun games, bid in a silent auction, get tips from expert pet trainers and meet Marley from "Marley and Me." All proceeds go to support the Friends of Animals Foundation and the Pennies for Pets charity fund. Admission is free. Call (310) 393-8218 for more information.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.

Plan to sell off landmarks has critics

SAMANTHA YOUNG
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO San Quentin State Prison. Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. The California State Fairgrounds.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's plan to put some of his state's biggest landmarks up for sale to help erase a $24 billion budget deficit is fraught with questions, chief among them: How can California taxpayers possibly get a good deal in this slumping real estate market?

Schwarzenegger, who has also proposed deep cuts in education, health care, welfare and parks, wants to sell off some property outright, sell office buildings and then rent them back from the new landlords, and lease some state land to developers.

"Everywhere I go, I hear stories about families selling off their boats and motorcycles to make ends meet. They have garage sales and yard sales," he told the Legislature this week, offering his rationale for selling assets. "They know that you don't have or keep a boat at the dock when you can't put food on the table."

The governor said California could generate $3 billion from selling seven landmarks and 11 office buildings scattered around the state.

In most cases, however, it would take a few years to complete the sales, doing nothing for California's immediate budget crisis. Moreover, selling in the middle of a recession and a downturn in real estate is a questionable proposition.

"Fundamentally, this is the wrong time to do this," said Robert Griswold, a real estate author and member of the planning commission in San Diego. "The market is down and is now in the favor of people looking to buy these properties and not in the favor of the state."

Fred Aguiar, Schwarzenegger's secretary of consumer services, defended the proposal, saying many of the properties cannot be compared to ordinary commercial or retail space because they are unique and often sit on prime land. He said potential buyers have already inquired about the sites, though he would not identify them.

"These are some very valuable properties," Aguiar said. "When you start a bidding process on valuable properties, I think a lot of people will be surprised at the kind of prices they will fetch."

The state estimates that San Quentin Prison — situated on 488 picturesque acres on the San Francisco Bay — could bring in $1 billion in today's market. It is widely assumed that any buyer would be interested primarily in the land and might tear down all or some of the 1880s prison to make way for condos or some other development.

It is unclear, however, where California's death row would be housed, and how long it would take to move the prison's 5,150 inmates — a process that could cost many millions of dollars and eat into any proceeds from San Quentin's sale.

The state has not put a price tag on the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum but estimates any sale of the 86-year-old stadium

SEE **FOR SALE** PAGE 10

Jobless get a shot at closure

BY WILL WEISS
Special to the Daily Press

THE INTERNET Tom Van Daele and his team at Santa Monica-based Unknownlab, a multimedia marketing outfit, have done something inspiring.

His Web site, cardsofchange.com, has attracted just short of 100 business cards since its launch on April 15, and not one has come from someone with a job. The site encourages a creative and positive yawp from people who, it would seem, would be among those least interested in being constructive: people who just lost their jobs.

The site invites individuals who have recently been laid off to post photographs of their old business cards, rehashed — sometimes literally — in any way that pleases them.

The response has been limited, relative to the successes of other Web phenomena of the same vein (postscript.com, etc.), but has been genuine nonetheless; most importantly, people who have posted cards on the site say it was gratifying and therapeutic to do so.

"I think there is a closure about it; you get a little bit of a voice. That's all you really need," said Scott McFarlin, a husband and father of one who lost his job at Tequila, an

SEE **CARDS** PAGE 10



JOLTING NEW RIDE

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

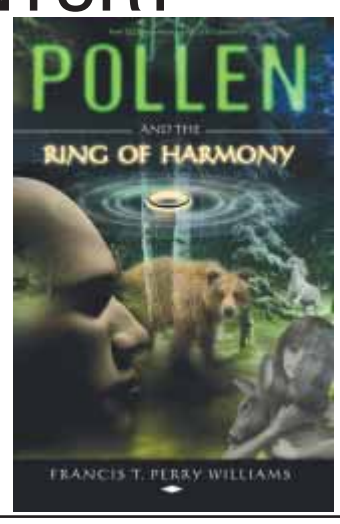
Vice President of Engineering Broc Tenhouten (left) talks to the press about the new all-electric mainstream sedan built in China from the new American car company Coda Automotive at the unveiling on Wednesday morning on Wilshire Boulevard.

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—Alice Karen Elkins, reviewer, www.rambles.net



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Plan needed before cleaning house

Editor:

The SMMUSD has blundered. The superintendent moved to close the A House at Samohi before the board even had the vote to eliminate a house. The A House principal has been told to start at Malibu July 1. How did this happen? Who knows, nobody has fully disclosed the timeline of events, but several board members have stated that they were aware that this was afoot. Speculation is flowing about dealings that involve the usual things – relationships, cronyism and turf protection.

Board members are trying to distance themselves by saying this is a personnel matter that falls under the superintendent's responsibility. Sorry, that won't fly. We're talking about a major, structural change to Samohi which needs much discussion and a well thought out plan before deciding which house and people should go. This is not a run-of-the-mill personnel matter, but rather a decision with such gravity that it falls entirely within the board's purview. All students, not just those in the closing house, will be severely impacted as the deck is dramatically reshuffled and they lose counselors and other resources they have come to depend on over the years. There should be a board approved plan that is appropriately vetted prior to proceeding.

Alternative suggestions have been made by [head Principal Hugo] Pedroza, who is well aware of the situation at Samohi since he is there every day, for how expenses can be cut while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the house system. At least one board member has summarily dismissed "The Pedroza Plan" without even considering it as a foundation for discussion. An ad hoc group of parents have also presented creative ideas for how to keep the house system intact. Will the board listen? Stay tuned.

If the board decides to eliminate a house today, then there needs to be careful consideration for how this will be done, and which house will go. The superintendent should be instructed to seek a wide variety of perspectives, to do an analysis of the effectiveness of the programs that have been developed in each house, and to report to the board on his rationale for which house to cut before any final plan is implemented. This will give clarity to how the decision was made and garner confidence from the community that thoughtful consideration went into the decision instead of some possible hidden agenda.

It should not be too much to ask the school board and superintendent to follow a logical and proper procedure where public input counts. After all it is us taxpayers footing the bill. Let's first have a discussion about whether there are creative alternatives to the draconian step of shutting down a house. If it is determined there is no alternative, then let's have a well thought out, transparent process for determining which house it will be.

Allen Nelson
Santa Monica

'Mother Ocean is Crying'

We love her so, or so we say,
But Mother Ocean cries today.
Sea life's dying, her beaches trashed.
A little respect is all she asked.
Bottles and bags, cups and straws
Where children played with oohs and aahs.
A 100 million tons, or more,
Pollute her seas and blight her shore.

Our boats she floats, her fish supplied,
But giant areas have all but died.
So who's to blame? It's you and me.
What must we do to save the sea?
Recycle our waste, less plastic we'll use,
Before it's too late, or we all will lose.

G.E. Matthews
Santa Monica

Your column here

Chon Lee — **Send comments to editor@smdp.com**



Photo courtesy Chon Lee

MAKING NEW FRIENDS: **Lincoln Middle School teacher Chon Lee (front right) with eighth grade students and their teacher at Sumgayit Lyceum, Azerbaijan.**

Struck by the inequality in education abroad

AZERBAIJAN.

The mere name connotes the foreign and uncharted terrain. It appears that not too many people have been to, let alone heard of, this small Caucasus republic alongside the Caspian Sea. My own students at Lincoln Middle School had a difficult time recognizing the country; one comic relief moment came when an ingenuous boy expressed his utter excitement for me to travel to "Azkaban" in the Harry Potter series, an obvious misinterpretation between the imaginary and reality.

I recently returned from the Eurasian third-world country where I had the privilege to participate in a two-week intensive, bilateral exchange entitled Teaching Excellence and Achievement. This educator grant is sponsored by the United States Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and implemented through the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX). I was selected alongside 12 other teachers from across the United States to represent our communities and schools in different Eurasian countries (Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan to name a few) to share best practices with international secondary teachers.

In my travels, I was remarkably fortunate to work with Azeri teachers from a diverse range of school environments: rural and urban, private and public, developed and emerging. I partnered up with multiple schools and co-taught in Azerbaijani classrooms, conducted professional development workshops for secondary educators, and facilitated discussion forums on educational policy at local universities. It was simply beguiling to see the effects of modern affluence in Baku (the capital) schools juxtaposed with emerging, traditional schools in smaller disadvantaged cities like Sumgayit and Ismayli. It definitely appears to reflect the ideology of how the "rich get richer and poor get poorer" with a struggling emergence of a middle-class. I kept wondering about how the pervasiveness of indifference within the oil-rich regions could be streamlined to help bridge the gap with the absolute poor and underprivileged.

In a country that is so obviously thriving both economically and socially in the metropolitan city of Baku, I kept wondering how the country can better transition and feed that wealth appropriately to the rest of the country that so desperately needs it. It is clear that the Azerbaijani government and Ministry of Education believes in the value of educating their children, but I'm left to speculate how this academic equity could be sustainable in a country where most resources are funneling into the capital oil-based territories, creating a social, economic, and educational divide.

In the past few years, I have seen this same precise economic imbalance in other grant-sponsored programs to South Africa and Cambodia. I have come to learn that economic power not only translates to social and political power but also how schools and the quality of education for children across the world are negatively impacted with lack of resources, untrained instructors, unsafe facilities, and outdated curriculum and frameworks. I still recall collaborating with teachers in Cape Town, South Africa and Phnom Penh, Cambodia and the universal theme of educational poverty was completely disheartening. How can a South African, Cambodian, or Azerbaijani teacher help students become life-long learners when there are so many short-term obstacles on a day-to-day basis?

Moreover, I had the great pleasure to meet and work alongside some extraordinary Peace Corps volunteers stationed in remote places in Azerbaijan, such as a small mountainous village called Luhic with only one school of roughly 70 children. It was remarkable to see the passion and desire for change, the commitment to helping their Azerbaijani neighbors as good citizens of the community. Upon deep reflection, I have learned so much about the Azerbaijani culture, people, and education including the Azeri-Armenian conflict with the Karabakh territory, microfinance loan programs in third world countries, environmental impacts of oil refinery, Azeri poets and literature, and globalization within a developing government and economy. Now in turn, I definitely want to use my experience as a catalyst to expand my students' analytical and critical thinking skills when comparing and contrasting global communities so that they can become more knowledgeable global citizens and learners.

CHON LEE is a National Board Certified English teacher at Lincoln Middle School in Santa Monica and can be contacted at clee@smmusd.org.

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Meredith Pro Tem

Meredith C. Carroll
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Just like Chuck

WHILE I GENERALLY DON'T SEE THE glass as half full only because mine is perpetually half empty, I still try to remain cheerful by having a "Why not me?" outlook on life. Unfortunately though, the "We'll tell you why not" gods almost always puncture my hopeful efforts with the same barbed response: "Yeah, right. You wish." It starts off simply enough whenever I'm driving somewhere. After all, why shouldn't I be the person who gets to park exactly in front of where she's going? Why should I be one of the schmucks who drives around the same block for 20 minutes, only to eventually still have to park 19 blocks from my destination? If anyone can pull up and immediately find a spot, then it should be me because I'm just as qualified, if not more so, as anyone else for that kind of dumb luck. I usually end up walking the 19 blocks, but I keep hope alive anyway every time I put the key in the ignition.

Speaking of dumb luck, gambling isn't my thing. But every once in a blue moon, when the amount of the Powerball jackpot is worth my while (you know, because I'm so flush with cash that only eight- or nine-figure sums would actually make a dent in my lifestyle) or when Pay at the Pump is broken and I have to actually walk inside the gas station, I buy a lotto ticket. I immediately assume I'll be victorious (and immediately get all warm and fuzzy fantasizing about how my kids and grandkids will fight over my fortune after my death like Brooke Astor's) because I figure I deserve it just as much as the group at the meat plant who always seems to win after splitting the cost of the $1 lotto ticket 17 ways (and ends up being featured on an episode of E! network's "THS Investigates" about how their lives were cursed afterward because they tried to build an in-ground hot tub on an ancient Indian burial site and then one of their ex-brothers-in-law absconded with what was left of the winnings after blowing most of the fortune on frozen concentrated orange juice futures).

Why it's never my brother-in-law who squanders my fortune on citrus after I desecrate the final resting place of an entire tribe, I'll never know. But that doesn't mean I'll ever stop dreaming of my heirs bickering over my dead body. When my husband and I were on our way to get our taxes done this spring, our neighbors let us know they were jetting off to Australia with the $5,000 they got back from the government. Even though I was all too aware of the number of our deductions plus our untaxed freelance projects, for a little while I decided that I underestimated our chances for a refund. The neighbors aren't any smarter than us. Why shouldn't we get a refund, too?

As it turns out though, the accountant, who silently, methodically and humorlessly alternated tapping her 4-inch-long Wite-Out painted nails between the calculator and computer keyboard for over an hour, was apparently a member of the "We'll tell you why not" team and revealed a $2,500 IRS bill at the end of our appointment.

WHY SHOULD I BE ONE OF THE SCHMUCKS WHO DRIVES AROUND THE SAME BLOCK FOR 20 MINUTES, ONLY TO EVENTUALLY STILL HAVE TO PARK 19 BLOCKS FROM MY DESTINATION?

A few days after that we brought the car in for one thing, and it turns out a whole other thing was wrong. I tried to will the problem to be a broken windshield wiper blade or a burnt-out brake light, or at least cost the equivalent thereof, because why do expensive things always happen to us? But no, it was a failed timing belt tensioner (otherwise known in car mechanics' speak as "There goes the college savings fund for the kids"). Speaking of college, when I was a senior in high school and had been accepted to college via early decision, I decided to send a postcard to Harvard letting them know they wouldn't be seeing me that autumn. I thought I might end up being one of those urban myths where the school realizes they can't live without me and begs me to enroll despite the fact that I never even applied. That I would be the solid "B" student who nevertheless shone so brightly they just had to have me. As it turns out, they didn't, but they did send me a lovely note wishing me all the best in my educational pursuits. Sometimes I feel a little like Charlie Brown after Lucy pulls the football out from underneath him. Except I see no reason why I won't kick it next time.

E-mail questions or comments to meredithccarroll@hotmail.com.

The Q Line

Education at a price

A recent Daily Press article revealed that local high school students are finding that a good education is a hard thing to come by during these dark economic times.

So this week's Q-Line question asks:

Do you think that parents and students should take the plunge and get the best education available regardless of the cost or should they seek out more affordable options?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. Please limit responses to a minute or less.

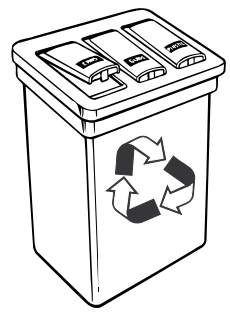

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New drink tax widely opposed

ALAN FRAM
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON A push for new taxes on soda, beer and wine to help pay for Americans' health care is stirring up more than just the beverage industry.

Advertisers, corn refiners — even addiction treatment centers — have mobilized their lobbyists, reflecting how a tax increase for a handful of popular products can reverberate broadly across Washington's interest groups.

The Senate Finance Committee is considering raising taxes on alcohol and imposing a new levy on soda and other naturally sweetened drinks to help pay for overhauling health care. The committee calls them "lifestyle tax proposals," saying the levies would slow sales of unhealthy products that contribute to rising medical costs.

Soft drink and alcohol lobbyists have snapped into action, though so far their campaigns have been quiet compared to the blaring, multimillion-dollar battles that typify major showdowns.

Their low-key approach is due partly to committee leaders' warnings to refrain from public attacks or be accused of sabotaging health care overhaul. They've also held back because they have faced only modest lobbying from tax proponents, and because they think the proposal may prove so unpopular that it ultimately won't threaten their businesses.

"They don't want to call attention to a quietly smoldering fire," said Rogan Kersh, an associate dean at the Wagner School of Public Service at New York University.

Besides alcohol, drinks with sugar, high fructose corn syrup and similar sweeteners would be targeted, though diet drinks with artificial sweeteners would not. Other industries also are on alert, worried that the idea of "lifestyle taxes" could spread to other products deemed unhealthy.

"Are they going to hit couch manufacturers? School districts that have canceled physical education?" joked Neil Trautwein, health care lobbyist for the National Retail Federation, which opposes the plan and whose members include fast-food restaurants.

Sugar producers and manufacturers of sweetened foods are opposed, as are dairy farmers and milk processors, since chocolate milk would be hit. Alcohol retailers want to go the opposite way, pushing for a cut in the existing tax on their products. That tax ranges from 21 cents per bottle of wine to 33 cents per six-pack of beer to $2.14 per fifth of hard liquor.

Even local governments are following developments closely.

Pennsylvania, one of several states that profit from alcohol because it runs the stores where it is sold, is watching to see how the proposal might affect it.

The American Beverage Association, representing makers of sodas, sports drinks and similar products, has been among the most active foes. It enlisted seven groups to join in a letter to senators opposing the tax, including the American Advertising Federation, whose members include Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola, and the Corn Refiners Association, whose companies make sweet syrups that would be taxed. Also signing were associations for grocers, food marketers and food vending machine operators.

"Dangerous Tax Threat Looms on Capitol Hill," the beverage association's Web site warns, urging the industry's 220,000 employees to e-mail Congress. Its recent ad in Capitol Hill newspapers highlights the industry's agreement to gradually lower calories in beverages sold in schools; it doesn't mention the tax proposal.

"We do want lawmakers to know, regardless of what legislation they may be considering, that this industry is out there doing its part," said Kevin Keane, a beverage association spokesman.

Many alcohol industry trade groups declined to discuss the Finance committee proposal. The Wine Institute, representing California vintners, provided one paragraph saying the tax would cost jobs, raise prices and single out a drink that is "part of a healthy diet and lifestyle for millions of Americans."

The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States has a Web site called "Stop Hospitality Taxes." It lets viewers automatically send e-mail opposing the tax to members of Congress, and provides paragraphs senders can insert into their messages with one click.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest, a consumer advocacy group, has been a leading proponent of the taxes. Executive Director Michael Jacobson wrote an op-ed column supporting the levies in the Montana Standard newspaper, in the home state of the panel's chairman, Democratic Sen. Max Baucus.

"Who wants to talk about raising taxes, especially for a product people enjoy?" Jacobson said in an interview, explaining the low-key support for the levies. "These aren't smokestacks."

Even addiction treatment providers are watching.

Ron Hunsicker, who heads a trade group for such centers, said he supports the alcohol tax if "those dollars will come back and beef up" federal spending on treatment programs.

Waiting in the wings are hospitals, doctors, insurers and drug makers who could bear the brunt of the $1.5 trillion that Congress' reshaping of health care could cost over the next decade.

Though those health care providers have larger concerns than beverage taxes, they know each dollar collected from the levies could be one less dollar from their own pockets. The American Hospital Association has voiced support for "tax incentives on lifestyle-related choices," while the American Medical Association backs raising alcohol levies but has been silent on taxing sweetened drinks.

Recent history shows the challenge. Maine voters rejected a soft drink tax last November and New York Gov. David Paterson dropped a proposed tax on sodas earlier this year. Several senators on the Finance committee, including top Republican Charles Grassley of Iowa, have said they oppose the proposal.

"Before you tax Joe Six-Pack on his beer and Joe Junior on his soda pop at the Little League game, people are going to say, 'Can't you go out and find some savings from'" the health care system, said one committee member, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore.

AP reporter MARY CLARE JALONICK contributed to this report.

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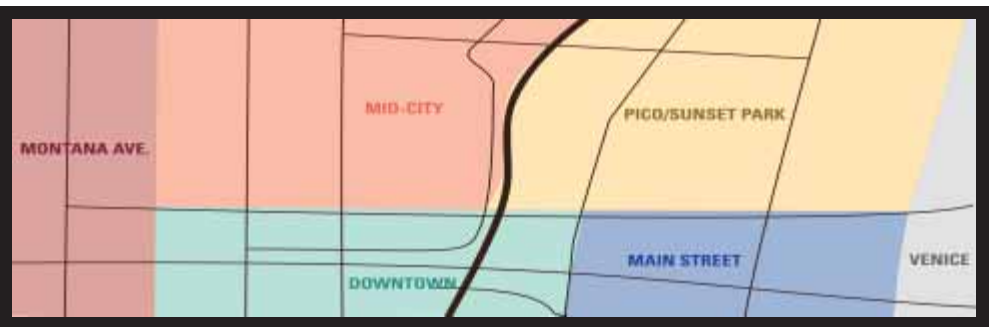
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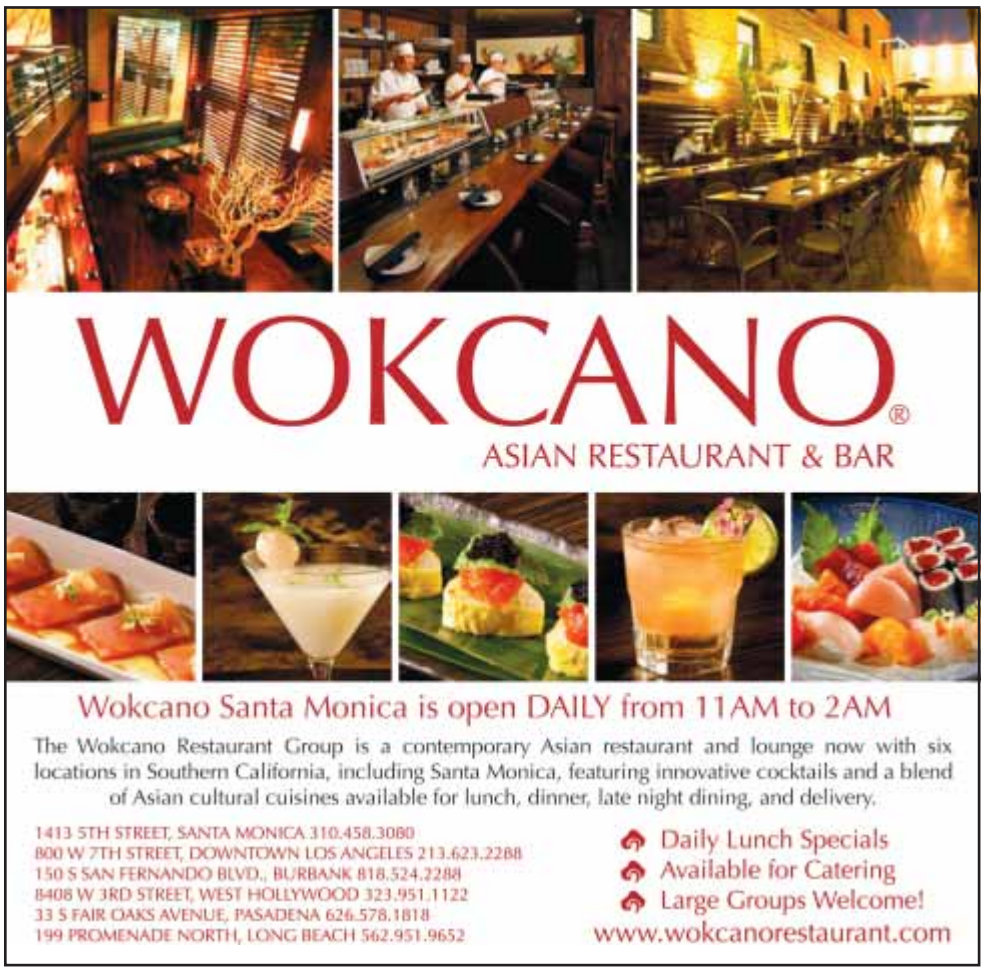
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Samohi administrator to be transferred to Malibu

FROM **SAMOHI** PAGE 1

"It's about the way the entire approach has unfolded that many of us are so disgruntled."

Cuneo said that while a recommendation has been made for an administrator to transfer, one has not been made for which specific house to reduce.

He added that a team led by Samohi Principal Dr. Hugo Pedroza has began discussing the implications of reducing a house and how the transition process should take place, especially for incoming seniors who might lose their advisers. A new naming scheme for the houses, which are named after each letter in the school's nickname, Samohi, has yet to be decided.

"Our goal is to have a lot of these things taken care of prior to the kids leaving school," Cuneo said.

A two-day retreat is also planned for the team to evaluate student performance on campus and what areas have been successful since the adoption of the system.

He pointed out that the population at Samohi was much larger when the house system began, going from 3,400 students then to approximately 2,990 today. Future projections show student enrollment flattening over the next two years before declining again.

Some parents also questioned why the district did not move forward with the "Pedroza Plan," which would have made alternate cuts to the school while keeping the house system intact, all while saving more money than proposed by district officials.

Cuneo said that several plans were considered, including making reductions in other areas at Samohi, finding that reorganizing the structure to five houses would have the least impact while still providing the quality of service expected.

Elizabeth Stearns, the president of the PTA at Samohi, said that parents are sensitive to the challenges facing the district with the budget crisis, which has only worsened since five of the six budget propositions failed in last month's special election.

"Parents are not going into this saying don't touch us, we don't want to be touched," she said. "We understand and want to partner with the school district to realize what money must be cut from the high school, but do it in the way that least impacts all 3,000 students on our campus."

Some parents have also said that reorganizing the house system could affect the most vulnerable student populations, including those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and pupils in special education.

Adams said that while Samohi is not classified as Title 1, it's a feeder for primary schools that have that designation. Schools that have a high population of students on the federal free lunch program are typically identified as Title 1.

"These are the kids who will more likely fall through the cracks," she said.

Roxie Fariadi, a junior with the A House, expressed concern over whether she can stay with her counselor.

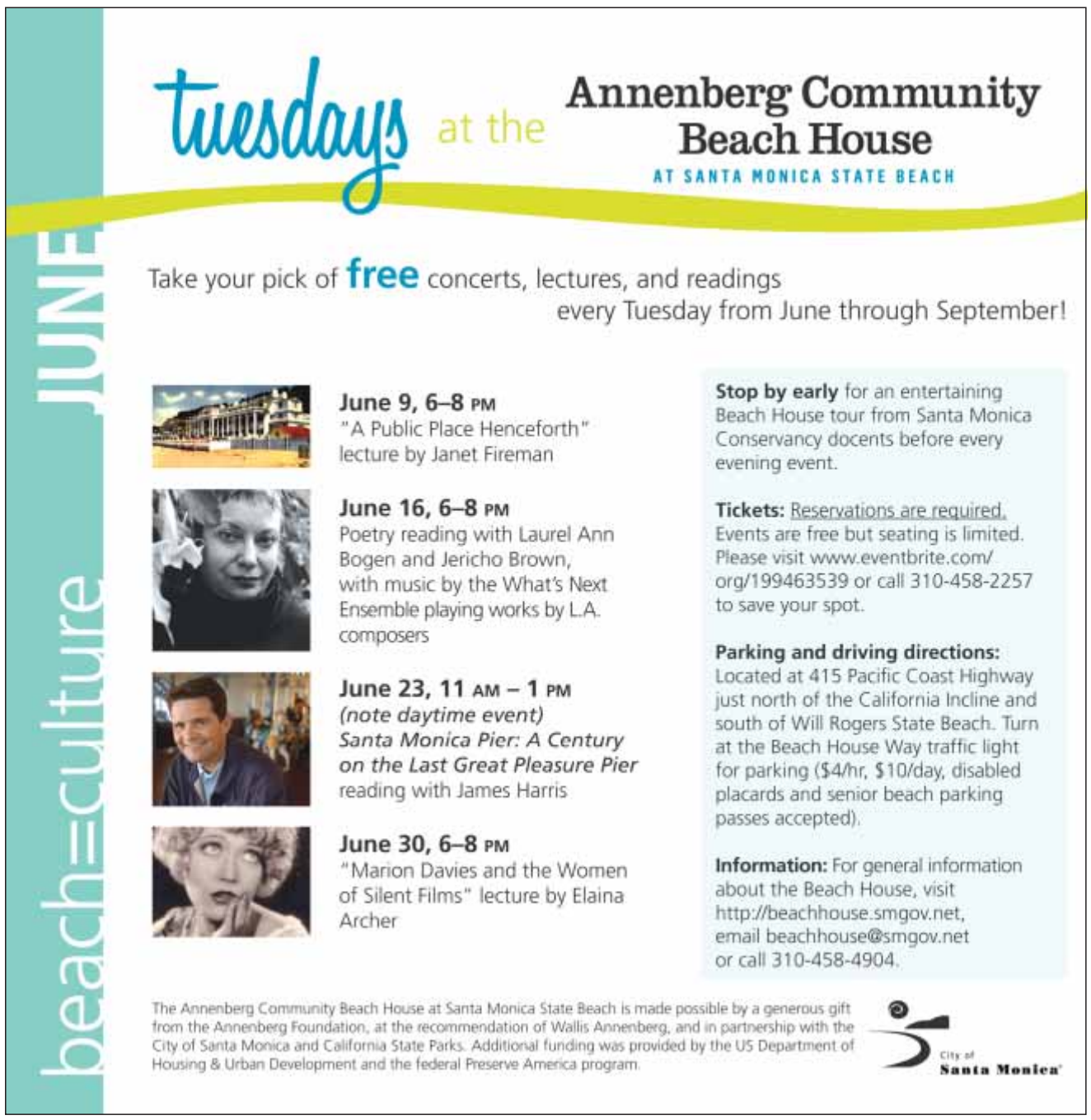
"I don't want to be placed with a different counselor for my senior year," she said.

Theo Benjamin, a junior with the A House who is also a member of its leadership team, said that reorganizing the structure would "take away from the entire essence of Samohi."

"One of the things that makes Samo so great is the house system," he added.

Catherine Cain contributed to this report

melodyh@smdp.com



Web site gives unemployed a new outlet

FROM **CARDS** PAGE 3

international advertising firm, back in early April. "It made me feel better. It helps you move on I suppose. That simple gesture allows you to feel better about yourself."

McFarlin, who has been doing freelance work and job hunting for almost two months, said that at the time of his layoff he had been interested in making a change anyway, but he explained that recent economic conditions have made finding a job virtually impossible.

"I'm finding enough work at the moment, but it's hard. I have five people who want to hire me right now, they're just waiting for their business to pick up," he said, adding that most of the chief financial officers at these potential employers have ordered hiring freezes across the board.

Jules Fox, who was recently laid off by advertising magnate TBWA\Chiat\Day, proclaims herself a "professional surf bum" on her cardsofchange.com contribution, and said she sees the time off as an opportunity to reevaluate her situation and has been spending time at the beach with friends while looking for another job.

Van Daele, founder and creative director of Unknownlab, got the site running on the backs of some of his friendships with people who had recently lost their jobs. But the man is jazzed about the positive response.

"I now get excited when I hear somebody is laid off; it's somebody who can make the site better," he said. "But of course it's not easy to approach them and tell them that this Web site is great for them. There is a big stigma about going through the world after you've been laid off."

Though he was not at liberty to mention specifics, Van Daele said that he was approached last week by a publisher with an offer for a book version of cardsofchange.com, which he said will be in negotiations in the coming weeks.

news@smdp.com

Property sales could take years

FROM **FOR SALE** PAGE 3

could take two to three years. The expectation is that a buyer would continue to operate the stadium, which can seat more than 100,000 people and was the site of the 1932 and 1984 Summer Olympics.

Democratic state Sen. Rod Wright said lawmakers should be careful about holding a fire sale of valuable landmarks.

"When New York was in the middle of a crisis, they never considered taking out Central Park," Wright said. "It would be like the Romans trying to sell the Trevi Fountain or the French trying to sell the Arc de Triomphe or the British trying to sell London Bridge. Those are landmarks."

(Actually, the British did sell London Bridge, which was shipped to the U.S. and rebuilt at Lake Havasu City, Ariz.)

Paul Habibi, a real estate lecturer at the University of California, Los Angeles, said California taxpayers could be shortchanged if the state moves forward with a sale now. In general, commercial properties in California have lost 25 percent to 35 percent of their value since the market peaked several years ago, Habibi said.

"This is the classic pawn shop mentality of trying to divest the state's assets," he said.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SMC

New quad wins award

Santa Monica College's new quad – a four-acre, heavily-landscaped area that has transformed the look and feel of the campus – has won the 2009 Los Angeles Architectural Award in the Landscape Architecture category.

Sponsored by the Los Angeles Business Council, the awards are considered the premiere architectural honors for projects in Los Angeles County.

The quad opened last August at the start of the fall 2008 semester. The $9 million project – funded by Measure U, the SMC bond approved by voters in 2002 – features a handsome promenade of pavers lined by palm trees and flanked by two large water fountains. Grass areas, trees, large planters and seating areas fill out the quad. It was designed by tBP Architects and Meléndrez Landscape Architects.

"We are very excited to have received this prestigious award," said Greg Brown, SMC director of facilities planning. "The quad has truly transformed the campus and has given it a university feel. It's become not only a place for students to relax and visit with friends, but is now the preferred hub for outdoor concerts and special events such as Club Row and the community-oriented Picnic on the Quad. It has truly changed the way students interact on campus."

DAILY PRESS

KCRW

Radio station picks new chairman

Public radio station 89.9 FM (KCRW) has announced that Michael Fleming, executive director of the Los Angeles-based David Bohnett Foundation, has been elected as the chairman of the KCRW Foundation Board of Directors.

The KCRW Foundation serves to provide financial and promotional support to insure that KCRW remains a leading source for news, information and eclectic music – a truly unique, intelligent, inspiring and important center for public affairs, art and culture – serving Southern California and beyond.

"We are delighted that Michael Fleming will be heading our Foundation. His background in the non-profit world is key to our vision," said KCRW-FM General Manager Ruth Seymour. "As media goes through a metamorphosis, Michael has the expertise and insight to help us advance KCRW's role as a broadcaster and Internet leader."

Michael Fleming said, "My first job was with WGBH-TV in Boston, and I have never lost my passion for the important work of public broadcasting. Today, through streaming on the Internet, KCRW can reach audiences far beyond its home turf. In addition to serving the local community, it's critical that we think as creatively as possible to identify ways to fund and sustain programming and features that appeal to – and have the potential to positively influence – the increasingly diverse and far-flung audiences that KCRW serves."

Fleming has been executive director of the David Bohnett Foundation for 10 years. Since 1999, the foundation has granted nearly $35 million to organizations that embody its mission of improving society through social justice and civic activism in areas including public policy, education, the LGBT community, the arts, gun violence and animal language research.

In addition to serving as the chairman of KCRW's board, Fleming's community involvement includes an appointment by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to the Board of Directors for the LEED-certified Los Angeles Convention Center and as a member of the Dean's Council of The Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service at New York University.

DP

County approves water shortage rules for Malibu

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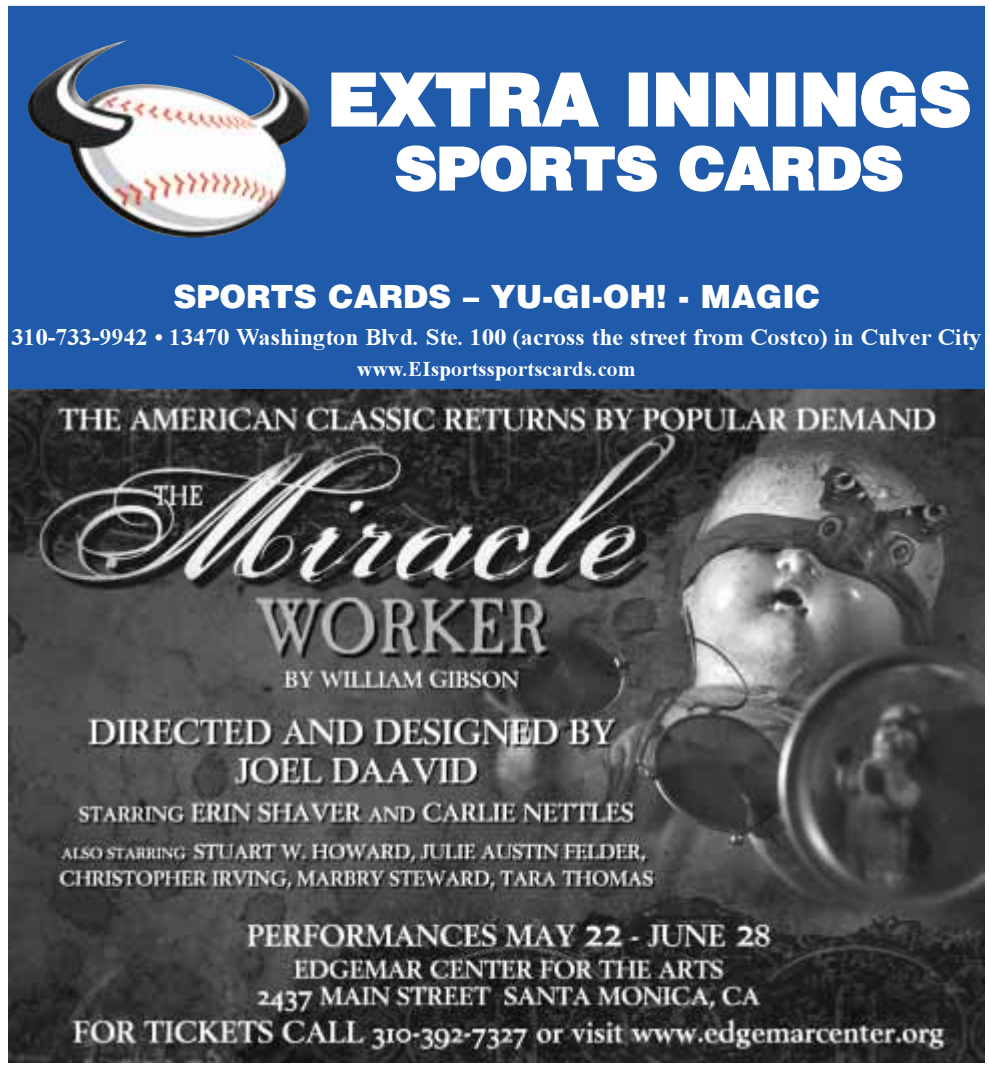
LOS ANGELES Los Angeles County supervisors have declared a water shortage emergency in Malibu, Topanga and Marina del Rey.

The board approved shortage rules Tuesday that will require residents to reduce their water consumption by 15 percent or face higher rates.

After three years of drought and with new limits on water pumped from the Sacramento Delta, water supplies have been cut and rates are up.

The supervisors also voted to add a service fee for customers in Kagel Canyon, Malibu, Val Verde, Acton and the Antelope Valley. The charges will raise $1.8 million in funds for maintenance, operating expenses and capital improvements.





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City Hall considers ways to save neighborhoods

FROM **NEIGHBORHOODS** PAGE 1

North of Montana.

They were asked to identify the attributes of their neighborhoods and address the challenges they face. City officials said the Land Use and Circulation Element will seek to preserve the unique characteristics that define each community, whether it be through policy changes or perhaps more stringent regulations when it concerns demolition.

"People are concerned about the demolition of existing homes and the loss of units to other kinds of development," Daniel Iacofano, a city consultant and urban planner from MIG, said.

While there are common problems that overlap with neighborhoods, such as traffic and parking, each come with its unique set of challenges, whether it's preserving the tree canopy north of Montana Avenue where City Hall last year proposed removing structurally deficient carob trees, the loss of affordable housing in the Mid-City, or development in Wilshire-Montana.

Demolition has been an issue in Sunset Park, where residents have expressed concern over the loss of affordable housing and courtyard style apartments.

The neighborhood is unique for its diverse collection of single-family homes and apartment buildings that were built for workers of the Douglas Aircraft Company in the 1940s, said Zina Josephs, the president of Friends of Sunset Park.

The neighborhood is also considered walkable, with schools, restaurants and retail within reach.

Congestion has also been identified as a challenge in Sunset Park, along with traffic caused by Santa Monica College and pollution and noise from Santa Monica Airport.

In the Pico Neighborhood, it's all about keeping the diversity of its residents, both culturally and economically.

Yolanda De Cordova has lived in the Pico Neighborhood for nearly 13 years, though she has worked in the area for roughly two dozen, including the last several at the Pico Youth and Family Center as its office manager. She said the neighborhood attributes have been impacted over the decades with the construction of the I-10 Freeway.

She said one of the biggest challenges facing the neighborhood is the presence of buses.

"We are starting to see larger buses," she said.

The Pico Neighborhood Association has also raised concerns over the proposal by the Exposition Construction Authority to place a maintenance yard at the Verizon lot, which is located near homes.

Neighborhood conservation could come in various forms, including changes in development standards to address issues with scale and size and a policy that would better manage the pace and type of changes that take place. One possible measure could be to create conservation overlay districts, which would sit on top of preexisting zones but have a special set of regulations that also apply.

Another solution could be to adopt regulations requiring that before a demolition permit is granted, the building's contribution to the neighborhood be evaluated.

Some cities in the state have taken similar actions to preserve their neighborhoods, including in Santa Cruz, which has six overlay districts, one of which requires that buildings be evaluated before a demolition application is approved.

In Ocean Park, residents point to the diverse collection of California bungalows and apartment buildings as one of the most interesting features.

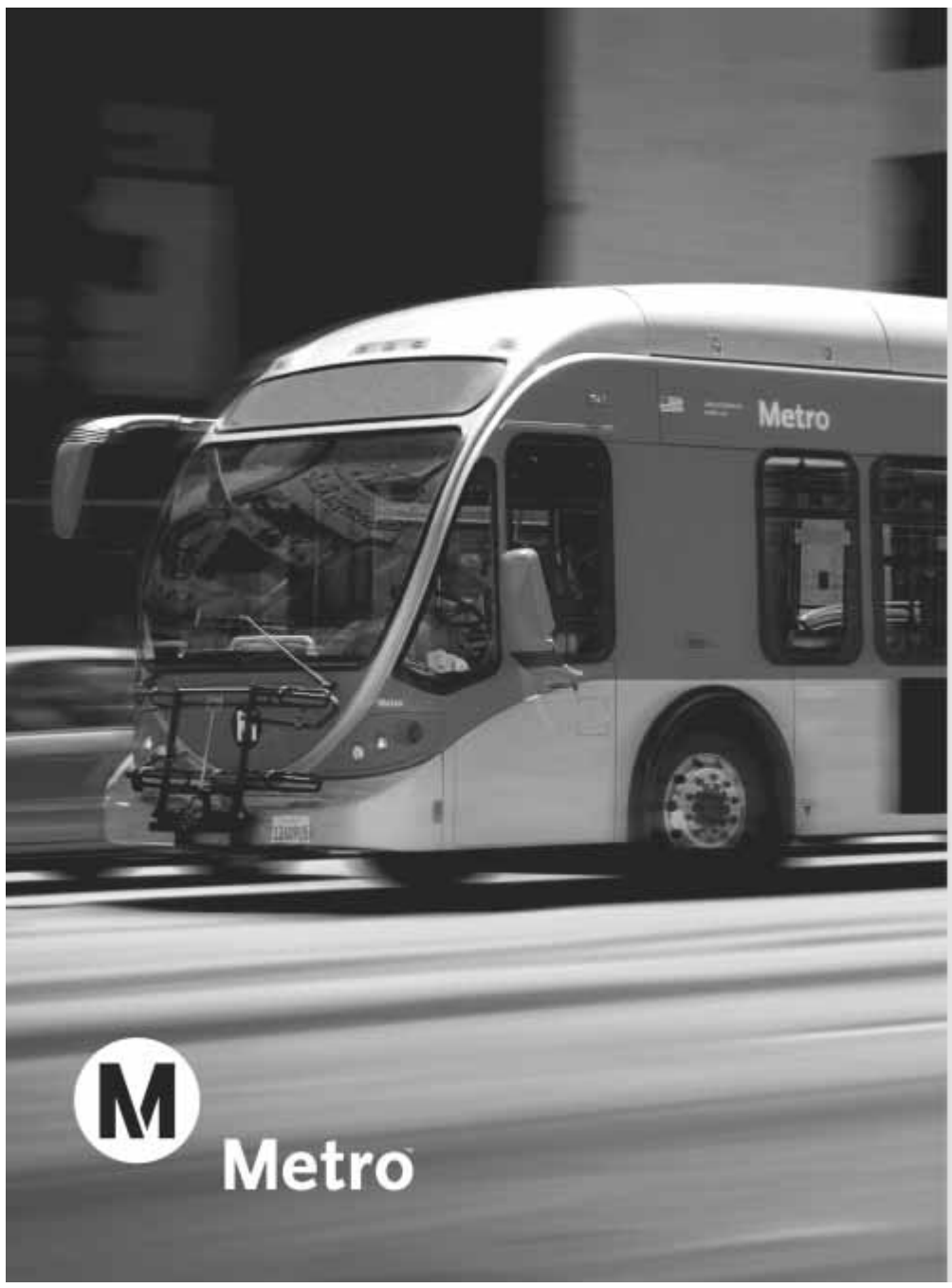
"We have single-family homes and a lot of apartments," Mary Marlow, the chairman of the Ocean Park association, said. "It's not like we have just one style."

Perhaps the most sensitive issue in the neighborhood is the new development that has taken place over the past decade, specifically on Main Street where several mixed-use projects have been built.

"Scale is definitely the most important," Marlow said. "Along the beach the little houses are being torn down and everything is being built to the max."

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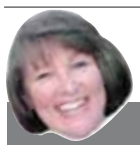
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Play Time

Cynthia Citron
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

‘Miracle’ of a production

SURELY A CHILD ABANDONED IN THE forest and raised by wolves would not grow up to be as wild and uncontrollable as the young Helen Keller. Trapped inside a body that could neither see nor hear the world around her, and over-indulged by her helpless and bewildered parents, Helen vented her anger and frustration in tantrums and random physical attacks.

The story of Helen Keller’s childhood, and her subsequent evolution under the resolute tutelage of the 20-year-old Annie Sullivan, is an American classic, given voice by playwright William Gibson in his 1957 television play “The Miracle Worker” and its Broadway production two years later. Since then, “The Miracle Worker” has become a perennial favorite, performed often in theaters around the country. But, I would venture to guess, nowhere better than in the current production at the Edgemar Center for the Arts in Santa Monica.

Carlie Nettles as Helen and Erin Christine Shaver as Annie Sullivan are intense and riveting, volatile, manic, and emotionally draining to watch. In ferocious battles of the will, they pummel each other: the mute Helen scratching and clawing, the indomitable Annie pinning her to the ground and never letting go. In a protracted breakfast scene, Helen wanders around the table grabbing handfuls of scrambled eggs from the plates of her permissive family members. The horrified Annie then launches into a wrestling match as she attempts to confine the writhing and kicking Helen in her seat and compel her to eat from a plate set in front of her. As the rebellious Helen repeatedly tosses the food to the floor, Annie continues to refill the plate. The scene, overlong and violent, is so truthful and so climactic as to leave the transfixed audience in a complete state of exhaustion.

Joel Daavid, who directed and designed this version of the play, has peopled it with children from Annie Sullivan’s bleak past: sad, blind orphans who appear as memory figures and move through their scenes with balletic grace.

As Helen’s genteel parents, noble figures in the late Confederacy, Stuart W. Howard plays her father, a captain in that war, and Julie Austin Felder plays her mother, Kate, a cousin of Robert E. Lee and daughter of a Confederate general. Kate hobbles Helen with tenderness fraught with guilt, while “The Captain,” who admits to not loving this disabled daughter, treats her with detachment and lack of empathy. Which, however, doesn’t explain his ambivalent relationship with his older son from a previous marriage. This son, James (Christopher Irving) is a sardonic, unpleasant young man who longs for his father’s respect but, for some inexplicable reason, garners only his contempt. This father-son relationship is ill-defined and unresolved, and is a confusing and erratic sideline to the central action of the play.

In addition to this rather unnecessary character, and an unnecessary aunt, played with Southern belle elegance by Marbry Steward, there is also the matter of redundancy. While Nettles and Shaver are consistently excellent, there are just a few too many battle scenes between them, and too many repetitions of Nettles stumbling around, behaving maliciously, and probing people’s faces and bodies. All this makes for a nearly three-hour play which should have been judiciously cut by at least half an hour.

These are minor cavils, however, to a play that is innovatively presented, beautifully performed, and carried out on a set that is cleverly designed and continually transforming by means of rotating scenery and diverse lighting effects.

Even if you saw the film version which won Academy Awards for both Patty Duke and Anne Bancroft in 1962, that was a long time ago. So it’s not too soon to see this vivid and emotionally satisfying revival.

“The Miracle Worker” will continue at the Edgemar Center for the Arts, 2437 Main St., Santa Monica, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. through June 28. Call (310) 392-7327 for reservations.

CYNTHIA CITRON can be heard reading her theater reviews on iTunes at feed://www.airsla.org/broadcasts/theater_reviewsrss.xml

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BOOK REVIEW

BY JACK NEWORTH



'The Wicked Wit of the West'

Irv Brecher as told to Hank Rosenfeld • Ben Yehuda Press

To historians of American comedy, the name Irving Brecher, ought to be included among the legends. At 24 Brecher was the only writer to get sole credit on Marx Brothers' films, "At the Circus" (1939) and "Go West" (1940.) He also worked on "The Wizard of Oz," created,"The Life of Riley" as a radio show, wrote and directed it as a movie and then as the first television sit-com (Starring a young, and relatively slim, Jackie Gleason).

Brecher's remarkable life is chronicled in this hilarious memoir, "The Wicked Wit of the West" (as Groucho dubbed him) as told to L.A. Times folk-journalist, and Santa Monica resident, Hank Rosenfeld.

Drawing on his early days of writing for Vaudeville and radio, the book is brimming with Irv's juicy tales about Hollywood icons, including Benny, Berle, Gleason, Burns, and of course, the Marx Brothers. It's the product of seven years of Rosenfeld's tagging along with Irv, splitting pastrami sandwiches, and recording Irv's every word of rapid-fire banter and acid wit.

Like "Tuesday with Morrie" only with laughs, the beauty of this book is the deep friendship that develops between Rosenfeld and the oft-crotchety Brecher. It began in 2001, when Turner Classic Movie channel interviewed Golden Age Hollywood participants. "I'm afraid I'm the last living MGM writer," Irv said. "And frankly I just hope I get through this interview."

In attendance, Rosenfeld was struck how much Irv sounded like Groucho, "That distinctively edgy launching of an expertly aimed zinger." Suddenly there was a beeping sound. "Unless there's a canary in here, my hearing aid just died."

"How long do those batteries last," asked the interviewer. "About two weeks," Irv replied. "Longer if you don't do any listening."

Brecher didn't want to be part of a typical, self-absorbed Hollywood biography. He agreed to do the book on one condition, "That I don't have to read it." Hank insisted on using a tape recorder to "get everything accurately." Irv quipped, "You're going to have trouble being a journalist if you insist on being accurate."

The book begins in 1931 in New York city. Irv was 17 and a ticket-take/usher at his cousin's movie house on 57th Street. He worked six, 10 hour days for $18 a week and was glad to have it as he was the only support of his parents and siblings in Depression-era Bronx.

In his spare time, Irv would occasionally send newspaper columnists Walter Winchell and Ed Sullivan topical gags and one-liners for the pure joy of seeing his name in papers with circulation of over one million. He never for a moment dreamed it would eventually lead to a career in glamorous, far-off Hollywood.

One day a reviewer for Variety, Wolf Kaufman, came into the theatre. He had recognized one of Irv's jokes in a Vaudeville act of Bob Hope! He convinced Irv to run an ad in Variety advertising his joke-writing talents. Irv didn't have the $15 for the ad, as it was almost a week's salary. Kaufman arranged for Irv to temporarily owe Variety, a publication he would wind up subscribing to for the next 70 years!

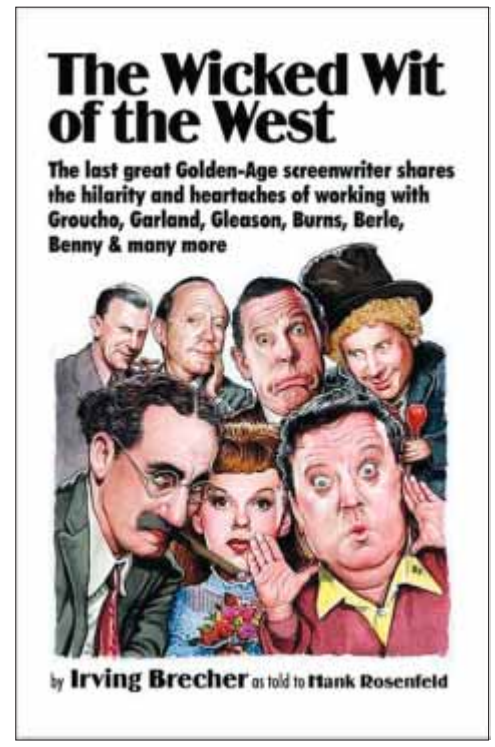
One of those responding to the Variety ad was a brash, young Vaudeville comedian named Milton Berle who was notorious for stealing other comics' material. (The chapter on Berle is entitled, "The Thief of Bad Gags."). After reviewing pages of Irv's jokes, Berle paid him the princely sum of $50. Soon Irv would quit his usher's job and would forever jokingly blame Hope and Berle for his life in show business.

Among the great Groucho stories details his and Irv's vacation at a hotel in the south that didn't accept Jews. Groucho sat on his suitcase and accused the hotel of being one in a chain of brothels. "Is it true that you're your brothel's keeper?" he asked the perplexed hotel manager.

In a scene from "Go West," a western, Groucho's knocked down a flight of stairs in a saloon by the villain. Harpo and Chico rush over to give him water. "Forget the water," Groucho says, "force brandy down my throat." That line became famous in bars all across the country. Pretty heady stuff for the 24-year-old screenwriter who wrote it.

"The Wicked Wit of the West" is a funny, charming, and ultimately touching, reminiscence. For those over 60, it may bring back fond memories of radio and early television. For those under, it represents an essential piece of American comedy history.

Irv's glaucoma made it impossible to review the book's galleys. He hired an actor to read it to him over four days. Shortly thereafter he passed away but even on his deathbed, he was cracking one-liners. Irv missed the publication but he had "read" the book, something he joked he'd never do. I'm definitely glad that I did.



EVENT INFO

■ On June 11, the American Cinematheque at the Aero Theatre on Montana Avenue, will show "Bye, Bye Birdie," written by Irv Brecher. Hank Rosenfeld will offer commentary. Hank can be reached at Hankidu@aol.com.

JACK NEWORTH also writes the "Laughing Matters" column which appears every Friday. He can be reached at Jackneworth@yahoo.com,

Gay marriage bill signed into law in New Hampshire

NORMA LOVE
Associated Press Writer

CONCORD, N.H. New Hampshire became the sixth state to legalize gay marriage Wednesday in a move that reflects the state's changing demographics from reliably Republican and conservative to younger and more liberal.

The Senate and House passed key language on religious rights, Gov. John Lynch — who personally opposes gay marriage — signed the legislation Wednesday afternoon.

Lynch, a Democrat, had promised a veto if the law didn't clearly spell out that churches and religious groups would not be forced to officiate at gay marriages or provide other services. Legislators made the changes.

"Today, we are standing up for the liberties of same-sex couples by making clear that they will receive the same rights, responsibilities — and respect — under New Hampshire law," Lynch said.

Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont and Iowa already allow gay marriage, though opponents hope to overturn Maine's law with a public vote.

California briefly allowed gay marriage before a public vote banned it; a court ruling grandfathered in couples who were already married.

Lynch said it is now time for the federal government to extend full equal rights to same-sex couples.

After rallies outside the Statehouse by both sides in the morning, the last of three bills in the package went to the Senate, which approved it 14-10 Wednesday afternoon.

Cheers from the gallery greeted the key vote in the House, which passed it 198-176. Surrounded by gay marriage supporters, Lynch signed the bill about an hour later.

The New Hampshire law will take effect Jan. 1, exactly two years after the state began recognizing civil unions.

The Rt. Rev. V. Gene Robinson, elected in New Hampshire in 2003 as the first openly gay bishop in the Episcopal Church, was among those celebrating the new law.

"It's about being recognized as whole people and whole citizens," Robinson said.

"There are a lot of people standing here who when we grew up could not have imagined this," he said. "You can't imagine something that is simply impossible. It's happened, in our lifetimes."

Opponents objected on grounds including the fragmented process.

"It is no surprise that the Legislature finally passed the last piece to the gay marriage bill today. After all, when you take 12 votes on five iterations of the same issue, you're bound to get it passed sooner or later," said Kevin Smith, executive director of gay marriage opponent Cornerstone Policy Research.

The revised bill clarified that church-related organizations that serve charitable or educational purposes are exempt from having to provide insurance and other benefits to same-sex spouses of employees.

The House rejected the language Lynch suggested two weeks ago by two votes. Wednesday's vote was on a revised bill negotiated with the Senate.

"The pro-gay marriage people have been very disingenuous," said Fenton Groen, 59, of Rochester, N.H. "They told us two years ago that if civil unions were passed, that would completely satisfy them. Within two years, they have completely changed their minds."

Supporters had considered Wednesday their last chance to pass a bill this year.

Rob Davis of Concord and his partner of 27 years, Dean Davis, were in the jubilant crowd outside afterward.

They had a civil union last year.

"It didn't go far enough," Rob Davis said of their civil union. "We're real happy."

New Hampshire's decision leaves Rhode Island as the only New England state not to allow same-sex marriages. A bill there is expected to fail this year, as similar ones have in previous years.

New obesity surgery leaves no scars

LINDSEY TANNER
AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO Doctors are testing a new kind of obesity surgery without any cuts through the abdomen, snaking a tube as thick as a garden hose down the throat to snap staples into the stomach.

The experimental, scar-free procedure creates a narrow passage that slows the food as it moves from the upper stomach into the lower stomach, helping patients feel full more quickly and eat less.

Doctors say preliminary results from about 200 U.S. patients and 100 in Europe look promising.

After about 18 months, obese European patients have lost an average of about 45 percent of their body weight, said Dr. Gregg Nishi, a surgeon at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. He discussed the European and U.S. studies during a Chicago conference this week for digestive disease specialists.

The procedure is only being done in the studies, which recently ended enrollment. Makers of the device used in the operation plan to seek federal approval if the research continues to go as planned.

While the two studies are still under way and only brief details are being released, Nishi said results so far are slightly better than typical results from with conventional stomach stapling.

Risks include perforating the esophagus, as Nishi said happened to a patient at another center, but otherwise, he said, there have been no major complications.

Some study patients have lost weight after unknowingly undergoing fake procedures — sedation and the tube, but no stapling. Results comparing them with the real thing aren't yet available.

Liliana Gomez, an administrative coordinator at Cedars-Sinai, was among the first Americans to have the scarless obesity surgery last year, as a test case for the U.S. study. She had planned on more invasive conventional surgery until learning that doctors at her hospital were studying the scarless stapling technique.

"When I found out it was going to be oral, through your mouth, I was like, 'Wow, that's kind of different,'" she said.

Since her operation in August, Gomez has lost about 40 pounds and dropped from size 22 to size 16.

The 35-year-old mother of three has a long way to go — she's still obese according to body mass index standards. But Gomez says she has cut her meal portions by more than half and still feels full, and is optimistic she'll continue to lose weight.

The new method is part of a medical movement to perform surgery through body openings such as the nose, mouth and vagina instead of making cuts. The idea is to reduce chances of infection and pain, and speed recovery. With no scars, there are cosmetic advantages, too.

Gomez had considered a gastric bypass operation, a more complex kind of stomach stapling, but worried about risks from that surgery. It reduces the stomach to the size of a golf ball and reroutes the digestive tract.

Whether done through one large abdominal incision or several tiny ones, gastric bypass is far more invasive and increases chances for malnutrition because it repositions how the stomach attaches to the intestines to restrict calorie absorption.

Another popular weight-loss surgery option involves putting an adjustable band around the top part of the stomach to create a small pouch.

The experimental method Gomez had is the oral version of a different kind of stomach surgery, which reduces the size of the stomach with staples but doesn't reroute the digestive system.

Surgery is generally considered a last-resort treatment for obesity, which affects more than 15 million Americans. Still, demand is high.

Preventing school dropouts starts early in education process

BETH J. HARPAZ
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK It's graduation time, but not for everyone.

One out of every four students fails to graduate from high school in four years, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Risk factors for dropping out include low academic achievement, mental health problems, truancy, poverty and teen pregnancy.

But here's a shocker from Lynne Strathman, director of Lydia Urban Academy in Rockford, Ill., a small faith-based alternative program for dropouts.

Strathman says the one thing that she consistently finds is that "the last time these students felt successful was the fourth grade."

That's right: Fourth grade. Which means parents and teachers may be ignoring years of red flags.

"Dropping out of school is often the result of a long process of disengagement," agreed Stuart Udell, chairman of the National Dropout Prevention Center, based at Clemson University in South Carolina. And typically, he added, kids have multiple risk factors rather than one simple problem. Here are a few of the issues related to teenage dropouts:

• Adult responsibilities, from work to child-rearing.

Among girls who have babies at age 17 or younger, 60 percent drop out of high school, according to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. Udell said boys who become fathers are at higher risk too.

One famous example: Levi Johnston, father of Bristol Palin's baby, interrupted his studies to become an apprentice electrician in Alaska. But the apprenticeship required a high school degree, and he left the program. Bristol graduated with her class, but Levi has not yet earned his diploma, according to interviews in the July issue of GQ magazine and on "Larry King Live."

• Truancy, learning disabilities and mental health problems.

"Truancy is a symptom," not the cause, of dropping out, according to Frederic Reamer, professor at the Rhode Island College School of Social Work and author with his wife of "Finding Help for Struggling Teens: A Guide for Parents and the Professionals Who Work With Them."

Strathman said kids who can't succeed academically often become truants because school is "so frustrating to them. They're labeled that they're lazy, but they don't know how to function in school because of a learning disability or a mental health issue." Low achievement leads to behavioral problems: "They felt like failures, and they made themselves get kicked out."



SURF REPORT

Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 62°

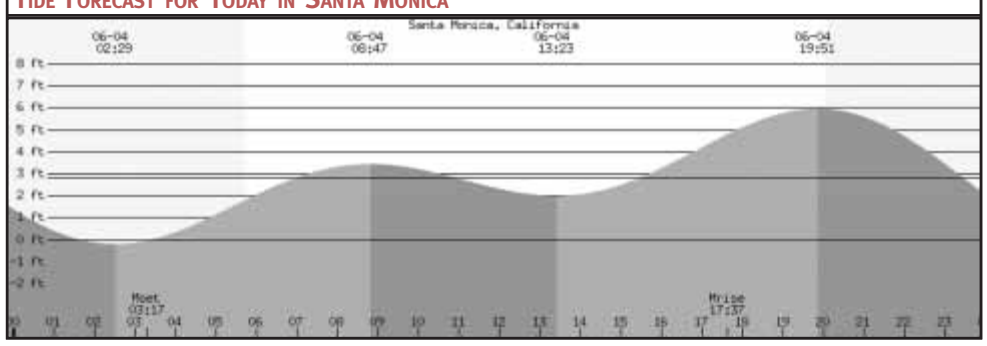
Swell Forecast (1-1 FT)

Thursday the 4th we should see SW swell from 200+ degrees start to increase. A more significant increase is expected Friday the 5th.

Long Range Synopsis

Friday the 5th is when we should see a better increase in southern hemi swell, mostly from 200+ degrees, and with 16-second periods. BUT...the ETA on this one is for later in the day.

Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica



BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of: **May 26, 2009**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - www.healthebay.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 8
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 40 / ns
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 5 / ns

The Beach Report Card is made possible by simplehuman, Goldhirsh Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, Ford

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Las Cornilla Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth	A+	ns
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechusa and Las Alisos creeks	A+	ns
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	ns
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	ns
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	ns
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	ns
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	A+	ns
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A	ns
Solstice Canyon at Don Blocker County Beach	D	ns
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth	A+	ns
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	B	ns
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	ns
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily	F	ns
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	B	ns
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	ns
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A+	ns
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	A	ns
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	ns
Tuna Canyon	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	C	ns
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	A	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	ns	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain	A	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua)	A	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	A+	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	A	ns
Santa Monica Municipal Pier	F	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain	C	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms)	A+	ns
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain	A	ns
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	ns
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain	A+	ns
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	A+	ns
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	ns
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St.	A+	ns
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain	A	ns
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach	A+	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty)	A+	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain	A+	ns
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant	A+	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain	A+	ns

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone
WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days
ns -- no sample taken

Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card© is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles' Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A–F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

Heal the Bay

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NBA FINALS

Bryant gets game face on

BY TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES His smile has vanished, replaced by something closer to a scowl. His days of joking around are seemingly on hold.

Kobe Bryant has gotten deadly serious.

He has that look, you've seen the one. It's the cold-blooded, get-out-of-my-way-or-pay glare he'll shoot at a teammate who messes up or an opponent who dares to try and stop him.

The Black Mamba is poised to strike.

The NBA finals are in his sights.

After a humbling loss to the Boston Celtics in last year's finals, Bryant and the Los Angeles Lakers will be seeking atonement — and a 15th championship — when they face the resurrected Orlando Magic in Game 1 on Thursday night at the Staples Center.

For Bryant, the game's greatest late-game closer since Michael Jordan, it's a second opportunity at shutting up some of his loudest detractors. He has won three titles, but hasn't been able to get No. 4 since Shaquille O'Neal was traded after the 2004 season to Miami.

Bryant was asked Wednesday if he needed a post-Shaq championship to enhance his legacy.

"Not at all," Bryant said. "It means nothing. To me, it's about winning another one, just because I want to win another one."

Before catching his breath, Bryant, who had been loose and relaxed earlier this week, then took a verbal swipe worthy of a flagrant foul at O'Neal, his former teammate with whom he famously feuded.

"People think Shaq would have won a championship without me on that team," he said. "They're crazy."

This is Bryant's chance. He doesn't want to waste it.

And O'Neal, a 7-foot timeline connecting finals appearances by both franchises, posted a message on his Twitter.com site saying he was pulling for Bryant.

"I am saying it today and today only," Shaq tweeted. "I want kobe bryant to get number four, spread da word."

From the moment Bryant dejectedly walked off the floor in Boston last June following L.A.'s 39-point loss in Game 6, he has been focused on a return. He helped restore U.S. basketball's world supremacy by leading the Americans to an Olympic gold medal in China last summer.

That was the Redeem Team. He's on another one.

"My next goal is winning the NBA championship," he said. "We don't want to fall short of that."

Los Angeles would seem to have everything — history, experience, star power, coaching, A-List celebrities — over Orlando.

The Lakers have won 14 titles. Orlando, 0.

The Lakers have won 61 finals games. Orlando, 0.

Los Angeles coach Phil Jackson has nine championship rings. Orlando's Stan Van Gundy 1 — but he got it as an assistant and doesn't know where it is.

Yet the Magic, making their first appearance in the finals since 1995, won both regular-season matchups against the Lakers and are capable of an upset.

"They've beaten us three of the last four times," Bryant said. "So we're very, very concerned."

They should be.

Dwight Howard, Orlando's fun-loving Superman of a center, is the league's latest incarnation of Shaq. He can bend backboards, take over a game at both ends and crack up his teammates with a killer impersonation of the frumpy and grumpy Van Gundy.

In Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals, Howard scored 40 points with 14 rebounds as the Magic finished off Cleveland and sawed the Kobe Bryant-LeBron James dream finals matchup in half.

On their way to the finals, the 3-point-happy Magic (they made 62 3s against the Cavs and are averaging 8.6 per game in the postseason) have knocked off the favored Celtics, Cavaliers and can now dispatch the Lakers.

That would be quite a trifecta. No team has ever beaten three 60-win teams in the same postseason.

Superman doesn't mind his role as Underdog.

"We've always been overlooked," Howard said. "We were overlooked in the first series against Philly. We were overlooked against Boston. We were overlooked against the Cavs, and we're still overlooked. We don't want to be a team that everybody picks to win, because I think as a young team, once everybody starts saying, 'OK, you're this or you're that,' sometimes you tend to forget what got you there.

"Everybody picking against us motivates us. It drives us to do something greater."

The Magic's season seemed doomed when All-Star point guard Jameer Nelson went down with a shoulder injury in February. The team survived the adversity and now may get a recovered Nelson back for the finals.

Van Gundy was still weighing whether to play Nelson, who averaged 27.5 points in the two wins over Los Angeles. He isn't worried about Nelson disrupting Orlando's chemistry, and Van Gundy is not convinced his return would provide any goose bumps.

"It's not like he hasn't played with our guys," Van Gundy said, "and I don't really think our guys need an emotional boost. I don't think it's going to be a Willis Reed moment or anything."

The overriding theme during the Lakers' post-practice availability on Wednesday was how last season's finals lessons will help them this time. A year ago, many of Los Angeles' young players got swept up and overrun by the mammoth media attention.

The images of Boston coach Doc Rivers bathing in Gatorade, Kevin Garnett kissing Boston's midcourt leprechaun logo and Paul Pierce hoisting the Larry O'Brien trophy have stuck with them.

The Lakers want to make them go away.

"We're upset about losing in the finals," forward Pau Gasol said. "We should have given it a better shot than we did. It didn't happen, and now we're here again and we can give it a much better shot and really get it done."

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AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

Drag Me to Hell (PG-13) 1hr 39min
12:40, 2:15, 3:05, 4:45, 5:35, 7:15, 8:00, 9:45

Earth (G) 1hr 30min
12:50

Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian (PG) 1hr 45min
1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40

Star Trek (PG-13) 2hrs 6min
3:15, 6:10, 9:00

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

Up (PG) 1hr 36min
12:35, 3:10, 5:45, 8:20

Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian (PG) 1hr 45min
12:55, 2:20, 3:40, 5:00, 6:20, 7:35, 9:00, 10:15

Up (Digital 3-D) (PG) 1hr 36min
1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50

Angels & Demons (Digital) (PG-13) 2hrs 20min
12:05, 1:10, 4:20, 7:30, 10:30

Star Trek (2009) (PG-13) 2hrs 06min
1:00, 3:15, 4:00, 7:00, 9:30, 10:00

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

The Brothers Bloom (PG-13) 1hr 49min
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 9:55

Every Little Step (PG-13) 1hr 36min
1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:45

O'Horten (PG-13) 1hr 30min
1:00, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:00

Easy Virtue (PG-13) 1hr 33min
1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:15

Mann's Criterion Theatre
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Terminator Salvation (Digital) (PG-13) 1hr 54min
1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

X-Men Origins: Wolverine (PG-13) 1hr 47min
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00

Dance Flick (PG-13) 1hr 23min
12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:20, 9:30

The Soloist (PG-13) 1hr 49min
12:50, 3:50, 6:50, 9:40

Terminator Salvation (PG-13) 1hr 54min
11:50 a.m., 2:30, 5:10, 6:00, 8:00, 9:00, 10:40

Ghosts of Girlfriends Past (PG-13) 1hr 40min
12:20, 3:10

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

Where the crowd is, Capricorn

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Deal directly with others. No in-betweens allowed. Interpersonal discussions could draw better results. You do want the best outcome, don't you? Patience plays out with an associate or key worker. Tonight: Dinner for two!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ Talk to others, but also work on your listening skills. Someone verbalizes his or her discontent. This person's reaction might have nothing to do with you. Creativity helps him or her relax and open up, getting to the root of the issue. Tonight: Pretend you are a kid again.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★ Focus on moving a difficult person and eliminating a difficult situation. If you fail on the first attempt, pull back, unless you want bigger problems. Consider starting a health and diet plan. Tonight: Find a favorite hobby.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ Your imagination helps with a very difficult and perhaps controlling person. New beginnings become possible within your immediate circle, though conversations can and probably are stilted at the beginning. Tonight: Catch up on people's news. Return calls and e-mails.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Your heart lies close to home — whether you decide to work from home or take a personal day. Revamp your daily life and try to make it more vital, making you happier. Change and let go of what doesn't work. Tonight: Update your budget.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Open up to new possibilities and stay direct. Be willing to head in a new direction and handle a situation differently. Good communication could defuse a bad idea with ease and without bad feelings. Tonight: Make calls, thinking "weekend."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ You think you need to have money to move your ideas. There are other assets and abilities that you do have. Use your people skills, and you could close a negotiation. Tonight: Avoid a control game.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Help get others motivated. You might wonder how to handle someone's anger or aggressive manner. You'll find answers quite quickly. A friend who is often negative will rain on your parade if you really listen to him or her. Don't! Tonight: Whatever makes you smile.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★ Take your time and clear out a problem that you are keeping to yourself. Though you might feel that it is better, it could put you in a sour mood, which could confuse many. You are very stern! Tonight: Do what you need to do for yourself.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★★ Zero in on what is important. Listen to feedback in a meeting. You'll gain a great deal of insight from others. News or information that you are hearing might not be right-on. In fact, there could be a lot left out. Know that you need to do your homework. Tonight: Where people are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★ Stand up there and be accountable. You might not be able to change a situation or make it go the way you want. Still, your leadership and opinions do make a difference, even with a partner who doesn't share a lot. Understand that you cannot change anyone. Tonight: Could be late.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Seek out information that you feel you need. Detach and understand what needs to happen. Others listen well, but they might not be open to hearing anything else but what they want to hear. Tonight: Listen to music.

Happy birthday

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

This year, your efforts and focus help manifest your desires. Your emphasis is on the quality of your life. Your determination to change transforms your daily life. If you are single, you will meet people with ease. Romance, however, is more likely to emanate from a foreigner or someone quite distant. If you are attached, enlist your sweetie to help update the quality of your life. SCORPIO can push your boundaries.

Girls and Sports
By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



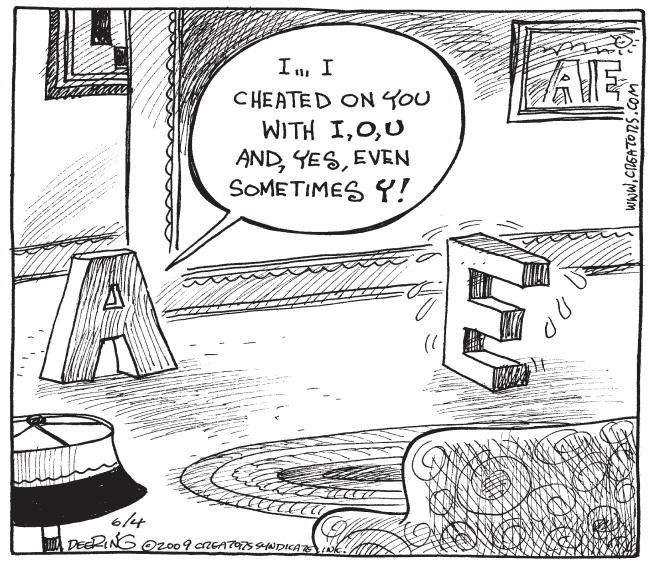
The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



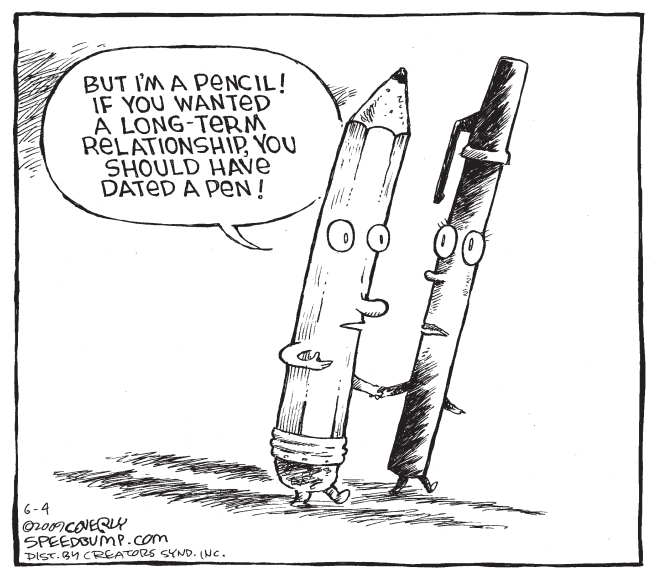
Garfield
By Jim Davis



Strange Brew
By John Deering



Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



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Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from ★ (easiest) to ★★★★★ (hardest).

Difficulty Level ★★★

	9						3	
6				1				2
			2		7			
		1		4		5		
	4		9	6	5		2	
		7		3		9		
			6		4			
8				5				9
	7						4	

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

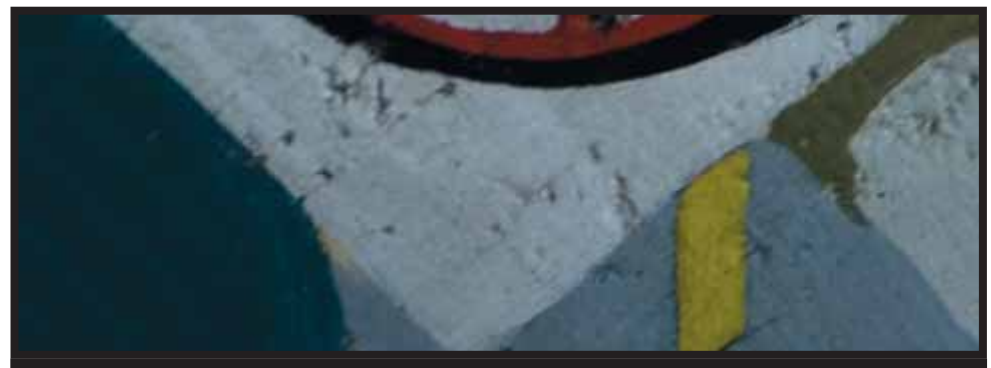
7	5	8	3	6	9	1	4	2
3	1	4	8	5	2	9	7	6
6	9	2	1	7	4	5	8	3
9	8	6	4	2	5	7	3	1
4	3	1	7	8	6	2	5	9
5	2	7	9	3	1	8	6	4
2	7	3	6	1	8	4	9	5
1	6	9	5	4	7	3	2	8
8	4	5	2	9	3	6	1	7

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MYSTERY REVEALED!

Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

Josh Nickel and Benjamin Steers both correctly identified this photograph of Ann Elizabeth Thiermann's mural, 'History of the Pico Neighborhood,' which can be found on Stewart Street at the I-10 Freeway underpass. Check out Friday's paper for a new Mystery Photo.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Unbending
6 Toss around
11 Came up
12 Daisy type
13 Perry's assistant
14 Bygone
15 Take out
17 Casino card
19 Crafty
20 Scouting org.
23 Singer Raitt
25 Double play duo
26 John Travolta movie
28 Bender
29 Clef type
30 Sow site
31 Lingerie item
32 Charter
33 Nebraska river
35 Berry of film
38 Satellite path
41 Thai, e.g.
42 TV's Arledge
43 Forgo frugality
44 Songwriter Jule

DOWN

1 "Far out, man!"
2 Rage
3 William Holden movie
4 Vacation spot
5 Gives a hand to
6 Spoils
7 Car bar
8 Writer Buntline
9 Color
10 Desire
16 Sister of Orestes
17 Touches on
18 French landscape painter
20 Jake Gyllenhaal movie
21 Boosted
22 To this point
24 "Unforgettable" singer
25 Be in the red
27 Public speakers
31 Coffee-bar offering
33 Scheme
34 Easy run
35 Owns
36 Pharaoh's symbol
37 Tell tales
39 Tavern
40 Links area

C	O	O	P	S	■	■	B	A	N	A
R	E	N	E	E	■	T	A	M	E	R
A	D	A	P	T	■	A	L	I	A	S
V	I	L	E	■	L	I	E	S	T	O
A	P	E	■	E	E	L	■	S	O	N
T	U	R	N	D	O	W	N	■	■	■
■	S	T	E	M	■	I	O	N	S	■
■	■	■	T	O	R	N	D	O	W	N
U	M	P	■	N	E	D	■	W	E	E
R	A	R	I	T	Y	■	C	H	E	W
A	M	I	G	O	■	C	R	E	T	E
L	E	M	O	N	■	C	O	R	E	S
S	T	A	R	■	■	S	C	E	N	T

Yesterday's answer

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1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	9	10
11					■	12				
13					■	14				
■	■	15			16			■	■	■
17	18		■	19			■	20	21	22
23			24			■	25			
26						27				
28				■	29					
30			■	31			■	32		
■	■	■	33				34		■	■
35	36	37			■	38			39	40
41					■	42				
43					■	44				

6-4

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 9 13 26 30 35
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SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 22 23 31 39 47
Meganumber: 3
Jackpot: $25M

FANTASY 5: 4 15 16 17 27

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 1 5 5
EVENING: 4 1 1

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 05 California Classic
2nd: 06 Whirl Win
3rd: 11 Money Bags
RACE TIME: 1.41.28

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Physician Geoffrey Hart, working with a grant from the National Institutes of Health, recently developed the Pedi-Sedate headgear to trick waiting-room kids into inhaling nitrous oxide while playing video games, thus knocking themselves out and, according to Hart's company, "dramatically improv(ing) the hospital or dental experience for the child, parents and healthcare providers." The helmet contains sophisticated sensors to monitor the dosages and effects on the child.

■ Manliness: (1) The Redneck Yacht Club opened in February near Naples, Fla., consisting of an 800-acre carefully designed mud pit that drivers pay $30 to frolic in with their own customized off-road vehicles. One mechanic told the Sarasota Herald-Tribune in April that he had spent $15,000 fixing up his rig, with 6-foot-high tires and a skull ornament. His review: "This place is kick-butt." (2) For Germany's fathers' day in May, the Panzer Fun Driving School in Germany's Brandenburg state suggested sending men off to drive one of its 13 Soviet armored vehicles (following a short class on the controls), and for an extra fee, patrons can ram their tanks over an old car.

■ Britons Sam Bompas and Harry Parr are revered chef-artists whose medium is the gelatin mold, with which they have created jelly models of, for example, London's St. Paul's Cathedral and a Madrid airport terminal, and who, for a New York customer, recently created orange-juice jelly inside some Compari jelly to produce a Compari-and-soda jelly. In April, the pair also opened a London bar, Alcoholic Architecture, in which vaporized gin and tonic saturate the air in equivalent strength of one gin-and-tonic drink for every 40 minutes of exposure.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1896 Henry Ford made a successful pre-dawn test run of his horseless carriage, called a "quadricycle," through the streets of Detroit.

WORD UP!

espy \ih-SPY\, *transitive verb*: To catch sight of; to perceive with the eyes; to discover, as a distant object partly concealed, or not obvious to notice; to see at a glance; to discern unexpectedly; to spy; as, to espy land; to espy a man in a crowd.

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Notices

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET OF SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The governing board of Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District will hold a public hearing on the BUDGET OF THE DISTRICT FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2010, prior to Final Adoption as required by Education Code Section 42103.
The public hearing will be held at 1651 16th Street / Santa Monica, CA on June 25, 2009, at 7:00 o'clock p.m. The public is cordially invited to attend this meeting.
The proposed budget will be on file and available for public inspection at the following location(s) should members of the public wish to review the budget prior to the public hearing. Location Office of the Superintendent - 1651 16th St. / Santa Monica, CA from June 22, 2009 during the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Darline P. Robles, Ph.D.,
Los Angeles County
Superintendent of Schools
Los Angeles County
Office of Education

6/4/09
CNS-1602151#
SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

DBAS

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 20090667735 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as TAPIZ MEDIA GROUP, 5118 DARTMOUTH AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90032, COUNTY OF LA. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : DANIEL MORALES, 5118 DARTMOUTH AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90032 This Business is being conducted by, an individual. Signed: Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious name or names listed herein.. /s/: DANIEL MORALES
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 5/6/2009. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 6/4/2009, 6/11/2009, 6/18/2009, 6/25/2009

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I Will Provide You With This Information At The Beginning of Each Month...Hope You Find It Helpful!

First Five Months of 2008 compared to First Five Months of 2009

Santa Monica Single Family Homes

Santa Monica Canyon

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	2	4	100%
Average Days on the Market	53	54	2%
Lowest rice	$2,050,000.00	$1,500,000.00	-27%
Median Price	$2,200,000.00	$1,545,000.00	-30%
Highest Price	$2,350,000.00	$1,900,000.00	-19%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$811.00	$745.00	-8%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	93.00%	95.00%	2%

North of Montana

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	21	13	-38%
Average Days on the Market	43	88	105%
Lowest Price	$1,575,000.00	$1,600,000.00	2%
Median Price	$2,500,000.00	$2,486,000.00	-1%
Highest Price	$3,930,000.00	$4,000,000.00	2%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$1,010.00	$802.00	-21%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	99.00%	94.00%	-5%

Between Wilshire and Montana

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	7	5	-29%
Average Days on the Market	70	60	-14%
Lowest Price	$1,508,000.00	$1,085,000.00	-28%
Median Price	$2,699,000.00	$2,150,000.00	-20%
Highest Price	$3,000,000.00	$2,487,000.00	-17%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$896.00	$679.00	-24%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	98.00%	95.00%	-3%

South of Wilshire

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	2	none	
Average Days on the Market	23		
Lowest Price	$830,000.00		
Median Price	$905,000.00		
Highest Price	$980,000.00		
Average Price Per Square Foot	$457.00		
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	96.00%		

Sunset Park

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	19	10	-47%
Average Days on the Market	62	50	-19%
Lowest Price	$780,000.00	$610,000.00	-22%
Median Price	$1,170,000.00	$9,891,000.00	745%
Highest Price	$2,200,000.00	$1,225,000.00	-44%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$642.00	$531.00	-17%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	94.00%	93.00%	-1%

Ocean park

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	8	4	-50%
Average Days on the Market	218	64	-71%
Lowest Price	$615,000.00	$1,250,000.00	103%
Median Price	$1,250,000.00	$1,995,000.00	60%
Highest Price	$2,225,000.00	$2,775,000.00	25%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$876.00	$782.00	-11%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	89.00%	98.00%	10%

Santa Monica Condo's & Townhomes

Santa Monica Canyon

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	1	1	0%
Average Days on the Market	330	11	-97%
Lowest Price	$1,150,000.00	$5,100,000.00	343%
Median Price	$1,150,000.00	$5,100,000.00	343%
Highest Price	$1,150,000.00	$5,100,000.00	343%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$824.00	$1,684.00	104%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	96.00%	97.00%	1%

North of Montana

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	16	4	-75%
Average Days on the Market	68	75	10%
Lowest Price	$465,000.00	$575,000.00	24%
Median Price	$1,360,000.00	$1,030,000.00	-24%
Highest Price	$5,800,000.00	$1,570,000.00	-73%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$903.00	$777.00	-14%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	91.00%	96.00%	5%

Between Wilshire and Montana

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	40	52	30%
Average Days on the Market	70	51	-27%
Lowest Price	$394,000.00	$270,000.00	-31%
Median Price	$657,500.00	$707,500.00	8%
Highest Price	$1,200,000.00	$1,799,000.00	50%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$607.00	$561.00	-8%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	97.00%	96.00%	-1%

South of Wilshire

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	36	34	-6%
Average Days on the Market	81	90	11%
Lowest Price	$160,000.00	$259,000.00	62%
Median Price	$625,000.00	$550,000.00	-12%
Highest Price	$1,040,000.00	$945,000.00	-9%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$509.00	$444.00	-13%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	96.00%	95.00%	-1%

Sunset Park

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	13	5	-62%
Average Days on the Market	73	69	-5%
Lowest Price	$345,000.00	$489,000.00	42%
Median Price	$735,000.00	$573,000.00	-22%
Highest Price	$995,000.00	$825,000.00	-17%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$475.00	$443.00	-7%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	97.00%	98.00%	1%

Ocean Park

	previous period 1-1-08 thru 5-31-08	current period 1-1-09 thru 5-31-09	% change
Number of Sales	16	19	19%
Average Days on the Market	125	48	-62%
Lowest Price	$410,000.00	$395,000.00	-4%
Median Price	$683,000.00	$739,000.00	8%
Highest Price	$1,750,000.00	$1,200,000.00	-31%
Average Price Per Square Foot	$694.00	$615.00	-11%
Average Sale Price / Average List Price	97.00%	95.00%	-2%

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