

FREE

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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City to move forward with water cleanup

Decides not to wait for oil company lawsuit to be settled by courts

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Santa Monica isn't waiting around for oil companies to clean up its water supply.

Six years after closing wells that produced 70 percent of the city's water because of high levels of MTBE contamination, city officials are moving forward with plans to clean up the city's largest source of water — the Charnock Wells.

And they are doing so without waiting for a verdict in the lawsuit against the companies believed to be responsible for the contamination.

"We have decided ... that six years is too long to wait for outside parties to begin designing and planning for the cleanup of our water supply," said Craig Perkins, director of the environmental and public works department. "So the city has moved

forward with that process now."

In the last two months, city officials have begun meeting with representatives from California Department of Health on how the cleanup needs to proceed.

They have also hired a cadre of consultants to begin running pilot programs on removing MTBE from water.

"MTBE is a tricky chemical," said Gil Balboa, the city's water utilities manager. "It finds its way into the ground water easily, it moves through the aquifer very quickly and it is very difficult to remove."

The Charnock Wells are located in Mar Vista, near the intersection of Palm Boulevard and Sawtelle Boulevard.

The tests are expected to take between 12-18 months to complete, Perkins said. Based on the results, the city will begin the planning process for a new water treatment facility and the environmental review process.

"But it will be a long time before we are able to turn on the wells from a water treatment facility," Perkins said. "At least five years."

Methyl tertiary-Butyl Ether is a color-

Nice effort



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Amara Russell, who plays for the Santa Monica High School Vikings' softball team, dives for a ball during practice on Thursday.

less chemical that at very low concentrations smells like turpentine and is a suspected carcinogen. The state was scheduled to ban the additive, but California Gov. Gray Davis has delayed the action.

Two years ago, Santa Monica sued 18 refiners, manufacturers and suppliers of

MTBE and MTBE-laden gasoline for allowing the chemical to leak into its ground water.

The pollution closed seven of Santa Monica's 11 wells, forcing the city to

See WATER, page 4

Civilians to direct traffic and save police money

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

This summer the Santa Monica Police Department will begin using a cadre of civilian officers to direct the city's traffic.

While other police department employees will be available to help out when things become busy, the Traffic Services Department will begin deploying 16-18 officers a day to keep traffic moving throughout the city.

The switch will save the city thousands of dollars in overtime pay that police officers and other police department employees have been paid for directing traffic in previous years.

Police could not say specifically how much the new traffic control officers would save the city overtime pay,

only that overtime pay was decreasing.

In 2000-2001, the police department spent about \$1.1 million on overtime. But so far this year the department has spent \$296,200 and next year it has budgeted \$285,600.

"This is one of the ways the police department is trying to meet its goals on saving money," said Lt. Frank Fabrega, an SMPD spokesman. "Any of those savings go back into the general fund for next year."

The advantages are not only financial, Fabrega said. With the extra officers posted at problematic intersections, traffic jams can be addressed quickly.

For example, if an overheated vehicle brakes down and blocks traffic, it used to take 45 minutes to an hour for an officer to arrive on the scene and for a tow truck to remove the vehicle.

However, now with the traffic control officers on the scene, the whole procedure can be done in 10-15 minutes, said Don Williams, a traffic services supervisor.

In the past, the police department as a whole was charged with directing traffic. Employees — both sworn officers and trained civilians — were assigned traffic duty on an overtime basis.

A few years ago, the department decided to train its meter-checkers to direct traffic. The department's name was changed to traffic services and beefed up by 10 new officers.

All of the employees in the traffic department had to undergo about six weeks of training and be able to direct traffic and write parking tickets.

Two weeks was spent in the classroom learning about

See POLICE, page 4



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

L.A. County Sheriff's deputies haul away a man who escaped custody Thursday and fled to Santa Monica High School.

Man escapes courthouse, enters Samohi

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica High School was nearly locked down by police Thursday after a criminal escaped custody at the courthouse and entered campus.

The man, whose identity was not known at press time, apparently ran across Fourth Street and entered the high school track area on the campus' west side, sources said.

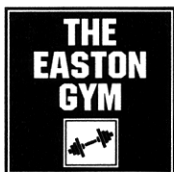
The Santa Monica Courthouse and Samohi are across the street from each other.

At about 2:30 p.m., Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputies were on scene and took the man into custody on the east end of the campus, sources said. He was reportedly being held on motor vehicle theft charges.

Two police cars arrived on scene with about a dozen students looking on.

Sources said police almost resorted to locking down the school before they caught the man.

School officials were not available for comment.



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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★ You might be pulled between and betwixt others and friends. Expenses could be overwhelming. Confusion surrounds plans and a meeting. A friend might not be portraying a situation realistically. Flow with opportunities. Tonight: Treat another.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Your smile wins the day. Even if you make an error or want to leave the office, the boss could be bedazzled by your smiling ways and sunny approach. Reach out for those around you. A conversation takes you in a new direction. Tonight: Whatever the Bull wants.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★ Take your time and think through a decision. You might not feel as strong as you would like to feel right now. Perhaps you need some downtime. A letter or phone call could be a misrepresentation of a situation. Check out facts. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Aim for more of what you want. Consider another's feelings before you make a major decision, especially within a partnership. Remember the importance of teamwork. Use your high energy to clear your desk. Tonight: Talk turkey with a loved one.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ If only you weren't so good at what you do! Others turn to you left and right for help and support. Consequently, you might need to disappoint someone, as you will have to work late. Just schedule a late get-together. Tonight: In the limelight.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Reach out for experts and those at a distance. You could have overly strong feelings about a co-worker. A friend pushes quite hard to make an impression. Let him or her know how you really feel. Be as authentic as possible. Tonight: Kick up your heels.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Move forward with a personal matter that might be preoccupying your mind, even if you've been trying not to think about it. You drive a hard bargain with a boss or someone you consider an authority. Check out what is really going on with someone close to you. Forget assumptions. Tonight: Be a duo.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Others seek you out, yet you might be wondering about one specific person. Instead of wondering, think about what you might like to do in order to bring this person forth. Reveal more of what you're thinking, especially your dreams. Tonight: Make a date.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ You just might be in a state of mind in which you want to settle in, work and maybe do an errand or two. You might be one of the few driving forces at your office or workplace. Help a partner express more of what he or she thinks or feels. Tonight: Relax outside with a loved one or neighbor.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ You might not be seeing everything clearly. Be careful with risks of all sorts, even though you think a certain action might be a sure deal. Be careful with others; someone might have a strong come-on. Revise your thinking about a work project. Tonight: Make hay while you can.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Don't make an assumption, though you could be in the mood. Right now you're not up to confronting much. In fact, you could be very happy, simply floating into weekend mode. Do what you must before skipping out the door. OK? Tonight: Play it low-key.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Head into the office and clear off your desk. Return messages. Make calls. You'll want to leave for the weekend knowing that you've handled everything you needed to. Leave your personal calls till much later. Listen to another's suggestions. Tonight: Out on the town.

QUOTE of the DAY

"We create revolution by living it."
— Jerry Rubin (1938-1994)

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LOCAL □ STATE



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Jewish community center to close

After 65 years in Santa Monica, the Bay Cities Jewish Community Center will close June 30.

The center's last Pre-K class will graduate June 14 and anyone with ties to Bay Cities is invited. The center is located at 2601 Santa Monica Blvd.

For more information, call Phyllis Foster at 310-828-3433.

Annual Pico Neighborhood meeting set

The Pico Neighborhood Association's 22nd annual neighborhood-wide meeting will be held Saturday, June 29 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Virginia Avenue Park.

The meeting will include a free picnic, discussion of neighborhood concerns and election of new members to the board of directors, as well as a discussion of the Veritas ballot measure.

Virginia Avenue Park is located on 22nd Street, between Pico Boulevard and Virginia Avenue.

For more information, contact Peter Tigler at 310-450-1755.

Green Party voices support for living wage

The Westside Greens unanimously voted on Thursday to support Santa Monica's recently passed living wage ordinance.

Hailing the law as a pioneering success for low-wage tourism workers, the Westside Greens also announced their opposition to an anticipated attempt by luxury hotels and other affected businesses to collect signatures forcing a referendum to reverse the ordinance.

According to longtime Westside Green and Santa Monica Mid-City neighborhood resident Linda Piera-Avila, "Our new living wage for tourism workers is an accomplishment Santa Monicans should stand proudly behind."

"A living wage furthers economic justice and the welfare of the workers, plus we taxpayers are no longer bearing the burden of food stamps and subsidized medical clinics for full-time workers so poorly paid they can't meet their family food and health expenses."

The Westside Greens are a recognized local of the Green Party of California, covering the area from the Santa Monica Mountains to the Marina and from Doheny to the sea. They meet at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month.



The ocean is a volatile thing. And while the storm that blew bona fide three-and-four-footers across L.A. County early this week fades into history today, a new swell is building. This one hails from the same area in the southwest Pacific as the last. Beach breaks promise

inconsistent waist-high surf with some chest level on plus sets.

NW wind swell pitches in for clean, steep waves.

Saturday, expect new swell to peak and surf to gain a foot at most at exposed southwest spots. Water will be warm, around 60 degrees, and waves will measure waist-to-chest-high.

Sunday things die down as the swell passes on and strong winds become weaker. Waves will lose a foot or more on average, though plus sets occasionally reach chest height.

(Information compiled by Jesse Haley.)

Location	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Water Quality
County Line	2-3'/Fair	2-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Zuma	2-3'/Fair	2-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Surfrider	1-2'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	A
Topanga	1-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	B
Breakwater	2-3'/Fair	2-4'/Far	2-3'/Fair	A
El Porto	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A

Ryder returns



Nick Ut/Associated Press

Actress Winona Ryder enters Los Angeles Superior Court in Beverly Hills on Thursday for the resumption of a preliminary hearing on shoplifting and drug charges. She returned to court three days after an arm injury she suffered walking through a crowd of reporters cut short the first day of her hearing. Ryder's attorney said the actress' right arm broke at the elbow when she was "whacked" from behind returning to court from lunch Monday. See story on page 6.



Residents sound off on booze problems

There has been talk among some elected officials that Santa Monica may have too many establishments that serve alcohol. Some have even suggested that the government regulate how many bars and restaurants should be located in different areas of the city.

This week's Q-Line asked: "Does Santa Monica have a drinking problem? If so, should the city government intervene?"

Here are your responses:

■ "Please! Don't give the elected imbeciles any more ammunition to screw up the city government. They've done enough already and to check on the bars and the restaurants is ridiculous. They need to check on the liquor stores and 7-Elevens. All they have to do is take a look at the homeless and all of the beer cans that sit around them."

■ "Yes we have alcohol for the young and the old in Santa Monica. There are at least three bars within spitting distance from each other. They may not be considered bars but nonetheless they still serve alcohol. They are, 1. The Border Grill, 2. Benihana's, 3. Harvelles. I think we have enough bars and bums in the street."

■ "The city should not get involved in a person's choice to drink or not to drink. I don't think there are too many drinking establishments in this city. It's a person's own personal business as to whether they want to put alcohol in their bodies. Government should stay out of our personal lives. I can't even imagine! What a stupid question! Another thing for government to get involved in! Just let a person do what they want to do with their alcohol consumption."

■ "Yes, Santa Monica does have a drinking problem. Last year when the ABC state agency came to Santa Monica, it said that this city has more alcohol

See Q-LINE, page 5



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LOCAL

City to begin process of cleaning drinking water

WATER, from page 1

import nearly 80 percent of the 12 million gallons of water it uses each day.

Until the ground water is cleaned, the oil companies are paying \$3.5 million a year to import drinking water to the city.

Cleaning up the city's wells and building a water treatment facility has been estimated to cost several hundred million dollars.

Though the oil companies were successful in moving the trial to an Orange County court, the city has won every challenge to its lawsuit.

Joe Lawrence, a deputy city attorney working on the case, said it is highly unlikely the lawsuit will be settled out of court.

"We expect there will be a trial," he said. "And probably the trial will take place in the middle or end of next year."

He added, "We are nowhere near a resolution at this point."

Meanwhile, the oil companies have been pointing fingers at each other, denying responsibility and blaming other companies named in the lawsuit, Lawrence said. The infighting has all but prevented any one company from settling with the city.

Recently, oil companies lost similar MTBE cases across the country, including in South Tahoe, Calif. Those companies found liable have been ordered to pay millions of dollars in damages.

"The city has always believed we would be victorious," Lawrence said. "The Tahoe ruling didn't bring any new confidence, it just confirmed what we had believed all along would be the result."

Since 1997, Santa Monica has budgeted \$2.2 million annually for the study, investigation and now treatment of the MTBE-contaminated wells at the Charnock wells and the Arcadia wells, which are located in West Los Angeles.

"We must clean these wells for our future generations," said Councilman Ken Genser. "We want to start it now to make sure it's done right and that we're in control of the process."

"But we also do not want to be dependent on outside water any longer than we need to."

Six months ago, Santa Monica opened a water treatment facility for the Arcadia wells — two of the MTBE contaminated wells. But the amount of water that can be drawn from the wells is minimal compared to the capacity at Charnock, officials said.

"We are pleased to have the Arcadia wells back online and it's a step in the right direction, but admittedly it's a small

step," Balboa said. "The Charnock wells represent 90 percent of the contaminated water we shut down."

Charnock is also more polluted.

Early tests found that the water contained more than 600 parts per billion of MTBE. Arcadia's water contained 86 parts per billion. The state has determined that water must contain less than 5 parts per billion before it is safe to drink.

Because of the high levels of contamination and amount of water located there, the Charnock wells will require a massive treatment facility.

The facility will have to operate continuously to handle the approximately

**"We must clean these
wells for our future
generations."**

—KEN GENSER

Santa Monica City Councilman

7,000 gallons of water coming out of the wells per minute, Perkins said.

In fact the plant must be so large, there isn't enough land by the wells to build it. So, the city plans to pipe the water to the Arcadia site where enough land is available to build the facility.

"We may have to reconstruct the city's water reservoir to fit everything in at the Arcadia site," Perkins said. "And that could be a considerable expense."

The Arcadia Wells are located near the intersection of Bundy Drive and Wilshire Boulevard.

Currently, the city treats water drawn from the Arcadia wells with granularly activated carbon. The water is run through a huge filter made of carbon, which absorbs the MTBE.

However, the carbon filter wouldn't be able to completely clean the Charnock water. Balboa said the city plans on using the carbon process in addition to an advanced oxidation process to clean the Charnock water.

The oxidation process involves adding hydrogen peroxide to the water and then using high intensity ultraviolet light to cause a chemical reaction that burns off the MTBE.

Designated traffic officers could save city thousands

POLICE, from page 1

the municipal code, the vehicle code, how to spot violations, distinguishing between makes and models of various vehicles, and learning the parameters of the city. Another three weeks was spent in the field, applying the classroom training.

"But just because they finished the program doesn't mean their training is done," said Williams. "Laws change and training has to be on-going in nature to address that."

Police said a traffic problem they are

finding is that people do not know where to go downtown when an emergency vehicle is trying to pass them. Officers say in that situation motorists can enter the designated bus lanes until the emergency vehicle passes and then get back into the roadway.

"We want residents, tourists and visitors to find traffic mobility to be a top priority in the city," Fabrega said. "We want people to come to the city and be able to move around and not get stuck in gridlock traffic."

LOCAL

The QLine

Q-LINE, from page 3

licenses per square mile than South Central Los Angeles. An alcohol license in an alcohol license. Once it is issued it stays with that establishment, even though the person who is leasing the space could leave and a completely different entity can go in there. That license will still be valid and still stay at that facility. That is a danger. We have way to many alcohol licenses. We are having a lot of drunken driving. The Santa Monica Police Department is not the only department giving DUIs. The California Highway Patrol is giving an awful lot too. So when Chief Butts at the last meeting asks are DUIs up or down and he says down, that's nonsense. He's a liar and we all know that. We are not looking at all of the other agencies giving citations. So, yes, we do have a problem."

■ "If Santa Monica has a drinking problem I couldn't even begin to see how city government intervention could do anything for it or about it. It's not the amount of bars and restaurants that are located in an area, but who goes to make the purchases. You can't control that. The government has no control over that. I say leave the establishments alone and let them do what they do."

■ "The only regulation I think the City of Santa Monica should have regarding establishments that serve alcohol is to keep them away from our schools, whether they are public or private, elementary, middle or high. Other than that I don't think the city should intervene."

■ "I feel Santa Monica does not have a drinking problem. The City of Santa Monica should not be regulating at all. The government should stay out of it 100 percent."

■ "As long as the bars are not near schools you can open as many as you like."

■ "If Santa Monica has a drinking problem, I've never heard of it. City government should not get involved if there is a problem. They are already far too involved in our private lives. If need be, there are other means of curbing drinking in public establishments."

■ "There's far too much boozing in this little hick town of Santa Monica. Vomit all over the place and lots of drunken yelling late at night."

■ "Santa Monica has a drinking problem but I am more concerned about the toxic waste they are going to start putting in our water very shortly. That's right fluoride, which is a by-product of the phosphate fertilizer industry, is now going to be dumped into our water rather than into a toxic waste dump. Are we going to pay for this? Of course. Would they have had to pay for it if they had put it in a toxic waste dump. Yes. I think concerns of the Christian Women's Temperance Union, who are worried about bars, are unfounded. It gives the cops plenty of business on DUIs. It's legal and I don't understand why anyone would have a problem with that and yet want toxic waste dumped in their water. Maybe we should refocus the question."

■ "I think Santa Monica has a government problem. Too much city government. That's what should be looked at. Less city government, less micro-managing."

■ "Yes. As a lifelong resident of Santa Monica I definitely think there should be a limit to how many places there are that sell the number one narcotic, which is alcohol. We need to protect our community from all the bad that alcohol does bring. It's probably more serious a drug problem that all the other drugs combined."

■ "Of course there is a drinking problem. But I think more concern should be focused on police enforcement of drinking laws. Every other Friday night the city is closed, so on Friday nights, where is our police enforcement?"

■ "One only has to look at the pervasive presence of obviously intoxicated persons on our streets, anytime day or night, to conclude that Santa Monica has a drinking problem. From the self medicating, mentally ill and chronically addictive transient population in Santa Monica to the nightly influx of binge-drinking college kids. The legendary non-existence of liquor law enforcement is tantamount to a perpetual last call to drink up in Santa Monica. It is against the law to not enforce the law as it pertains to alcohol sales and service. Local law enforcement is guilty of a misdemeanor if it fails to enforce liquor laws. Even if they simply know of violations and do nothing, they are guilty."



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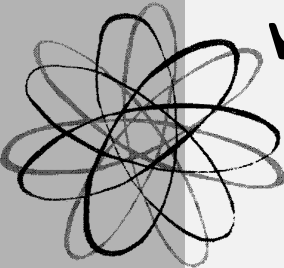
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STATE

Judge orders Ryder to stand trial for shoplifting

BY LINDA DEUTSCH
AP Special Correspondent

BEVERLY HILLS — Winona Ryder was ordered Thursday to stand trial on charges alleging she shoplifted some \$6,000 worth of merchandise from Saks Fifth Avenue and illegally possessed a drug without a prescription.

A store security official testified during a preliminary hearing that she saw the actress cutting security sensor tags off the items, and a criminalist testified that two pills found in Ryder's possession were a generic form of Percoset, a prescription painkiller.

Superior Court Judge Elden Fox said there was sufficient cause for her to be tried on charges of second-degree burglary, grand theft, vandalism and possession of a controlled substance.

Saks security official Colleen Rainey testified she looked through slats of a door and saw Ryder kneeling on the floor of a fitting room on Dec. 12, taking things out of shopping bags and putting them on the floor around her.

"I saw her cutting sensor tags off of merchandise," she testified. "She was using a pair of scissors."

At one point, she said, Ryder cut her finger and was bleeding.

Asked by defense lawyer Mark Geragos if she recognized the movie star that day, Rainey said she told another employee she looked familiar "and I said I thought it was maybe Winona Ryder."

But she added, "Her behavior was such and the way she was dressed — she appeared to be a bit disheveled. I may have mentioned she looked homeless."

Saks security official Kenneth Evans testified earlier that he had the same reaction when he first began watching her as a possible shoplifter.

"When I began to watch the defendant, absolutely I thought she was a homeless person," he said under questioning by Geragos.

Evans said the actress carried a garment bag, a red Saks shopping bag, another shopping bag and her tote bag.

"And she was wearing a three-quarter-

length cashmere coat?" asked Geragos.

"Yes," said the witness.

"And do you get a lot of homeless people wearing three-quarter-length cashmere coats?" the lawyer asked.

The question drew an objection and it was not answered.

Evans also said, however, that before leaving the store Ryder twice charged purchases that amounted to about \$3,700.

Authorities initially alleged Ryder shoplifted about \$4,800 worth of items but the value was later raised.

Ryder came to court Thursday with her right arm wrapped in an elastic bandage and held in a sling. Geragos said Ryder's right arm broke at the elbow when she was "whacked" from behind while walking through a crush of reporters at the courthouse on Monday, causing several days' delay in the hearing.

Outside court, Geragos denounced Rainey's testimony.

"That testimony was as close to full-blown perjury as I've seen in a courtroom. Those witnesses lied through their teeth," Geragos said. He also berated the district attorney's office for an alleged whisper campaign to cast doubt Ryder's arm injury.

"I believe Saks targeted her as a celebrity prior to the Christmas holidays and they have a more than willing partner in the district attorney's office," Geragos said.

Deputy District Attorney Julie Jurek rejected Geragos' allegations of perjury.

"I'm 100 percent satisfied that all of the peoples' witnesses told the truth today," she said.

Among court spectators was Mark Klaas, whose 12-year-old daughter, Polly, was abducted from her Petaluma home in 1993 and killed by a convicted kidnapper. Ryder, who is from Petaluma, was active in the search and later efforts to reform the criminal justice system. Ryder embraced Klaas during a break and thanked him for coming.

"I can certainly speak to the character of Winona Ryder," Klaas said later. "She offered \$1 million of her money for the recovery of my child. ... I think it's terrible what they're doing to her."

Disbarred attorney working as city's legal consultant

By The Associated Press

SOUTH GATE — A disbarred attorney who was found embezzling money and forging documents is working as a labor and trial specialist here for 10 months.

Christina Paguirigan, a former lawyer, has a history of felony convictions and probation violations. She has been working for South Gate under the name Christina Klaparada, charging the city \$200 an hour in legal fees.

Paguirigan, 42, faces up to three years in state prison in October if she fails to repay nearly \$34,000 to several past clients.

In 1997, she pleaded no contest to forging a witness' signature on court documents and was later disbarred for that act. A year later, she was convicted on two felony counts of embezzling \$37,500 from a trust account while working as legal counsel for a group that operates the Long Beach Convention Center.

She was sentenced to five years probation for that crime, but prosecutors said

she has skipped court appearances and has not paid back money she owes.

Paguirigan has not been convicted of any South Gate-related crimes and promised that she will keep out of trouble.

"I intend to keep an absolutely clean record, to be vigilant and not having any lapses of judgment occur," Paguirigan said.

The revelations add to the city's problems. City officials are being investigated for possible political corruption as South Gate tries to improve its tarnished image.

However, critics said the blue-collar city of 96,000 southeast of Los Angeles doesn't seem to mind who occupies office. Recently, city Treasurer Albert Robles was appointed deputy city manager, just one month after being charged with threatening to kill public officials.

"They are getting together individuals with similar backgrounds, and a lack of ethics and morals" said Councilman Henry Gonzalez, a frequent critic of the council majority. "It's like looking at a piece of fish. After a while, it starts to smell."

NATIONAL



Debt to society: Wrongly convicted face long road to getting compensation

BY SHARON COHEN
AP National Writer

After A.B. Butler Jr. was cleared of rape and freed from prison two years ago, the state of Texas granted him a pardon and gave him a check for its mistake. The value of 16 1/2 years behind bars: About \$4.60 a day.

The check totaled \$27,854 for more than a third of his life wasted, while his parents died and his marriage collapsed.

"It should have been more and it could have been more," sighs Butler, a 47-year-old construction worker. "But I just look at it as a blessing that I'm free. I take what I have and move on. There's always tomorrow and that's what I look forward to."

While Butler's attitude is accepting, his case and a growing number like it raise a thorny question: When innocent prisoners are freed after "paying a debt to society" that was never owed, does society have a debt to them in return?

What these men have found is varying and sometimes inconsistent state standards for paying for the life-changing mistake of putting the wrong person in prison.

An Associated Press review of 110 men whose convictions were overturned by DNA testing shows that where they live, when they were freed and even how skilled their lawyers are greatly influence whether they get compensated and if so, by how much.

Only 15 states, along with the District of Columbia and the federal government, have specific laws to compensate the wrongly convicted, according to a review conducted last year by Pace University associate law professor Adele Bernhard.

"It's not the common person's issue," she says. "We don't think it's going to happen to us or anybody we know."

The AP found 43 of the 110 men have received compensation, ranging from Ben Salazar's \$25,000 in Texas to an extraordinary \$36 million civil settlement shared by four Illinois men locked up for a total of 65 years.

Thirteen men collected \$1 million or more, from civil suits, state claims or both.

Although money will never make up for the lost pieces of these men's lives, for some compensation isn't just a question of fairness, but a matter of survival.

Kirk Bloodworth was branded a child killer and languished in the brutal, gray world of a Maryland prison for nearly a decade. For 2 1/2 years he was on death row.

He says the state robbed him of the chance to build his business and make his living as a crab fisherman. Now 41, the former Marine has high blood pressure, dental problems, no health insurance — and fears he could lose his boat.

Bloodworth seethes when he compares his compensation to that of a woman awarded far more after she burned herself with spilled coffee at a fast-food restaurant.

"The state was ready to kill me," he says, his voice rising, "and I got \$300,000."

Bloodworth collected \$30,000 for each year he was locked up. But he spent more than half of it the day he received his check, paying off loans and legal fees and reimbursing his father, who dug into his own savings for the drawn-out battle to free him.

He ran out of money quickly and for a short time was homeless, sleeping in his truck and at a restaurant where he found work. He admits he wasted some of his compensation, opening his wallet too often for newfound friends.

"I guess I wanted some social acceptance," he says. "I wanted to feel good again."

David Shawn Pope knows that feeling. After spending 15 years in a Texas prison for a rape he didn't commit, he indulged in his own spending spree with the first part of \$385,000 he'll collect.

A \$50,000 Ford Mustang Cobra. Furniture. A stylish wardrobe. Modeling, acting, bartending classes.

"To be honest with you, when I got out, I was pretty lonely," he says. "Spending money can be an addiction. It makes you feel better."

Pope, now 40, has scaled back since his release last year, but still has a swank, \$2,300-a-month apartment in the Marina district of San Francisco.

"Other tenants in my building say, 'Hello, how are you?' It's like they're saying, 'You must be well off, you're one of us.' But I'm really not."

Pope benefitted from a Texas law passed last year that boosted compensation to \$25,000 for each year of wrongful incarceration, up to \$500,000.

Previously, Texas paid a maximum of \$50,000 — though practically speaking, almost no one received much more than \$25,000.

Because Butler's compensation came under the old law, he received less than one-tenth of what Pope collected, even though he served more time.

As DNA continues to free inmates, more states are considering compensation.

In May, the Oklahoma House and Senate passed a bill to provide up to \$200,000 to wrongly convicted people. Last year, Gov. Frank Keating vetoed a compensation measure, saying it was too broad. He has not yet decided whether he will sign the new legislation, an aide says.

It is hard to find any official opposed to the principle of compensating those wrongly imprisoned. The difficulty is in the details. Lawmakers in some states have expressed concern about straining already tight budgets with compensation payments or awarding money in cases where there was no official negligence.

In states that do pay the wrongly convicted, there often are strings attached: filing deadlines; pledges the exonerated will not file suit; and frequently, a requirement that the governor issue a pardon.

Most states also have a money cap, which Schaffer, the Houston lawyer, argues is shamefully low, considering the agony endured.

"It doesn't take into account the fact that you were locked in a cell, the fact you might have been physically or sexually abused, kept away from your family and friends, living in hell," he says, "and that you came out with a scarlet letter on your forehead."

State claims are the most common form of compensation. In at least five cases, men who had been freed collected money from states with special legislation, sometimes called "moral obligation" bills, written to help a specific person.

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SPORTS

Lakers spreading many happy hours throughout Santa Monica



RON SMITH



At 6:17 p.m., Wednesday evening, beach time, Kerry Kittles hit a 17-foot jump shot and the Nets led 2-0, in the first game of the NBA finals.

Laker fans at Over-Under Sports Bar at 14th and Santa Monica weren't worried, though. It's happy hour, the beers are only \$2 and there have been tougher holes to dig out of.

What — us worry? We'll dig out of this one too. So

with the faith being duly kept, by the time I got to Sonny McLean's up on Wilshire and 26th — around 6:45 or so — to see how the true-blue transplanted Boston crowd was rooting, this series was over.

Chick Hearn told me as I parked that Rick Fox, uncontested, grabbed a missed shot by Kobe, threw it back in, made it look easy. And Rick Fox never makes it look easy, unless maybe it's looking cool and getting beauty queens to marry him. The Lakers were awake and rolling. NBC execs began squirming over their martinis at the in-joints in New York, as they saw ratings for this thing diving faster than the Dow Jones.

Lakers by 15 at the end of the first, so let's see — that means Lakers by 60 at the end of the game, and 240 at the end of the series. Do the math. Shaq had two less points than the whole Nets team in the first quarter. Kenny Anderson told me Shaq wants to get this thing over fast so he can

get back to the Krispy Kremes and the gentlemen's clubs.

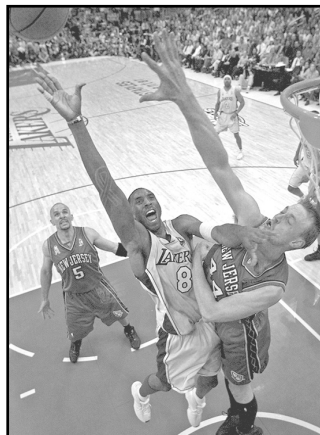
When Kobe then threw down a double pump, tomahawk sky dunk over the Nets biggest guy — his name is McCulloch — you were looking at what will be the new NBA logo some day. Move over Jerry West.

And that only got the second quarter going.

The two-headed Shakobe monster was playing like they'd just been allowed to take the weights off their ankles after that Sacramento torture. The lead is extended to 23 with more than six minutes to go in the first half. Those NBC guys in New York were now ordering doubles.

This all took place within the hour, that happy one, so everybody at Sonny's continued to hang with the cheap beer, looking at this thing like you look at a train wreck. And how's this for a twist?

These Bostonians suddenly love New Jersey — the only way they can get a shot in at the detested



Mark J. Terrill/Associated Press
Kobe Bryant goes up for a basket as New Jersey Nets' Keith Van Horn attempts to block in the fourth quarter in Game 1 of the NBA Finals on Wednesday in Los Angeles.

Lakers. And their newly beloved Nets did give them a cheap thrill by getting to within three in the fourth, but the conclusion was the same as it nearly always is.

The good guys eventually won by five. And the NBC guys woke up Thursday morning with killer hangovers and the faint hope that they might have something going on here that somebody will still want to tune in to.

National Basketball Association

By The Associated Press

All Times EDT
NBA FINALS (Best-of-7)

Wednesday, June 5

L.A. Lakers 99, New Jersey 94, Lakers lead series 1-0

Friday, June 7

New Jersey at L.A. Lakers, 9 p.m.

Sunday, June 9

L.A. Lakers at New Jersey, 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 12

L.A. Lakers at New Jersey, 9 p.m.

Friday, June 14

L.A. Lakers at New Jersey, 9 p.m., if necessary

Monday, June 17

New Jersey at L.A. Lakers, 9 p.m., if necessary

Wednesday, June 19

New Jersey at L.A. Lakers, 9 p.m., if necessary

NBA Notes

By The Associated Press

SCOREBOARD

New Jersey at L.A. Lakers (9 p.m. EDT). The Nets look to tie the Finals after losing Game 1 99-94, despite a triple-double from Jason Kidd.

STAR

Wednesday — Shaquille O'Neal, Lakers, had 36 points, 16 rebounds and four blocks in Los Angeles' 99-94 Game 1 win over New Jersey.

CLOSE CALL

The Los Angeles Lakers gave everyone a little suspense in Game 1 of the NBA Finals, letting a 23-point lead slip to three in the fourth quarter before they finished off the New Jersey Nets 99-94 Wednesday night.

EXCELLENCE

Magic Johnson, who set the standard for point guards with his all-around brilliance, and Larry Brown were elected Wednesday into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. Other inductees were Arizona coach Lute Olson; late New Jersey Nets star Drazen Petrovic; North Carolina State women's basketball coach Kay Yow and the Harlem Globetrotters.

TRIPLE-DOUBLE

Jason Kidd had 23 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for the first triple-double in the NBA Finals since Charles Barkley did it for Phoenix in 1993, but New Jersey lost to Los Angeles 99-94 Wednesday night.

INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR

The NBA Finals are being televised in 36 languages, ranging from Arabic to Cantonese, Macedonian to Icelandic, Tagalog to Ukrainian. The NBA estimates the games will reach about 2.5 billion fans in 205 countries via television, the Internet and digital technology. A record 52 international players from 30 countries and territories were on league rosters this season, including the Lakers' Rick Fox and the Nets' Todd McCulloch, both from Canada, and Los Angeles' Stanislav Medvedenko, from Ukraine.

SPEAKING

"We were a little nervous and everybody was a little tense to start. We knocked on the door, but we couldn't come through." — Jason Kidd after New Jersey lost to Los Angeles 99-94 in Game 1 of the NBA Finals on Wednesday

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Notice is hereby given that the City of Santa Monica has developed the Proposed FY 2002-03 One-Year Action Plan. The One-Year Action Plan is submitted annually to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It delineates the City's specific projects and activities for one-year use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funds in order to meet the City's overall housing and community development needs as specified in the Consolidated Plan (FY 2000-05) adopted by City Council and submitted to HUD in June 2000. The City is seeking community comments on the Proposed One-Year Action Plan.

Copies of the Proposed FY 2002-03 One-Year Action Plan are now available to the public for a 30-day community review period ending June 25, 2002. To obtain a copy of the Proposed FY 2002-03 One-Year Action Plan, please contact the Human Services Division, 1685 Main Street, Room 212, Santa Monica, CA 90401, telephone (310) 458-8701. Please send your written comments to the above address by June 25, 2002.

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INTERNATIONAL



FBI whistle-blower Rowley criticizes bureaucracy

BY DAVID ESPO
AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — The FBI is weighed down by bureaucracy, “make-work paperwork” and a culture that discourages risk-taking, an agency whistle-blower told Congress on Thursday, venting frustration with an organization she said could have done more to prevent the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

“Seven to nine levels (of bureaucracy) is really ridiculous,” Coleen Rowley, a lawyer in the FBI’s Minneapolis office, told a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing and a nationwide television audience.

Rowley appeared after FBI Director Robert S. Mueller suggested that Congress expand surveillance powers that were put into law only seven months ago, and said his storied agency needs to be “more flexible, agile and mobile” if it is to prevent future terrorist attacks.

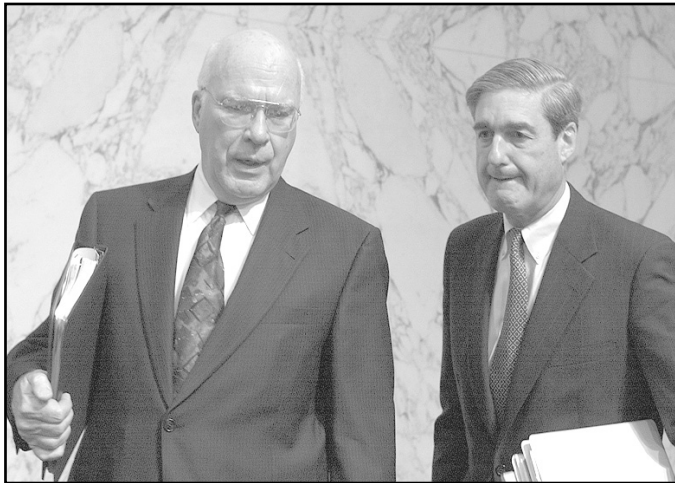
Mueller also disclosed it could take two or three years — far longer than the one year he originally hoped — to bring FBI computer systems up to standards needed to sift intelligence information efficiently.

The panel met as President Bush outlined his latest plans for strengthening America’s defenses against terrorism. They included creation of a new Department of Homeland Security, combining responsibilities now scattered in several federal agencies — including customs, immigration, the Secret Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

At the same time, members of the House and Senate intelligence committees met in a guarded room in the Capitol to continue their own review of the events of Sept. 11. Sen. Bob Graham, D-Fla., said the session included a staff-led review of the growth of Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida network and U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

While Mueller has appeared in public several times since the worst terrorist attacks in the nation’s history, Rowley was making her debut, a veteran FBI attorney so unaccustomed to publicity that her prepared public testimony contained lawyerly footnotes.

Praised by Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, as a patriot for stepping forward, she told lawmakers she would not talk about the details of the case of Zacarias Moussaoui that prompted her explosive letter last month. In a 13-page memo, the FBI agent accused bureau headquarters of putting roadblocks in the way of Minneapolis field agents trying to investigate the foreign-born Moussaoui, who is



Dennis Cook/Associated Press

FBI Director Robert Mueller, right, talks to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., on Capitol Hill on Thursday.

charged with conspiring with the hijackers in the attacks.

Instead, she focused her remarks on the frustrations of working in an “ever-growing bureaucracy” that she said led to risk aversion, make-work paperwork and so many layers of officials that effective decision-making was impeded.

“We have a culture in the FBI that there’s a certain pecking order and it’s pretty strong, and it’s very rare that somebody picks up the phone and calls a rank or two above themselves,” Rowley said.

Last August, FBI agents in Minnesota arrested Moussaoui, a French citizen of Moroccan descent, on an immigration violation after a flight school instructor became suspicious of his desire to learn to fly a commercial jet.

FBI headquarters turned down the Minneapolis’ office request to seek a search warrant to examine Moussaoui’s computer. After the Sept. 11 attacks, the FBI got the warrant and found information related to jetliners and crop-dusters on the computer hard drive, officials said. The government grounded crop-dusting planes temporarily because of what it found.

In his turn in the witness chair, Mueller won praise from several senators for his efforts to reform an agency that Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., described as hide-bound. “You inherited a great organization but also a

great bureaucracy,” added Sen. Mike DeWine, R-Ohio.

Even senators who were critical of Mueller at various points joined in the praise.

At the same time, he faced sharp questioning about the FBI’s failure to alert the committee earlier this year about the so-called Phoenix memorandum, a document sent to agency headquarters last summer noting that several Arabs were suspiciously training at a U.S. aviation school in Arizona.

Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., asked Mueller why the headquarters agent to whom the memo was addressed, David Frasca, had not told the Judiciary Committee about it in January when Frasca met with the panel’s staff. Mueller said he did not know.

Sens. John Kyl, R-Ariz., and Schumer introduced a measure on Wednesday to make it easier for agents to obtain wiretaps and conduct searches in foreign intelligence cases, saying that if the FBI had been able to listen in on Moussaoui it might have been able to prevent the attacks.

“This is a problem, and we’re looking for solutions to address this problem,” Mueller replied, adding that the Justice Department would be issuing a formal opinion on the legislation in the future.

“We are looking at ways to tweak” the legislation passed by Congress late last year, he added.

Mueller had previously outlined plans to reorganize the FBI to devote greater resources to anti-terrorism, including its ability to analyze available intelligence. “This Congress is all too familiar with the FBI’s analytical shortcomings,” he said. “Building subject area expertise or developing an awareness of the potential value of an isolated piece of information does not occur overnight,” he said. “It is developed over time.”

He told one senator the agency had begun hiring additional translators skilled in Farsi, Pashto and other languages, and said the FBI now has the ability to translate intercepts “in real time” in terrorism cases.

At the same time, he told seemingly incredulous senators that computer technology at the agency didn’t allow an agent to search all existing electronic reports for a key phrase — the term “flight school,” for example.

Asked time after time whether Rowley’s letter or the Phoenix memo could have prevented the disastrous attacks, he sidestepped.

“I’m hesitant to speculate as to what would have happened if, ...” he said at one point.

Israelis shell compound, Arafat’s living quarters

BY IBRAHIM HAZBOUN
Associated Press Writer

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Israeli forces blew up three buildings in Yasser Arafat’s headquarters and shelled his master bedroom on Thursday, in what Israel said was part of a series of reprisals for the killing of 17 Israelis in a car bomb attack.

The fiery attack, in which an 18-year-old suicide bomber drove an explosives-laden car alongside an Israeli bus and blew it up, led to two Israeli incursions and a promise of more — a cycle that threatened to torpedo renewed international efforts to put an end to more than 20 months of Mideast violence.

In contrast to a monthlong siege that ended May 2, Thursday’s incursion into Arafat’s office compound in Ramallah lasted only a few hours. Israeli tanks and giant bulldozers smashed a huge hole in the outside wall of the city-block-size compound and destroyed three buildings inside, including the military intelligence headquarters.

An Israeli shell or rocket crashed into Arafat’s sleeping quarters, about five feet from his bed — prompting Arafat to accuse the Israelis of trying to kill him.

Pointing to his dust-covered bed, broken bedroom mirror and shattered bathroom tiles, Arafat said: “I was supposed to sleep here last night, but I had some work downstairs. Of course (the Israelis) knew where I was. Everybody knows this

is my bedroom.”

An Israeli army spokesman, Capt. Jacob Dallal, denied Arafat was the target. “If there had been any intention of harming Arafat, it would not have been a problem,” Dallal said.

Also Thursday, Israeli forces entered Beituniya, a suburb of Ramallah, and arrested six men, including a suspected leader of the radical Islamic Hamas group. Palestinians and Israeli forces exchanged fire during the brief incursion.

Israeli forces left Nablus after a week-long operation to arrest suspected terrorists and confiscate weapons and explosives.

An Israeli motorist was killed in a shooting in the West Bank on Thursday, a hospital official said. He was identified as an 18-year-old high school student from the Jewish settlement of Ofra, between Ramallah and Nablus.

After the bombing Wednesday, Israeli forces briefly entered Jenin, where the teen-age bomber, Hamza Samudi, came from. The extremist Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

Islamic Jihad said Samudi learned to drive just four days before the attack, with his handlers giving him a few pointers on where to find the brake, the clutch and the gearshift. On the day before the attack, Samudi took his elderly father for a spin in the stolen car given to him by Islamic Jihad, neighbors said.

The Palestinian Authority, headed by Arafat, denounced the bombing and

ordered the arrest of Islamic Jihad activists. Even so, the group’s leader, Abdullah Shami, remained at his home in Gaza, apparently unconcerned.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

blamed Arafat. “This is a cruel, merciless war, a war being waged against us by the Palestinian Authority and its leader, who have one central aim — to break Israel’s power to resist,” Sharon said.

Archaeologists find tombs of ancient government scribes

BY SARAH EL DEEB
Associated Press Writer

SAQQARA, Egypt — Archaeologists have unearthed six 3,500-year-old tombs they believe reveal important details about the structure of government in a period considered Egypt’s golden age, the nation’s top archaeologist said Thursday.

Zahi Hawass, head of Egypt’s Supreme Council of the Antiquities, also discussed an exhibit of Egyptian treasures to tour the United States beginning June 30 at Washington’s National Gallery of Art. The exhibit is bigger than the blockbuster King Tut show of the 1970s.

Earlier this week, archaeologists working on a dig supervised by Hawass just outside Cairo, found the six tombs at the foot of the famous third dynasty Step Pyramid, believed to be Egypt’s first.

The tombs belonged to government officials who worked in northern Egypt

at the end of the 18th dynasty and early 19th dynasty (1567-1200 BC), when the seat of power was in southern Egypt, not the northern area near Cairo.

One of the tombs was capped with a 15-inch block of limestone carved in the shape of a pyramid, a characteristic of New Kingdom burials that is unusual in northern Egypt.

Hawass said the discovery is further proof of government decentralization during the New Kingdom.

“Those buried here were in charge of the Delta,” he said.

The six buried in the tombs included at least one royal scribe and a temple scribe. Archaeologists were still trying to determine the roles of all those buried played, but believed they were administrators.

“It enlarges our knowledge of the government” structure at the time, Hawass said, with its two branches, one in the north and another in the south.

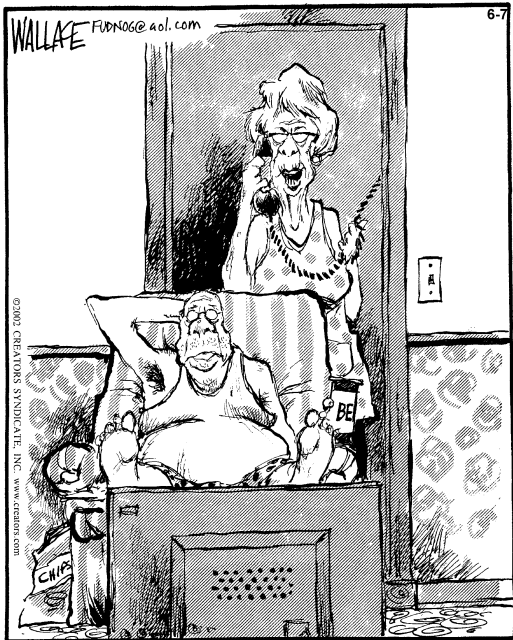


COMICS

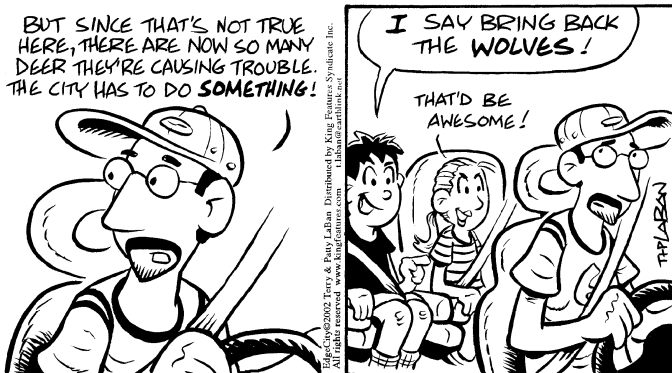
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CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Feed the pigs
 - 5 Sneaker features
 - 10 Ann Richards, for one
 - 12 Turk's neighbor
 - 13 Nimble
 - 14 Misbehave
 - 15 Free
 - 16 Destroyer, e.g.
 - 18 Prepares vegetables
 - 20 Count start
 - 21 Gone by
 - 23 Louis — (old coin)
 - 24 Pound resident
 - 26 Pinnacle
 - 28 Light metal
 - 29 Sound
 - 31 Bus. abbr.
 - 32 Stop talking
 - 36 Playwright Shelagh —
 - 39 Mimic
 - 40 Dunne or Worth
 - 41 Monopoly buy
 - 43 Swimmer Janet
 - 44 One with a title
 - 45 Chal-lenges
- DOWN**
- 1 Walk of Fame sights
 - 2 On the up-and-up
 - 3 Rust, for one
 - 4 Buddy
 - 5 Tale teller
 - 6 Circle bits
 - 7 Battery end
 - 8 Season start
 - 9 Straw user
 - 11 Set the-ory and the like
 - 17 Ninny
 - 19 Fitting
 - 22 Hunting cry
 - 24 Wise goddess
 - 25 Hazy
 - 27 Casserole bit
 - 28 Cleaned up
 - 30 Flying whiz

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TEAS	SENSED

Yesterday's answer

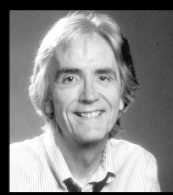
- 33 — Loa
- 34 Bother
- 35 Jury members
- 37 Sister of Emily and Charlotte
- 38 "The Untouchables" hero
- 42 Night flier

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43					44			
45						46		

6-6

STUMPED?

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

County turns down police station project because of bad feng shui

Voters in laid-back Sausalito (Marin County), Calif., turned down construction of a \$7.8 million police station in March, in part on the advice of a consultant on the ancient Chinese art feng shui who said the proposed building was not harmoniously designed in that it would block the positive flow of energy to other places in town. Said the consultant, Ms. Sidney Nancy Bennett, the building would "cut off the mouth of chi" and compromise "the arrows of sha." (In April, 400 villagers in Vinh Phuc province, Vietnam, held three farmers captive for several days, having blamed them for putting a curse on the village that disturbed its "geomantic flow," according to an Associated Press dispatch, which resulted in several traffic accidents.)

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BACK PAGE

ODDS & ENDS

Snowboarder-thief not too bright

By The Associated Press

SMELTERVILLE, Idaho — The alleged burglar of the Lookout Ski Shop in Kellogg forgot a key element that made the investigation easy, Shoshone County authorities said.

He left behind the key to his post office box.

Jesse W. Murphy, 21, was booked into jail Tuesday on a charge of burglary in the break-in early that morning, sheriff's Detective Mitch Alexander said.

A backpack left at the scene contained a set of keys, including one for the post office box.

Alexander and Pinehurst Police Chief Brad Kitchen determined who had the box and headed to Murphy's home in Smelterville. Alexander said the next clue was at their feet.

"There was a price tag for a snowboard with the regular price and sale price laying right at the foot of the front door," Alexander said. "It was the same type of tag I had seen in the shop while we were processing the scene."

City thumbn' for greenies

By The Associated Press

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho — This city needs a few good green thumbs.

With the entire flower-planting crew recovering from an automobile accident, city Parks and Recreation leaders are trying to find volunteers to plant a summer's worth of blooms.

They are contacting Boy Scouts, church groups and other organizations to help plant a greenhouse full of flowers over the next three weeks.

Unless a few volunteers can be found, the flowers may never get planted in the 20 as-yet-unplanted city-owned flower beds.

The five employees on the flower crew were injured

in a two-vehicle crash on Friday which killed an Idaho Falls woman.

"I went and visited them yesterday. I doubt they will be back for a while," Parks and Recreation Director Dave Christiansen said Tuesday.

When the crash happened, the crew was in the process of planting a summer's worth of flowers in 100 flower beds throughout the city.

"It could take a couple days to get it done," Christiansen said.

Man wrestles rare fish

By The Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — When Steve Ness hooked into a catfish on the Minnesota River a couple of weeks ago, he knew he had a monster on the other end of his 20-pound test line.

"It was so fat it wouldn't come in," Ness recalled. "I fought it for about a half-hour, but it was so close to shore its belly was stuck on the bottom. I didn't want to break the line, so I jumped in and grabbed it."

He didn't learn until later that the 52-pound, 8-ounce blue catfish he caught May 22 using chicken liver for bait was more than just big. It also was rare.

Common in other areas of the nation, blue catfish are so rare in Minnesota that an official state record didn't exist.

"In fact, this is the first confirmed blue catfish catch in the Minnesota River for many, many years — at least that I'm aware of," said Huon Newburg, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regional fisheries director.

About 6,000 blue catfish fingerlings were stocked into the St. Croix River in the early 1970s. Some — including the one Ness caught — may have migrated into the Minnesota River over the years, but they would have had to get past two dams at Granite Falls, Newburg said.

"The best explanation is that it might have done that

during the extensive flooding when water skirted around these dams," he said.

Heroism saves doomed cop's job

By The Associated Press

ELIZABETHTON, Tenn. — An off-duty sheriff's deputy in court on bad check charges saved his job when he chased and captured a jail prisoner who fled the courtroom.

After the heroics, the prosecutor dropped all charges against the deputy, preserving his 20-year law enforcement career.

Carter County Lt. Rocky Croy was in criminal court Tuesday to face two charges of writing bad checks worth less than \$40 to a supermarket.

While Croy in civilian clothes waited in the gallery for his case to come up, a prisoner bolted from the courtroom. Croy jumped out of his seat and ran after the fleeing man.

"Go get him, Rocky," Judge Lynn Brown shouted from the bench.

Croy returned to the courtroom with 20-year-old Jerry Ray Oaks, who had been charged with aggravated burglary, attempted aggravated robbery, theft, felony evading arrest and felony reckless endangerment.

Assistant District Attorney Ken Baldwin then asked the judge to dismiss the charges against Croy.

"Your honor, this is the kind of person we need in law enforcement," Baldwin told Brown. "He instinctively went after that man even though he was off duty."

Croy had already made restitution on the two checks. He said they were written from an account he and his wife closed when they thought all the checks had cleared.

If the charges stood, Croy would have been dismissed from the department.

"He had a lot riding on this day in court — 20 years of service," Sheriff John Henson said. "Rocky has always been a good officer. I am glad he got it worked out."

Croy will be back on duty Thursday, the sheriff said.

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