

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

15 19 21 25 38

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 0 1 6

Evening picks: 4 1 1

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 04 Big Ben

2nd Place: 05 California Classic

3rd Place: 02 Lucky Star

Race Time: 1:47.51



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Oklahoma state Rep. Mike O'Neal, married with three children and the author of the state's proposed "Defense of Marriage Act," was charged with a felony in February for grabbing a woman's buttocks in an Oklahoma City bar; he was also accused of making lewd comments to, and chasing after, her. And one of the sponsors of Georgia's sanctity-of-marriage constitutional amendment (introduced in January), state Sen. Bill Stephens, was divorced in 1991 after 15 years of marriage but then had the marriage no-counted ("annulled") in order to marry a Catholic woman in 1994, according to a public records check by Atlanta's Southern Voice.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Real eyes realize real lies"
Graffiti



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Stomp and circumstance

Santa Monica High stages 150th graduation ceremony

By Daily Press staff

SAMOH — Seven hundred and fifty-one Vikings sailed into adulthood Thursday evening amid the 150th graduation ceremony at Santa Monica High School.

Thousands of friends, parents and community leaders attended the commencement event, cheering and snapping photos as the students filtered into the Greek Theater.

"I have never been so mindful as in today's society that being men and women of integrity is a tough task," said John Deasy, superintendent of local schools. "Wherever you go and whatever you do, you will always be a graduate of Samohi and make us proud."

The ceremony was punctuated by several student speeches and songs, including a tap dance performance by Maud Arnold and a presentation of the "Ten things to do before you enter the real world," by graduating students Amelia Katkov, Elena Megalos and Thalia Roussos.

Among the ten things the trio suggested was to climb to the top of the stairs in the history building and look out at the



John Wood/Daily Press

CLASS ACT: Samohi graduate Maud Arnold performs "Tapping into the Future" to the delight of thousands of students and supporters.

ocean, take lots of pictures, spend an entire day alone and write letters to the people who've had an influence on you — even if they are never able to read them.

Samohi began as the Sixth Street School in 1891. The cornerstone of the current school was dedicated in 1912, and today the campus covers 33 acres.

'Happening' spot



Nicky Five Aces/Special to the Daily Press

Maria Shriver, First Lady of California, signs a copy of her book about Alzheimer's disease, "What's Happening to Grandpa?" for Nat Trives, a former mayor and current chairman of the local chamber of commerce. Shriver spent Thursday afternoon signing copies of the book at Room with a View, a home furnishings store on Montana Avenue.

Turning tail: Squirrels best be moving on

Health officials demand that SM poison ground squirrels; Council begs to differ

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — A contentious dispute over whether Santa Monica's ground squirrels should be poisoned to prevent outbreaks of the bubonic plague has pitted local leaders against Los Angeles health authorities.

The City Council this week voted to look into alternative ways of dealing with the local California ground squirrel population, considered dangerous because it is a host to fleas, which carry the deadly plague. Nationwide, 10 to 15 people die from the plague each year, mostly in rural areas.

Officials from the Los Angeles County Health Department twice recently demanded Santa Monica kill off its resident ground squirrel population, saying if City Hall doesn't do the work, they will. At issue are the many ground squirrels living inside the Palisades Bluffs, above the Pacific Coast Highway.

Members of the City Council broached the contentious issue late Tuesday, after passing a budget for the coming year and hashing out a proposal for an \$11.50 minimum wage for government workers. Some on the council said the squirrels need to be killed to protect the safety of residents, adding alternatives are too costly. Others argued it's inhumane to kill the playful animals.

"If your dog has fleas, you don't kill your dog," said City Councilman Kevin McKeown, kicking off a divisive, hour-long debate on the dais.

NUTS ABOUT SQUIRRELS

Perhaps the most ardent supporter of the ground squirrels was Councilman Ken Genser, who suggested City Hall disregard the county mandate.

"I don't know what the county would do, but I think if we're serious about trying to solve the problem, and maybe not following the order strictly, I think we should maybe not be so much asking the county — but telling them what we intend to do, and leaving it at that," Genser told his colleagues.

"There is a human dimension to this," he added. "I know, certainly for certain individuals in my family, the squirrels are a very important part of their recreation. And I think they bring a lot of pleasure to a lot of people in this community."

McKeown said he hoped to avoid disobeying a county order, but emphasized he feels strongly about saving the squirrels. He pointed to Riverside, Santa Barbara and Ventura, and said City Hall should follow their method of treating the squirrels for fleas, rather than killing them outright.

See PLAGUE, page 6

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Happy Birthday, Melinda Smith

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

★★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★★-Average
★★-So-so ★-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★ Your sixth sense could make you a Triple Crown winner, if you just go with it. Trust that you will choose the right words at the right moment. Investigate your options, realizing your physical limits. You too can become tired. Tonight: Happy close to home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Your ability to read between the lines helps with a very special friend. You talk yourself or someone you need into a key investment. Your creativity and risk-taking could crest at this very moment. Careful, my dear Bull. Tonight: Out at a favorite Friday spot.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Your smile is that of a sure winner. Listen carefully to another's ideas about a money venture. Do check out a piece of property. Be aware of a tendency to be overly confident. Work on being a spendthrift. Tonight: Indulgence is the theme.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ Your smile helps overcome a problem that might have been caused by being overly cautious. Know when to say enough and go your own way. You might have to keep a secret a little longer. You're chatty and full of fun. Remember: Don't spill the beans. Tonight: As you like it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★ Allow a partner or friend to be dominant. You might be pleased and surprised. Your ability to kick back and simply enjoy the moment comes through. The potential exists for getting more than a Lion's share of work done, too. Tonight: Yawn. Time to head home.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Finally, professional and personal relationships are more to your liking. Let down your defenses and explain what has been on your mind. Understand others' need for your advice and company. Schedule some "group" time. Tonight: Where the gang is.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Your mind might not be present with the moment, as you are thinking of many other matters. Home in on some research. Use your powerful intuitive sense to mosey out of work early and to handle a higher-up. Perhaps he or she might like to join you for bubbly and a snack. Tonight: Into weekend mode.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Reach out for others, understanding that everyone has his or her limits. You might not be comfortable with an exchange that involves a child or new friend. In fact, you could be startled. Stay with the tried-and-true right now. Tonight: Hook up with an old friend.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Work with others. You discover that one associate is unusually verbal and willing to work with you. Together you build your professional status. Remember to prioritize. Many dive into the limelight, wanting your attention. Tonight: Togetherness works.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★★ You have established a certain precedent, and others count on your stability. You know how to put the final touches on a work project before networking. A meeting draws unusual ideas and ends the workweek with a smile. Tonight: Out with friends and co-workers.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Work gets most of your attention. You need to focus more on what needs to happen rather than what you want to occur. Laughter marks your interactions as the day comes to a close. Plan on socializing with co-workers. Tonight: Head on home.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ You establish a stronger sense of your expectations and who you are. Allow your personality to come through clearly, but also loosen up. Avoid judging others. Be more in touch with your long-term feelings and desires. Tonight: Dance the weekend in.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Butting out on the beaches

By Daily Press staff

Cigarette smoking on all California beaches might soon be extinguished after legislators, environmentalists and health activists gather today to announce and discuss new state legislation that prohibits tobacco stems from making an appearance on the state's sandy shores. The new legislation, which is being introduced by assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood), hopes to eliminate beach litter and marine debris from the state's 1,100 miles of beach. The step to ensure a statewide smoke-free environment on the beaches follows in California's leading efforts to remove environmental tobacco smoke in public places such as bars, restaurants and parks. The conference will be held at Santa Monica Pier's parking lot at the corner of Ocean and Colorado Avenues at 10:00 a.m.

SOUL searching on Main Street

By Daily Press staff

Main Street will host its 4th annual Summer SOULstice and sidewalk sale event this Sunday with activities for families, friends and lovebirds. Festival-goers will have a chance to ride a pony and pet some furry little creatures while joining in on a scavenger hunt to win a \$550 surfboard or dinner for two at Chinois. All the participants will also have a chance to win more than \$200 in prizes from various Main Street shops. The festival's fun and games will all be held with the backdrop of live music from the tribute bands. The celebration of the official start of summer will take place on Father's Day, between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Main Street between Pico and Marine. For more information, visit www.mainstreetsm.com

Independence Day festivities begin to come into light

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica College will play host to live music and a fireworks show in their "Celebrate America" event one day before Independence Day. The event will feature artists such as Dan Crow (pictured) and the Thunderwear Band and the USC Trojan Marching Band. Doors open at 5 p.m., and the music and fun will start at 6 p.m. on SMC's Corsair Field at 16th Street and Pico Boulevard. Revelers are allowed to bring picnic baskets and food, minus the alcohol and barbecue grills. For more information, call (310) 434-3000.



SURF REPORT

2-3 ft.+ sets, knee- to chest-high, and fair conditions. We'll see the wind swell drop off over the next couple of days, as small SW swell provides energy through the weekend. A better SW swell will fill in next Tuesday through Thursday. On Friday look for SW swell to slowly back down as NW wind swell offers minimal energy to cross it up. The better SW/combo breaks see knee-waist high+ waves.

Today the water is:

68°

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



LOW TIDES

HIGH TIDES

	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	1:10	0.9	12:20	1.4	6:56	3.5	6:24	5.3
SUNDAY	1:57	0.4	12:56	1.7	7:59	3.4	7:26	5.7
MONDAY	2:36	0.0	1:29	2.0	8:52	3.4	7:54	5.8
TUESDAY	3:12	-0.3	2:00	2.2	9:39	3.4	8:23	5.9
WEDNESDAY	3:46	-0.5	2:30	2.4	10:20	3.4	8:52	5.9
THURSDAY	4:20	-0.6	3:00	2.5	11:00	3.4	9:22	5.9
FRIDAY	4:54	-0.6	3:32	2.6	11:40	3.4	9:54	5.9

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Santa Monica Daily Press

The QLine

City Hall has now focused its efforts on making sure business owners are complying with the rules and regulations set upon them when they were approved to open in their locations.

After the business owner is visited in a surprise inspection by a building and safety code compliance officer, he or she is handed a bill for \$500. City officials say business owners have to be charged to offset the inspection program.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Should business owners pay to have their property inspected by City Hall? Why or why not?"

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

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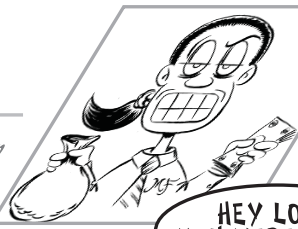
SOE KING

WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY

*FARCE-n. ;farse
see also; deception*

*FEINSTEIN-n. fine-steen
see also; farce, fink*

*FINK-n. fi/fag/k
see also; one held in contempt.*



HEY LOOK!
YOU WERE RIGHT.

**Ex-Mayor/Councilman
still refuses to return missing funds.
"This is how I've decided to handle it"
is his only comment.**

-Continuing News Item

Member: AAEC, NCS, SCCS

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Business of Santa Monica is anti-business

Editor:

If the city were truly concerned about code compliance, they could first look at complaints, instead of surprise attacks on random businesses. Several months ago I lodged a complaint about a business in violation of a CUP. I did this after contacting the business personally on at least three occasions. When my efforts failed to result in compliance, I reluctantly contacted code enforcement. Code enforcement did nothing. I never heard back, no letter, no follow-up. As far as I can tell, they never bothered to try to enforce the condition I complained about. That business continues to violate their CUP on a daily basis, and nothing is done.

Meanwhile, the city has hired an inspection officer and plans to hire two more, as well as a support staff person. Does it bother anyone else that during a time we hear so much about "budget cuts" and lack of funds, our city is adding four new full-time positions? And for the sole purpose of charging \$500 to innocent business owners while looking for additional revenue from fines as well. Unbelievable. How convenient it is to wage war on businesses. Why are we so quick to defend the poor, the children, the homeless, etc. — yet treat our businesses as though they are enemies of the state? Who will come to their rescue? It's easy to demonize or at least exclude oneself from the plight of someone who owns a business. They must be rich. They can afford that \$500. After all, it's not coming out of my pocket.

Personally, I do not own a business, so it would be easy to ignore this and go on my way. But I was reminded of Martin Niemöller's quote about moral failure in the face of the Holocaust: "First they came for the Communists, but I was not a Communist, so I said nothing. Then they came for the Social Democrats, but I was not a Social Democrat, so I did nothing. Then came for the trade unionists, but I was not a trade unionist. And then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew, so I did little. Then when they came for me, there was no one left to stand up for me."

How quickly we forget the lessons of history. Ask yourself, who will be left to stand up for you?

Kathryn Morea
Santa Monica

A song for the 'Unsung Hero'

Editor:

Classified staff at Santa Monica College selected Carl Gettleman, academic computer instructional specialist at the college for 15 years, to receive this year's "Unsung Hero" honor in recognition of his leadership and efforts on their behalf. The prestigious award was presented by California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 36 at an event celebrating union activists from throughout Southern California. Gettleman quipped that "getting an award for being an unsung hero is essentially self-nullifying, as the recipient of the award can no longer claim to be unsung." He was, of course, grateful for the Chapter's acknowledgment.

Illegally fired by SMC in 1999, Gettleman regained his position after an arduous, two-year legal battle with the SMC District over back wages. Reinstated, he resumed his incisive criticisms of the policies of the college's governing hierarchy. He has continued to present both written and verbal reports effectively counteracting SMC's relentless public relations campaign of misinformation. A fearless representative of employees, Gettleman was one of the organizers of the college classified staff's recent 83-percent vote of "no confidence" in SMC President/Superintendent Piedad Robertson's ability to lead the college, which paralleled the 86-percent "no confidence" vote by the SMC faculty.

Phil Hendricks
President, CSEA Chapter 36
Santa Monica College

Down on Main Street: Keep Montana low-key



MY WRITE

BY BILL BAUER

In July, the City Council will act upon proposed changes in development standards and permitted uses for Montana Avenue approved Wednesday by the Planning Commission.

In May 2000, because of neighbor concerns and hard work by Councilman Kevin McKeown, City Council approved interim standards restricting the size of developments and prohibiting new incidental food outlets on the commercial strip of Montana that stretches 10 blocks from 7th Street to 17th Street. If recommendations approved by the Planning Commission (based on City staff recommendations) are adopted permanently by City Council, neighborhood livability around Montana could be threatened once again.

Neighbors on both sides of Montana and I strongly support more restrictive conditions as a way of keeping our low-key, neighborhood street from being overrun by mini-malls and food and drink establishments catering to the entire world.

Main Street is a prime example of a commercial street where round-the-clock activity has made life a living hell for neighbors. Many businesses, especially those with food or food and alcohol service, operate from 6 a.m. until past midnight. After hours, the early a.m. freight deliveries, cleaning noise, trash disposal, sidewalk and patio washing and loud music from uncaring employees' radios supplant the drunks' shouting and screaming, car horns, alarms, stereos and squealing tires. As one Main Street adjacent resident told me, "It never stops and the city does nothing."

Which all leads me back to Montana Avenue. We don't want to see the street, which is entirely surrounded by residential neighborhoods, to become another "Main Street" at the expense of our livability.

About a decade ago, the city painted single traffic lanes on Montana Avenue. Eager to see what affect this had on side street traffic flow, some of us checked city traffic studies of the area. The studies showed traffic counts doubling on the 1400 block of Idaho Avenue — a strictly residential street south of Montana. Traffic had substantially increased on the 800 blocks of 14th and 15th Streets, too. However, traffic patterns were relatively unchanged on most other residential blocks.

There was (and is) a constant parade of vehicles driving from Montana, down

Court 14 or 15th Street, west on Idaho and up 14th Street to Montana. Drivers circled the block looking for preferably free places to park while they patronized two newly opened coffee shops and a new bagel shop on the South side of the 1400 block of Montana Avenue.

City staff agreed these three new incidental food businesses were causing the dramatic increase in adjacent street traffic — not the new paint striping. And, it provided further proof that persons "driving" to these locations are most likely not "locals" living adjacent to Montana Avenue.

Incidental food establishments are virtually indistinguishable from cafes and permitted to provide a quarter of the parking required by a restaurant. It's unfortunate that the two "official neighborhood groups," staff and even the Planning Commission itself ignored the fact that most incidental food outlets on Montana are woefully underparked and contribute substantially to adjacent residential traffic, pollution and parking woes.

Hopefully, City Council will correct this and prohibit new incidental food permits. And, I strongly suggest adding a permanent freeze on future alcohol permits as another way to preserve the peace for surrounding residents, especially at night.

Another issue concerns sidewalk dining. Montana sidewalks are less than 10-feet wide — much too narrow to safely accommodate both sidewalk diners and pedestrians. The staff recommended that a four-foot wide clear path must be maintained. That's not going to happen because of parking meters, news racks, poles, tables, chairs, trees, pets, shopping bags and infant carriers. Therefore, City Council has an opportunity to correct another bad planning error and vote for public safety.

Development standards requiring Planning Commission review of all projects in excess of 5,000 square feet and lower development standards for new construction should be approved to allow more public input on potentially incompatible projects.

It's not in the adjacent resident's best interests to re-open the street to more intensive and potentially harmful neighborhood impacting uses, so it's up to the City Council to step in and set things right, again.

I urge all neighbors on both sides of Montana Avenue to phone City Council at 310-458-8201 or e-mail council@SantaMonica.org. Tell them not to let Montana Avenue become the ugly, loud, traffic-generating, alcohol-soaked monster that Main Street has become.

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

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OPINION



GUEST COMMENTARY BY DONNA J. WARREN

Mike Feinstein needs to come clean

After three years of delay and evasion, Mike Feinstein needs to come clean. I say that as one of Mike's biggest former fans. I'm the treasurer of the Green Party of Los Angeles County, and the Green Party of California's most recent candidate for Lt. Governor.

When I joined the Green Party in the late 90s, Mike Feinstein was a hero. I was a career auditor for the MTA and President of the Los Angeles Chapter of Government Accountants (AGA). I invited Mike to give our keynote address.

When allegations first surfaced that Feinstein had been depositing Green Party checks into a personally-controlled credit union account, I backed Mike. The law requires political donations to be reported under the Political Reform Act, though, and I became increasingly troubled that Mike wouldn't provide records of how much was collected and how it was spent.

One check in particular became an undeniable problem, because the donor told us in writing he meant it for the Green Party of Los Angeles County (GPLAC), not for Mike. Finally, in late 2003, I wrote Mike asking him to make available the \$10,000 donated to the GPLAC less any amount supported by documentation of a GPLAC-authorized expenditure.

Mike responded with a letter threatening legal action. I audited the books and records of the GPLAC and determined that Mike owed the Green Party \$6,800 of the \$10,000 check he deposited in his personal account.

To gain control of the bank records that would provide for state-mandated political donation filings, and to recover some of the money, the Green Party L.A. County Council unanimously authorized filing a small claims suit and requested immediate mediation.

Mike never mediated, and he didn't show up in court, either.

For the first hearing in February, he denied having received notice. After Santa Monica resident Chuck Allord personally served Feinstein at City Hall,

Mike postponed the court date and instead packed the County Council with cronies who pulled the case off the docket.

Wait a minute. The Treasurer has a legal responsibility for the funds of the organization. When I challenged the dismissal of the small claims court case, Mike's minions tried to oust me. They did so in clear violation of organizational bylaws, but Mike sent another group officer to the courthouse to tell the small claims clerk to drop the case because I had been fired.

Ten days later, the full County Council affirmed that my 'firing' never happened, but the damage was done. The case was dead, and the opportunity to bring into daylight the bank records of political donations Mike deposited was lost for the moment.

You see, now it's been discovered checks made out to the state Green Party also were deposited in that account by Mike Feinstein. The state party is now demanding to see Mike's bank records, and this larger investigation won't be so easily evaded. Failing to make public filings of political donations and expenditures is serious business, and Mike's manipulations are wearing thin.

Ask yourself, why is Feinstein still hiding those bank records? Why has he chosen to delay month after month, over three years now, ever since we first found out about the missing \$10,000?

As Treasurer, I have a fiduciary responsibility to the Green Party. We have given Mike Feinstein every opportunity to come clean. We're not asking for his money, we're asking for our money. We're not asking for his records, we're asking for public records. Political donations and expenditures are a matter of public record, that's the law.

Mike, make me a fan again, follow the law.

(Donna J. Warren is an auditor and a director of the Pacifica Radio National Board. She's a former Green Party candidate for Lt. Governor of California and may be reached at cottry@sbcglobal.net.)

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

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Check Out the Question of the Week on Page 3 and let us hear what you have to say

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City calls county's bluff about killing squirrels

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That possibility has many concerned, because the county doesn't employ the special "bait tunnels" that City Hall has used in the past. That method attracts squirrels, who then pick up the poison and carry it back to their resting spots. County officials, staffers said, use what's called a "broadcast" method — where poison is essentially scattered about, putting other small, bluff-dwelling animals at risk.



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STATE



Air-dropped fish contributing to amphibians' demise

BY DON THOMPSON

Associated Press Writer

EBBETTS PASS — High in the Sierra Nevada south of Lake Tahoe, a half-hour hike from the nearest road, Vance T. Vredenburg fishes a hand into the snow meltwater feeding a shallow, willow-lined pond that may be unique in hosting four species of increasingly rare amphibians.

The University of California, Berkeley, researcher pulls out a male mountain yellow-legged frog, already tagged with a rice grain-sized microchip. It's important, Vredenburg said, to catalog the pond's amphibian populations before they, too, "blink out."

Throughout the world, frogs are dying en masse, a phenomenon that concerns scientists because the extremely sensitive amphibians are among the first species to react to wider environmental problems. Global warming, increased solar radiation, windblown pesticides, pollution and diseases all are being explored as possible reasons why the populations are croaking.

Yet Vredenburg found a simpler explanation is one major cause: They're being eaten by trout air-dropped into pristine mountain lakes across the West and in areas as remote as the Andes in South America, on every continent except Antarctica.

It's another example that interfering with nature brings unforeseen consequences.

San Francisco epicureans introduced Eastern bullfrogs a century ago because they liked gourmet frog legs. The bullfrogs have since devastated the population of red-legged frogs thought to have inspired Mark Twain's Gold Rush-era short story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County."

More recently, voracious northern pike dumped into the northern Sierra's Lake Davis a decade ago are eating the lake's trout and costing the state millions of dollars to eradicate.

Late in the 1800s, anglers and hatchery managers began hauling fish into high mountain lakes in modified milk cans lashed to mules. But in the 1950s, wildlife managers discovered they could drop the fingerlings from airplanes, easily seeding thousands of previously inaccessible lakes.

Now thousands of lakes across the West — many of them in designated wilderness areas — are regularly stocked with trout, accounting for about 95 percent of the larger, deeper lakes that once were prime frog habitat.

"If you put fish in the lakes, they grow really fast on the frog population," Vredenburg said.

The impact of trout ripples far beyond any single pond by splintering frog populations and driving them to less desirable areas, where they can more easily be wiped out by a drought, deep winter freeze, disease or other disaster, he theorizes.

"You end up with these isolated marginal habitats that have frogs in them, then they disappear," Vredenburg said. "I think the fish explain a large part of frog decline."

Vredenburg concentrated his studies on mountain yellow-legged frogs, a species that evolved at high altitudes with little competition from fish.

With artificial stocking over the last half-century, trout now occupy 90 percent of the frogs' remote habitat. The well-documented species once was so plentiful researchers had trouble not stepping on the critters; now they're endangered in Southern California and are awaiting a similar listing in the Sierra.

To set up his eight-year study, Vredenburg and his assistants hauled camping and research equipment on their backs into the remote Sixty Lake Basin of Kings Canyon National Park, a two-day hike from the nearest road.

He demonstrated that where there are fish,

there are no breeding populations of frogs.

The relationship has been documented in studies in Costa Rica, Spain and Australia and those by the U.S. Forest Service in California's northern Cascades, Idaho and Montana.

"It's so conclusive that it's not worth arguing over," said David Wake, a UC Berkeley biology professor who organized the first international conference on amphibian decline in 1990 after noticing that frogs had disappeared from Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite National Park.

The good news is, once the fish are removed, Vredenburg found frogs repopulated the lakes to normal levels within three years.

The research by Vredenburg and others is driving experiments and policy changes by state and federal agencies including the National Park Service, which is removing fish from 11 high altitude Sierra lakes to see if frogs will return.

The California Department of Fish and Game stopped stocking fish where yellow-legged frogs live in 2001, ending aerial stocking of about 75 percent of high mountain lakes — though the majority of trout populations are self-sustaining. The department has since surveyed more than 5,000 Sierra lakes for the frogs and found only a tiny fraction with breeding populations. The department is working with federal agencies to balance the needs of trout and frogs through basin-wide habitat plans.

"A lot of people have had trouble

accepting this, but I think it's finally sinking in," said U.S. Forest Service spokesman Matt Mathes.

Ed Pert, Fish and Game's fisheries programs chief, doesn't doubt that trout have had a wide impact, but says Vredenburg's conclusions are too broad, particularly when he didn't compensate for other possible causes like disease and pollution.

Vredenburg has now shifted his research to a mysterious disease that also is playing havoc with frog populations. In earlier experiments, he ruled out the effect of solar radiation on mountain yellow-legged frogs, though irradiation is known to affect other species. And in some areas, amphibians are dying where there are no trout.

Wake thinks there is no single cause: "I think the real answer is synergism — death by a thousand cuts."

He discovered the pond near Ebbetts Pass in 1985 while hiking with his family. It's the only place he or Vredenburg know that is home to mountain yellow-legged frogs, Pacific tree frogs, Yosemite toads and long-toed salamanders.

In mid-June, snowdrifts remained around the pond nestled at about 8,300 feet. Male frogs scrambled over the snow to claim the best breeding territory around the pond's edge. A few days ago the females arrived, and now Wake and Vredenburg count the dozens of egg masses that in a few more days will produce clouds of tadpoles that will take years to reach maturity and reproduce.

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Entertainment

WHAT'S PLAYING

THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK
A fine return to action-hero form by Vin Diesel, but film suffers from excess and a convoluted storyline.
Starring: Diesel, Thandie Newton, Judi Dench

NAPOLEON DYNAMITE
Boasts enough humdingers to qualify as a winner in what has thus far been a humdrum year for comedies.
Starring: Jon Heder, Jon Gries,

GARFIELD
What abhorrent sin did humankind commit to deserve Breckin Meyer?
Starring: Meyer, Bill Murray, Jennifer Love Hewitt

HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN
Not only more visually appealing than its forebears, it is decidedly more mature and interesting. A momentous motion picture that effectively evokes author J.K. Rowling's bookish magic.
Starring: Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint

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

RAISING HELEN
In the wake of a recent spate of similar slush – “Jersey Girl” and “Uptown Girls” come to mind – i offer this: give it a rest, please.
Starring: Kate Hudson, John Corbett

SAVED!
This cheeky indictment of religious fundamentalism is at times engaging, but suffers from an almost fanatical aversion to subtlety.
Starring: Mandy Moore, Jena Malone

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

SOUL PLANE
The soundtrack kicks, the cristal flows and crass comedy is in full effect in this urbanized take on the “Airplane” spoofs.
Starring: Snoop Dogg, D.L. Hughley

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

TROY
A spirited throwback to the sprawling war epics of yesteryear. Brad Pitt's muscular performance as Achilles is nearly unsailable.
Starring: Brad Pitt, Eric Bana, Orlando Bloom

BREAKIN' ALL THE RULES
A mediocre WB sitcom disguised as a big screen sex farce; wastes decent talent on pablum that relies far too heavily on unlikely coincidence and lots of mistaken identity.
Starring: Jamie Foxx, Gabrielle Union, Morris Chestnut

COFFEE AND CIGARETTES
A thoughtful collection of eleven deadpan comedic vignettes from indie icon Jim Jarmusch. A black and white gallimaufry of talent and abstraction.
Starring: Bill Murray, Cate Blanchett

‘Dodgeball’ hits funny bone hard

Review

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Some moviegoers may find the foundation upon which this Ben Stiller-Vince Vaughn vehicle is built to be too rudimentary — grownups playing a silly childhood game — but then again, anyone who shows up expecting highbrow humor out of “Dodgeball” deserves to get whacked in the noggin by a red rubber ball. Film neophyte Rawson Marshall Thurber (he created the “Terry Tate: Office Linebacker” spots) wrote and directed this comedy about a group of 98-pound weaklings who have the dodgeballs to take on the big bullies. It’s inane, implausible and — oh yeah — at times very funny.

“Dodgeball” certainly doesn’t compare to Stiller or Vaughn’s best stuff (“There’s Something About Mary” and “Swingers,” respectively), but there’s no shame in this game

either. Stiller effectively plays his egomaniacal, self-loathing fitness guru way over the top, and Vaughn is, as usual, cooler than the other side of the pillow as the good-natured protagonist. The main players get assists from Rip Torn, Christine Taylor (aka Mrs. Ben Stiller) and Stephen Root (“Office Space”), all of whom deliver yuk-yuks in key supporting roles.

Peter LaFleur (Vaughn) is the insouciant proprietor and resident best bud to the proletarian patrons of a rundown gym called “Average Joe’s.” Peter’s business is doomed, thanks to a neighboring iron-pumping palace, Globo Gym, owned by White Goodman (Stiller). The tanned and toned White’s got it in for Peter, and is hellbent on bulldozing Average Joe’s. After a sympathetic attorney from the bank (Taylor) informs eventual love interest Peter that 50 grand is needed to save his beloved sweatshop, he and dodgeball legend Patches O’Houlihan (Torn) lead a ragtag team of mis-

fits to Vegas in the hopes of winning the cash at a dodgeball tournament. To do so, they’ll need to overcome White’s squad of roid-raging ringers and their own foibles — one guy thinks he’s a pirate, another is enervatively docile. Their quest ultimately leads us to a profound truth: Seeing people get nailed in the nuts by balls is a real hoot.

(Rated PG-13 for rude and sexual humor, and language. Running time: 91 minutes)

Jet set: Hanks, Spielberg get emotional

Q&A

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

It isn’t every day a poor shlub gets a private sitdown with Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks at a swanky left coast hotel, but for this one it happened last Wednesday in the 90210. The dynamic duo sat down to discuss their new film “The Terminal,” the old stuff and being bosom buddies.

Q: What, if anything, were you trying to convey in “The Terminal” about an America that is very different now than it was before September 11, 2001?

STEVEN SPIELBERG: Whatever I said about the post-9-11 environment, I chose to say it gently. This was not meant to be a picture that emphasized politics or the post-disaster enviroinmaent over character. Of course, this country is much more vigilant at our international airports because of 9-11, but you have to make your own inferences.

Q: Are we sacrificing too much personal freedom in the name of national security?

SS: We sometimes forget about a teeny little thing called the human being. We do tend to suspect everybody. Suddenly everything doesn’t look as safe as it

used to look before that horrible disaster. This was an effort to try and show audiences that the people who travel internationally are, for the most part, the same people who traveled before 9-11, and that we should try to start trusting each other again.

Q: Tom, what’s your favorite Spielberg movie?

TOM HANKS: Wow. Well, what’s tough is, which films do you not include on the list? From the perspective of when I saw the film, I’d say “Close Encounters of the Third Kind.” It’s easily one of the five greatest motion pictures ever made. That’s not taking anything away from “ET” or “Schindler’s List” or “Saving Private Ryan” — they’re all part of the top ten, for crying out loud. But “Close Encounters of the Third Kind” made me poop my pants.

Q: Have you soiled yourself over a Hanks movie, Steven?

TH: And we’re talking literally.
SS: (laughs) I pooped my pants from both pathos and laughter when I saw “A League of Their Own.” That was a great character you played — one of my favorite performances of all time. And I also think one of the greatest statements ever made on the AIDS epidemic was “Philadelphia.”

Q: You’ve both made some emotionally devastating movies.

Are you ever moved to tears while you’re shooting the films?

SS: Absolutely. If you can have an emotional reaction behind the camera to what the actor is doing in front of it, there’s no better signal that you’re really involved. On “Schindler’s List” and “Saving Private Ryan” there were whole days where I would have tears in my eyes all day long. And I’m not patting myself on the back — I think anybody, if they believe in what they’re doing, gets caught up in the emotional journey.

TH: You do get overpowered by what’s going on. You know you’re making a movie, of course, but the emotional power is not like you’re making a movie. After what we did on Omaha Beach (in “Saving Private Ryan”) I had a day off, had a Guinness in the afternoon, and two more at dinner-time because I needed it.

Q: The question on everybody’s mind is when are the two of you going to bring “Bosom Buddies” to the big screen?

TH: We have Steven working on the storyboards. He’s got it all ready to go. If we can shoot in the Vatican — we’re just waiting for those permits to come through — we’ll have it.

Q: Steven, what can you tell us about the next Indiana Jones film?

SS: It’s still in the process. I’m hoping we’ll make it next summer.

Perhaps it’ll come out Memorial Day of ’06, but I can’t promise you that. I was certain it was going to be shot this summer, coming out ’05, but that didn’t happen so I didn’t want to make a promise I can’t keep to the public.

TH: What’s the actual name of it? Does it have a name?

SS: Indy 4

TH: Just Indy 4? (chuckles)
Indy 4. You gotta come up with something better than that.

SS: I’ll leave that up to you, Tom.

TH: Only if I get one of those cool Indy Jones hats.

Q: What was your worst airport experience?

TH: There was a four-hour storm delay, we were already in the plane, pulled away from the gate, sitting on the runway. (Impersonating a flight attendant) “Ladies and gentlemen, there’s a storm all over the east coast.” We couldn’t leave until the gate was cleared at La Guardia, so we were sitting there for a while at O’Hare. We were in the plane, on the runway, on a flight that was going to take an hour and a half, but we were sitting on the runway at O’Hare for four hours.

Q: Must have been hot?

TH: It’s not necess... well, no... it’s stuffy.

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ENTERTAINMENT



‘Terminal’ should be removed from life-support

Review

BY DAN DUNN

Special to the Daily Press

Frequent collaborators Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks (“Saving Private Ryan,” “Catch Me If You Can”) once again team up, this time with fellow Academy Award-winner Catherine Zeta-Jones, in an unlikely story about an Eastern European traveler who finds himself stranded indefinitely inside New York’s JFK airport following a military coup in his homeland that renders his passport invalid. Stanley Tucci and “Y Tu Mama Tambien”’s Diego Luna are also on board for this surprisingly flawed film that

proves even the best of the best are fallible.

Sitting through “The Terminal,” it’s easy to relate to the main character, Viktor Navorski, who is stuck somewhere awfully boring (when was the last time anyone had fun at an airport?) for what feels like an eternity. What Viktor fails to grasp as the days turn into months inside the terminal, is that all he has to do to escape is walk out. While it’s doubtful many filmgoers will do just that, it’s safe to say that by the time the final credits roll lots of folks will be wishing they’d chosen a more lively destination.

There’s nothing truly objectionable about “The Terminal” — it’s well-acted and seems to have good intentions — but

the plot points are so far-fetched that it’s nearly impossible to invest oneself in the story. An entire government collapsed while Viktor was in the air — sheesh, how far away is the fictional village of Krakozhia? Hard-ass airport official Frank Dixon (Tucci) can’t find a single European in JFK to translate when he interrogates Viktor? So he turns him loose in the terminal where Viktor instantly learns English, befriends a multi-ethnic band of brothers and chows fast food. C’mon, that’s nearly as hard to believe as Catherine Zeta-Jones’ stunning, neurotic stewardess falling for a frumpy foreign rube who sleeps on a cot at Gate 67.

We’re supposed to buy that everyone from the Homeland Security officers to the gals at the counter at Burger King (product placement is off the hook in this movie — guess we’re supposed to buy Whoppers, too) adopt Viktor as a sort of duty-free mascot, but let’s face it, even in pre-9/11 America, it’s impossible to believe that a scenario even remotely like the one upon which this film relies could ever exist. It’s this dubious premise that keeps “The Terminal,” like Viktor, stuck in airport limbo hell.

(Rated PG-13 for brief language and drug references. Running time: 129 minutes)

‘Weeping Camel’ a film that need not be deserted

Review

BY DAN DUNN

Special to the Daily Press

Legendary documentarian Robert J. Flaherty (“Nanook of the North”) once said his primary ambition as a filmmaker was to “show how a rose smells.” In the delightful “The Story of the Weeping Camel,” fresh talents Byambasuren Davaa and Luigi Falorni channel the spirit of Flaherty, whose work was a major inspiration to this project, delivering an ethereal treasure that inspires all of the senses.

Set in the vast, remote Gobi Desert of Mongolia — one of the last undefiled places on earth still capable of stirring the imagination — “Weeping Camel” follows a real family of nomadic

herders who face a crisis when a mother camel rejects her newborn calf after a particularly difficult birth. The herders, several generations strong, employ a number of methods to coax the mother into nursing the baby, eventually summoning a violinist to assist an ancient ritual that, if successful, will not only save the calf, but bring the mother camel to tears.

Audiences will weep as well, as the soul of this magically simplistic film is as stirring as the visuals. And if they awarded golden statuettes to the hoofed ruminants of the family Camelidae (look it up, people), well, the little white calf would be a shoe-in to take home the hardware.

(Rated PG for some mild thematic content. Running time: 90 minutes)

‘World’ beaters are just beat

Review

BY DAN DUNN

Special to the Daily Press

One thing’s for sure, you could spend 80 days trekking the globe and you’d be seriously hard-pressed to unearth anything more odious than this high-priced turd of a remake. Disney’s “Around the World in 80 Days” is shamefully violent (it is, after all, supposed to be a family film) and contains enough offensive racial stereotypes to make even the crassest Howard Stern fan cringe. The gags are awful, performances sub-par and the obligatory fight scenes serve only to remind that star Jackie Chan is really getting old. And he’s not aging gracefully either. Once considered a singular talent who combined the martial arts expertise of Bruce Lee with the comedic prowess of Buster Keaton in making some of the best Chinese movies ever, Chan has sold-out for Hollywood greenbacks and, in the process, devolved into a pathetic Asian caricature. Here, he voluntarily subjugates himself to be the white man’s valet, Passepartout, who can sing, knows karate and is careful to offer “a thousand pardons” whenever he’s reproached by his master.

Based on the novel by Jules Verne, “Around the World” chronicles the adven-

tures of 19th Century persnickety British inventor Phileas Fogg (Steve Coogan), who — on a bet with England’s crooked Minister of Science (Jim Broadbent) — attempts to circle the planet in just 80 days. It’s a Victorian-era “The Amazing Race” rife with possibility, but it stumbles right out of the gate and never recovers.

Coogan, who was fantastic in “24 Hour Party People” is surely going to regret this choice, and Broadbent — a recent Academy Award-winner for his supporting role in “Iris” — needs not only fire his agent, he must remove him from his Christmas card list as well. Chan, with a string of recent missteps that includes “The Medallion,” “The Tuxedo” and a gig judging the Miss World Pageant, appears to be a lost cause. Next up for him is “Rush Hour 3.” Ooh, can’t wait!

One bright spot here is French actress Cecile de France, who wows in her English language debut as Fogg’s love interest. In a nod to its cameo-laden predecessor, “Around the World” trots out John Cleese, Kathy Bates and the governor of California. As you’ve no doubt gathered, they don’t much help matters.

(Rated PG for action violence, some crude humor and mild language. Running time: 93 minutes)



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STATE

Spurned California senators feel Bush-whacked

BY ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer released angry letters to President Bush and federal energy regulators this week, urging them to agree immediately to California's demands for billions in refunds from the state's 2000-01 energy crisis.

The Democrats cited new transcripts of Enron Corp. traders gloating and swapping profanities as they discussed cheating California on energy sales.

"We have now seen proof that is irrefutable that we were essentially robbed," Boxer told a press conference.

She released a letter to Bush asking him to seek the resignation of any member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission who doesn't agree California should receive refunds of \$8.9 billion for overcharges.

In a letter to FERC Chairman Pat Wood, Feinstein criticized a May FERC order that requires California to pay Enron and other energy companies almost \$270 million in refunds for power they purchased from state sellers at the height of the crisis.

"To ask Californians to repay energy companies \$270 million after the fraud perpetrated against them is preposterous. Californians lost billions during the 2000-2001 energy crisis while energy traders mocked them. California consumers are the ones who deserve some relief."

Dianne Feinstein
Senator

"To ask Californians to repay energy companies \$270 million after the fraud perpetrated against them is preposterous," Feinstein said in a statement. "Californians lost billions during the 2000-2001 energy crisis while energy traders mocked them. California consumers are the ones who deserve some relief."

California Attorney General Bill Lockyer filed a motion with FERC this week asking regulators to reverse the order. FERC spokesman Kevin Cadden said he couldn't comment on Feinstein's complaints about the order because the matter was pending before his agency.

A public utility district in Washington state recently released records indicating Enron manipulated the energy market practically every day during the 2000-01 power crunch and gouged Western customers for at least \$1.1 billion. The utility also has released details of conversations in which Enron traders gleefully discuss ripping off "those poor grandmothers" in California and gloat about a forest fire shutting down a transmission line.

California contends it is owed some \$9 billion in refunds from overcharges by electricity sellers during the

energy crisis, while FERC has put the number at about \$3 billion. Officials are still calculating a final number.

"The bottom line is due process takes time, all parties have to have an opportunity to have their say in the proceedings, and we're acting on these matters based on the facts and the law and we're going to continue to act on these matters according to the facts and the law," said FERC spokesman Bryan Lee.

Boxer and Feinstein sent a joint letter to Wood on June 2, shortly after the tapes of Enron traders became public, asking him to order the refunds.

Boxer released Wood's 1 1/2-page response, dated June 7, on Wednesday. He didn't comment on the contents of the tapes but wrote, "The commission takes very seriously your concerns about market manipulation. The commission has received copies of the tapes you mentioned and is pursuing Enron's misdeeds in every way possible."

White House spokesman Ken Lisaius said he hadn't seen Boxer's letter to Bush but officials would respond to the senator after reviewing the letter.

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STATE



LA's Library Tower was initially a 9/11 target

BY SETH HETTENA
Associated Press Writer

SAN DIEGO — The tallest building in California and other West Coast sites were on an early list of targets for the Sept. 11 plot, the commission investigating the attacks reported this week.

The mastermind of the attacks, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, said he originally envisioned an attack involving 10 hijacked planes. He proposed crashing them into CIA and FBI headquarters, unidentified nuclear power plants and the tallest buildings in California and Washington state. At 1,017 feet, Library Tower in Los Angeles is the tallest building west of the Mississippi.

The expanded plan was rejected by Osama bin Laden, who ultimately approved a mission involving four planes. Training for it began in 1999.

The commission's 20-page outline of the Sept. 11 plot, based on interviews with government officials and documents, filled some of the gaps in the events lead-

ing up to the deadliest attacks on U.S. soil and raised fresh questions.

The report answered the question of what led the first two hijackers who entered the United States to pick San Diego as their first base of operations — a phone book. But what the pair did for the first two weeks after their arrival remains a mystery.

Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar, who were aboard the flight that crashed into the Pentagon, arrived Jan. 15, 2000, at Los Angeles International Airport. For the first two weeks, the two Saudis appear to have frequented the King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, possibly staying in a nearby apartment. The commission said it is continuing to investigate their activities and associates.

Last month, the mosque's imam, a Saudi consular official named Fahad al Thumairy, was denied entry at LAX and expelled from the United States. U.S. officials said his name was on a list of people with suspected links to terrorism.

Mohammed, who is in U.S. custody at undisclosed location overseas, told inves-

tigators he sent Alhazmi and Almihdhar to San Diego because he learned of the city's flight and language schools from a phone book. Alhazmi barely spoke English; Almihdhar spoke none. The two received permission to seek help at local mosques.

Among the commission's disclosures:

■ Despite their poor English, Almihdhar and Alhazmi were picked for the mission because they were "so eager to participate in the attacks" they already had obtained U.S. visas. They had both been inspired by a friend who was a suicide bomber in the 1998 attack on the U.S. embassy in Kenya.

■ Mohdar Abdullah, a San Diego State University student, helped Alhazmi and Almihdhar and later made jailhouse claims that he had advance knowledge of the attacks. Abdullah last month was deported to Yemen. The FBI has been unable to fully corroborate his contentions. Abdullah's attorney, Randall B. Hamud, called the allegations "a total lie."

■ In June 2000, Almihdhar abruptly left

San Diego to visit his family in Yemen. Apparently, he did so without Mohammed's permission, the Sept. 11 commission reported. Mohammed was displeased and wanted to remove him from the operation, but Bin Laden interceded and Almihdhar remained part of the plot.

The commission cleared the wife of the Saudi ambassador to the United States, Princess Haifa al-Faisal, saying it found no evidence she provided money "directly or indirectly" to the Sept. 11 conspiracy.

The princess, wife of Saudi Arabia's U.S. ambassador, Prince Bandar, came under scrutiny because she had sent checks to the wife of Osama Basnan, one of two Saudi nationals living in San Diego who befriended the hijackers. The Saudi government, which strongly denies providing support for terrorists, says those checks were charitable donations to help cover the medical expenses of Basnan's wife.

The commission report said there is no evidence that Basnan and the other Saudi, Omar al-Bayoumi, provided funding to the two hijackers.

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NATIONAL

Business proves a cure-all for bored physicians

BY PAUL FOY
AP Business Writer

SALT LAKE CITY — Dr. Molly Hutsinpillar says she has the best job in medicine.

Her work for a physician staffing agency has taken her from the South Pole to Alaska. She can pick and choose the assignments, or not work at all. She doesn't have to support an office or staff and her agency covers expenses for airfare, rental cars, lodging and malpractice insurance — "everything except gas and food."

She's a doctor for hire who practices medicine and nothing more.

"You have power over your schedule," said the 48-year-old emergency physician from her Snowbird resort time-share, resting after 3 1/2 months at the South Pole, where she worked for National Science Foundation contractor Raytheon Co. and dealt mostly with altitude sickness at the 9,000-foot base.

A business started 25 years ago this fall by a University of Utah medical student — hiring doctors like smokejumpers for temporary assignments, often to remote places — has provided thousands of physicians like Hutsinpillar with reliable work and ballooned into a \$2 billion industry.

"They're needed and appreciated, and

they don't get sucked into professional politics. It's pure medicine, without all the hassles," said Dr. Therus Kolff, who started the physician-for-hire business known by the industry name locum tenens — Latin for "holding a place."

Kolff, an entrepreneur who started four companies, now sits on the board of Salt Lake-based VISTA Staffing Solutions, which can draw on a pool of more than 1,200 physicians, including Hutsinpillar. Their wages range from \$50 an hour for basic emergency care to as much as \$2,000 a day for neurosurgeons, depending on the assignment.

"If they don't want to go to North Dakota in February, they don't have to," said VISTA chief executive Mark Brouse, who can resort to horse-trading to find doctors willing to take less desirable postings: "We'll send you to Hawaii in March."

Physicians work anywhere from a week or less on U.S. assignments to as much as six months overseas, typically earning \$400 a day for family practice or about \$1,200 for specialists.

VISTA, which screens and certifies doctors, covers their malpractice insurance with a \$1 million annual premium, Brouse said. The company has as many as 200 physicians under contract any given day.

The demand for these footloose doctors is expected to steadily increase as the

U.S. population grows and gets proportionally older, while U.S. medical schools are limited in the number of new doctors they can graduate, Kolff said.

Regional disparities in the supply of doctors, who tend to gravitate to metropolitan areas, gave rise to shortages in the first place.

Kolff was a medical student when he landed a federal grant to supply medical help to rural areas and Indian reservations across the West where doctors are scarce.

In 1979 he founded Comprehensive Health Systems, selling that company in the early 1990s. Through a series of mergers it's now called CompHealth Group, one of seven big players in the medical staffing industry. VISTA is the fifth largest and fastest growing player, supplying doctors only. Others deploy nurses as well. The roll call of agencies includes another 60 mom-and-pop operations.

Kolff, 55, comes from a family of doctors including his father, grandfather, two uncles and three brothers. Another brother is a medical architect who designs hospitals and clinics.

Their 93-year-old Dutch immigrant father, Willem J. Kolff, invented the kidney dialysis machine and headed the Division of Artificial Organs at the University of Utah until 1999.

Therus (pronounced "Terrus") Kolff

says many doctors are fed up with pushing paper, fighting insurers, keeping long hours and paying exorbitant malpractice rates.

When the economy and stock market rebound, he predicts, many older physicians will cash out their retirement portfolios and retire, aggravating the doctor shortage and giving companies like VISTA and its contractor-physicians more business.

Hutsinpillar has worked for VISTA and other staffing agencies off and on since 1998. An engineer, she decided at 32 to pursue a medical degree at the University of Utah. She completed a residency in Denver, then worked for the Colorado Outward Bound School for nine years while spending winters skiing.

"Financially single" but married, she visits her husband and his daughter in Spokane, Wash., between assignments and spends Augusts at Priest Lake in northern Idaho. She still owns a house in Salt Lake City, which she rents out.

Hutsinpillar has spent parts of the past few weeks pulling 24-hour shifts at one hospital in Ketchikan, Alaska, and overnight shifts at another hospital in Anchorage. She could make more money being a regular doctor with fixed hours but "my needs are not huge."

"Life is so short, you have to enjoy it," she said.



ELECTION NEWS

FOR SANTA MONICA RESIDENTS!

NOVEMBER 2, 2004 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

SANTA MONICA ELECTION INFORMATION:

Offices to be voted upon:

City Council	Four Seats
Rent Control Board	Two Seats
Board of Education	Three Seats
College Board of Trustees	Three Seats

Eligibility Requirements: Candidate must be a registered voter in the jurisdiction at the time nomination papers are issued to him/her. All vacancies are for four-year terms.

Filing Period: July 12, 2004 to August 6, 2004. However, because City Hall will be closed Friday, August 6, nomination papers will be accepted through Monday, August 9, until 5:30 p.m. Nomination papers will be issued by the City Clerk starting on July 12, 2004, and throughout the nomination period. In order to qualify, a candidate must obtain at least 100 valid signatures, from voters registered in the jurisdiction, on his/her petition. Candidate Workshops will be held on July 12, 2004, at 8:30 a.m., and July 14, 2004, at 5:30 p.m., in Council Chambers at City Hall. Candidates not able to attend the workshops will be issued nomination papers throughout the filing period at the City Clerk's Office upon request. There is no filing fee.

LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE: OCTOBER 18, 2004

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For information on the following related topics, please call the City Clerks Office at 458-8211:

- Elected Official Duties
- Campaign Fundraising
- Establishing Campaign Committees
- Related Election Regulations
- Local Measures for November 5th Ballot
- Initiative Process

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NATIONAL



Ocean's a-lovin': J-1 proves it's never too late for love

BY MARY PEMBERTON

Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — J-1 was doing more than whispering sweet nothings to Aurora as the two clutched each other in a deep embrace in a secluded corner last month.

It turns out that J-1 had all the right moves. Aurora is happily laying long strings of nearly translucent eggs in her tank.

"She basically stays there hanging on the wall, and the eggs are extruded and sent out of her mantle," Richard Hocking, aquarium curator at the Alaska SeaLife Center, said recently.

Aurora, a Giant Pacific octopus, began laying eggs last weekend by dribbling them down the sides of her tank. Lately, she's taken to laying discrete clusters. She could lay 60,000 to 100,000 eggs — about what's expected from a Giant Pacific octopus.

She likes to use one or more of her eight arms to gently move the eggs and press them to the walls of her 3,600-gal-

lon tank, part of the Seward center's "Denizens of the Deep" exhibit.

Aquarists at the center could only wonder what went on the morning of May 11 when the aging J-1, who up until then had lived a strictly bachelor life, was introduced to the slightly younger Aurora.

During their brief but oh-so-intense encounter, when they were both gripping the back of the tank and his body nearly covered hers, did J-1 pass his spermatophore packet to Aurora? Did she accept it? Would she choose to conceive?

That's right, female Giant Pacific octopuses can choose to conceive in what is known as delayed fertilization. Apparently, J-1 had the right stuff.

"I am amazed by this animal's vitality," Hocking said of J-1, an 81-pound octopus which at more than 5 years is considered elderly. "This animal has a lot of vitality, more than any other I've seen in an octopus."

When J-1 began acting cranky with Aurora early last week, he was removed from her tank. Giving her privacy and

dimming the exhibit lights to simulate den-like conditions may have been just what she craved. Aurora began laying eggs just a few days later.

In the wild, Giant Pacific octopus females stop eating when caring for eggs, weaken and die about the same time as the eggs hatch.

Hocking said Aurora will continue to be given food but the inevitable will happen. Her immune system eventually will shut down and she will die. The only question is when.

Aurora was about the size of a grapefruit when she was found in 2002 living inside an old tire in front of the SeaLife Center.

J-1, who was only about the size of a quarter when collected on a beach near Seldovia in 1999, now measures 12 feet when stretched out. He is doing fine for now, but basically he's on his way out, too.

"Nothing is forever for an octopus. Five years is a long time," Hocking said.

In the meantime, aquarists will keep a close eye on the eggs. Over the next cou-

ple of weeks, they'll be looking for a darkening in the eggs to indicate the development of baby octopuses. If the eggs are fertile, they could produce young in two or three months.

To prepare for the big event, aquarists at the center are talking with colleagues at the Seattle Aquarium and the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport to find out what to expect.

If the eggs are fertile and they hatch, the center would be lucky to have a handful survive. Then aquarists have to figure out what to feed the babies as they grow. Hocking said octopuses are pretty specific about what they will eat and when. They may try using a net to troll for live plankton from open waters near Seward.

"We will learn a lot," Hocking said. "Almost the easy part is getting the eggs fertilized, and the animals do that. They did their part and then they go away and they die."

Crop insurance industry sues over government subsidies

BY RYAN J. FOLEY

Associated Press Writer

DES MOINES, Iowa — A coalition of insurance companies is suing the U.S. Department of Agriculture, claiming the government has shortchanged them millions of dollars in a program to provide crop insurance to farmers.

The lawsuit, and a separate disagreement over new terms set by USDA for the Federal Crop Insurance Program, are the latest battles between the crop insurance industry and the government.

Taxpayers subsidize the program to help farmers who lose crops to natural disasters — such as the flooding, hail and tornadoes that struck across a large swath of the Midwest this spring. The result is lower premiums for farmers, but insurance companies complain they aren't reim-

bursed adequately by the government.

"The way it's been going, you've had a significant amount of unreimbursed costs that have been imposed on the companies for years," said Elizabeth Haws, a lobbyist with the American Association of Crop Insurers, a trade association.

The companies warn that cuts to the program could reduce insurance availability to farmers or force companies in the industry to merge to be profitable.

In their lawsuit, filed this week in federal court in Council Bluffs, they claim the government violated a 1998 contract when Congress cut their fees and subsidies. They said the changes cost the companies at least \$60 million between 1999 and 2002.

Eight of the 12 companies in the lawsuit, including ACE Property and Casualty Insurance Co. and Alliance

Insurance Cos., continue to take part in the program, originally started in the 1930s to help farmers cope with the Dust Bowl.

USDA this week announced further cuts in subsidies in a new agreement with companies. Companies have until June 30 to decide whether to sign the agreement, which reduces reimbursements industry-wide by \$36 million over two years.

Trade groups predict that some of the 14 companies now in the program will opt to drop out or merge. That will mean fewer choices for farmers, especially in high-risk areas where companies don't want to operate, officials said.

"This year certainly is starting out to be very challenging, so I think the crop insurance industry is justifiably very worried about what's going on," said Paul Horel, president of the Crop Insurance Research

Bureau in Overland Park, Kan. "It's going to be real challenging for much of the industry to be profitable over the next couple years with this agreement."

Farmers and ranchers paid more than \$3 billion in premiums to protect 215 million acres of land under the program in 2002, according to the research group.

Shirley Pugh, a spokeswoman for USDA's Risk Management Agency, declined to comment on the lawsuit, but said the new contract was necessary because new technology and planning is allowing farmers to better manage their risk.

"The growing complexity and expansion of risk management tools for farmers has taken us well beyond traditional crop insurance and we need a new forward-looking agreement between the government and the companies," she said.

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NATIONAL

9/11 commission: U.S. was dazed and confused

BY HOPE YEN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The terror strikes of Sept. 11, 2001 overwhelmed all immediate efforts at response or even full comprehension, a bipartisan commission reported Thursday, and spread such confusion that Vice President Dick Cheney mistakenly thought U.S. warplanes shot down two aircraft.

The front line civilian and military agencies struggled to “improvise a homeland defense against an unprecedented challenge they had never encountered and had never trained to meet,” the panel said.

“We fought many phantoms that day,” Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the panel. He noted that reports of car bombings and other terrorist acts spread quickly in the nerves-on-edge hours after the World Trade Center and Pentagon were struck by planes hijacked by terrorists.

The panel met as President Bush personally disputed its day-old finding that there was no “collaborative relationship” between Saddam Hussein and the al-Qaida terrorist network responsible for the attacks.

“There was a relationship between Iraq and al-Qaida,” the president said after a Cabinet meeting at the White House.

The dispute is a significant one, since Bush and top administration officials cited ties between al-Qaida and the Iraqi dictator in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The bipartisan commission issued its latest findings as it held the last public

session of a momentous review of the worst terror strikes in the nation’s history. The panel is expected to make a final report next month into the events that killed nearly 3,000.

The commission said efforts to respond to four hijackings that day were plagued on multiple fronts.

Among them was difficulty in establishing secure communications between President Bush, who was in Florida at the time of the attack, and officials in Washington, the panel said.

“The president himself said in our interview with him how frustrated he was,” said former Rep. Lee Hamilton, vice chairman of the panel.

Some commissioners were sharply critical of the FAA. One, former Navy Secretary John Lehman, called its performance a “real inescapable failure.”

The commission said the military never received more than nine minutes notice from the FAA on any of the four hijackings.

It added there was a delay in passing along an order for pilots to shoot down any hostile aircraft.

Additionally:

■ The first call from the FAA to the military for help prompted a question: “Is this real-world or exercise?”

■ One plane moved into a gap in Federal Aviation Administration radar coverage.

■ A single air traffic controller wound up with responsibility for two hijacked planes simultaneously.

■ The FAA failed to notify the military that one of the four planes had been hijacked.

■ The FAA incorrectly told the military that the first plane to crash into the World Trade Center was still in the air after impact.

The commission’s report steered clear of any claims that the planes could have been intercepted.

“NORAD (North American Air Defense Command) officials have maintained that they would have intercepted and shot down United 93. We are not so sure,” the report said. That was the hijacked plane that crashed into the Pennsylvania countryside, evidently after passengers struggled with the terrorists aboard.

“Their actions saved the lives of countless others,” the panel said.

Gen. Ralph E. Eberhart, NORAD commander, testified that given the changes implemented since then, the military would be able to shoot down the plane if it got immediate notice from the FAA.

If FAA and NORAD officials were scrambling to deal with the strikes, so, too, were top officials of the government.

Cheney, in a secure, below-ground White House facility, received Bush’s approval for pilots to shoot down aircraft deemed hostile. The vice president conveyed the order.

At midmorning, more than a half-hour after the order had been given, Cheney told Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld he thought it had been carried out.

“It’s my understanding that they’ve already taken a couple of aircraft out,” Cheney said, according to the partial transcript of a conference call that the commission released.

While it is customary for commission staff to read their report aloud, this one was augmented by snippets of tape recordings made that day as well as graphics demonstrating the flight paths of the four hijacked planes.

A particularly haunting transmission came from the cockpit of American Airlines Flight 11, which took off from Boston and was the first plane to strike the World Trade Center. A person believed to be Mohamed Atta, the alleged ringleader of the 19 hijackers, who piloted the plane, is heard saying to passengers: “We have some planes. Just stay quiet and you’ll be OK. We are returning to the airport.”

Later, Atta told the passengers, “If you try to make any moves, you’ll endanger yourself and the airplane.”

The report largely blamed inadequate emergency procedures that contemplated more time to react to a traditional hijacking rather than a suicide hijacking.

In many cases, the panel praised the actions of government personnel forced to make split-second decisions. In the hours just after the attacks occurred, nearly 4,500 planes in the air had to be landed as quickly as possible. To do that, air traffic controllers first had to reroute about a quarter of them.

“We do not believe that an accurate understanding of the events of that morning reflects discredit on the operational personnel,” the report said.

The report said air traffic controllers realized at 8:24 a.m. on Sept. 11 that Flight 11 was being hijacked, but lost several minutes notifying layers of command before contacting NORAD. The plane crashed at 8:46 a.m.

Controllers, meanwhile, didn’t realize American Airlines Flight 77 — which took off from Dulles Airport outside Washington — might be hijacked when it mysteriously started veering off course at 8:54 a.m. The plane then traveled undetected for 36 minutes toward Washington, due in part to a radar glitch.

The confusion meant only an unarmed military cargo plane could be diverted to track the plane. The plane located Flight 77 but its crew could do nothing as the commercial jetliner crashed into the Pentagon.

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INTERNATIONAL



Car bomb attack on Iraqi military camp kills 35

BY SAMEER N. YACCOUB

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A sport utility vehicle packed with artillery shells blew up Thursday in a crowd of people waiting to volunteer for the Iraqi military, killing at least 35 people and wounding 138. Another car bomb north of the capital killed six members of the Iraqi security forces.

The explosion in Baghdad was part of a surge of violence on U.S. coalition forces and their Iraqi allies ahead of the transfer of sovereignty to Iraqis on June 30.

The blast scattered bodies and debris across a four-lane highway outside Baghdad's Muthanna airport, which is used as a base by both the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps and the U.S. military. The explosion could be heard for several miles and sent a cloud of smoke over the city.

Iraq's interior minister said he believed an al-Qaida-linked militant, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, was connected to the bombing.

No American or Iraqi troops were wounded, U.S. Army Col. Mike Murray said. Most of the victims appeared to be poor Iraqis hoping to join the security forces because job opportunities here are limited.

"This clearly again was an attack that has hurt the Iraqi people," Murray said.

Another car bomb exploded Thursday afternoon in a village near Balad, 50 miles north of Baghdad, killing six ICDC members and injuring four others, the U.S. 1st Infantry Division said. The ICDC is the main internal security force, created by U.S. administrators to battle insurgents.

The bombing came a day after a rocket slammed into a U.S. logistics base near

Balad, killing three U.S. soldiers and wounding 25 people.

A top U.S. military official said Thursday's bombing in Baghdad appeared to fit a new pattern from al-Zarqawi's terror network in Iraq: simpler, more frequent car bombings to shake confidence in Iraqi security forces ahead of the handover.

Asked by reporters if he saw al-Zarqawi's hand in the attack, interim Interior Minister Falah Hassan al-Naqib said "I think there is some links."

"We are quite sure and confident they are not Iraqis," al-Naqib said. "And we have very good indications that they came from abroad."

Al-Naqib said that one of al-Zarqawi's aides had been arrested, though he didn't say, who, where or when.

Many of the Baghdad victims had just gotten off a bus at about 9 a.m., Murray said. About 100 volunteers were trying to enter the recruiting center when the white sport utility vehicle crashed into the crowd, ICDC Capt. Hani Hussein said.

Another 175 Iraqis already accepted into the security force were inside the gate of the facility, but none of them was injured.

"We were standing waiting for our turn to register," Rafid Mudhar told The Associated Press from his hospital bed. "All of a sudden, we heard big explosion and most of those standing fell on the ground including me."

He said he was unconscious for a while, then managed to reach a nearby ambulance.

Bloody bodies covered in dust were scattered around the blast site. One dead man lay prostrate in the center of a highway median.

An artillery shell could be seen lying on the road.

At least 35 people died and 138 were injured, health ministry official Saad al-Amili said.

Surrounded by Western security guards and Iraqi police, interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi visited the scene of Thursday's blast and described it as a "cowardly attack."

"We are going to face these escalations," he said. "The Iraqi people are going to prevail and the government of Iraq is determined to go ahead in confronting the enemies, whether they are here in Iraq or whether they are anywhere else in the world."

Yas Khudair, an ICDC member, said all the victims were "poor people" who "wanted to volunteer to support their families."

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said the string of recent attacks would not affect the handover of sovereignty.

"The terrorists used to justify their terror saying it was against the occupation. The occupation is going to end in 12 days time; now the terrorists appear to be trying to stop the transfer of power to the Iraqi people themselves.

"We and the Iraqi people will not be deterred. The transfer of power will take place. Iraqis will take control of their lives," he said.

Britain announced Thursday that it will send more troops to Iraq, increasing the number of soldiers there by 270 to a total of about 9,200.

An explosion next to a convoy of water trucks killed a Hungarian soldier and wounded another Thursday, 40 miles

northeast of the Hillah base south of Baghdad, the Hungarian Defense Ministry said. It was Hungary's first military death in Iraq.

British soldiers clashed with Shiite fighters loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in southeastern Iraq after coalition troops detained one of the militia's leaders, but no one was injured, witnesses and the British military said.

Three British military vehicles also were fired upon early Thursday with small arms fire and a rocket propelled grenade in two separate attacks in the city of Amarah, 180 miles southeast of Baghdad, a British military spokesman said. None of the vehicles was damaged, the spokesman said on condition anonymity.

The attacks occurred after British forces detained militia leader, Ahmed Hachi.

Witnesses said the fighting lasted about an hour and a shop was burned.

The trouble began only one day after al-Sadr took steps to honor an agreement meant to end fighting with American forces in the holy cities of Nafaj and Kufa, ordering fighters who did not live in those twin cities to return home.

President Bush, in a speech beamed live to U.S. forces worldwide, said democracy was being born in Iraq despite the killings and pipeline attacks.

"We have come not to conquer, but to liberate people and we will stand with them until their freedom is secure," Bush told several thousand troops at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., home of the U.S. Central Command.



WORLD BRIEFLY

Gay marriages hit a glitch

By The Associated Press

BOSTON — A 1913 law that went virtually unnoticed for almost a century may take center stage in the battle over gay marriage in Massachusetts.

The law prohibits clerks from issuing licenses to couples if the marriage would not be legal in their home state.

After the state's Supreme Judicial Court ruled in November that same-sex couples had a right to marry, Gov. Mitt Romney used the 1913 law to block out-of-state couples from exchanging vows in Massachusetts.

Gay rights advocates contend the law is unconstitutional. They also said it's discriminatory to enforce it against gay couples when heterosexual couples from out-of-state were rarely, if ever, challenged over the past several decades.

The advocates plan to challenge the law in court this week.

A source familiar with the legal challenge who asked not to be named told The Associated Press that two lawsuits would be filed — one on behalf of about a dozen cities and towns and one on behalf of out-of-state couples.

Take that, Tehran

By The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Senior diplomats at the International Atomic Energy Agency refused to back down from a tough statement rebuking Iran for nuclear cover-ups even after the Iranian president warned of retaliation.

Chief U.S. delegate Kenneth Brill this week accused Tehran of a "full-court press of intimidation" to sway a meeting of the IAEA's 35-nation board of governors.

"People who are trying to produce electricity for light bulbs don't engage in this kind of behavior," he said.

Iran has suspended its uranium enrichment program, but President Mohammad Khatami said Tuesday that his

country has no "moral commitment" to maintain suspension. He insisted his country would not accept a toughly worded text.

But one delegate said the draft that keeps a sharp rebuke could be formally submitted by early Thursday.

A diplomat told The Associated Press the Americans were waiting for new revelations about Iran's nuclear program to surface at the next board meeting in September that will increase sentiment to find the country guilty of contravening the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. That could result in referral to the U.N. Security Council, which could impose sanctions.

Turks toughen up on terrorists

By The Associated Press

ISTANBUL, Turkey — Turkish police detained four suspected Islamic militants on suspicion they were planning to bomb an upcoming NATO summit that will be attended by foreign leaders including President Bush.

The four were detained this week in Istanbul and are suspected of being members of the Ansar al-Islam, a group linked to the al-Qaida terrorist network, a police official said on customary condition of anonymity. Bomb-making materials were also seized, the official said.

Turkey has pumped up security ahead of the June 28-29 meeting of NATO leaders.

Swiss banks open up the vaults

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — After years of acrimony, Swiss banks have agreed to release records of thousands of World War II-era accounts that may belong to victims of the Nazis.

A lawyer for Nazi victims who sued the banks said the agreement could allow the victims or their descen-

dants to obtain hundreds of millions of dollars in unclaimed funds. The banks' refusal to release the records had angered Holocaust survivors and infuriated a federal judge overseeing the case.

If Swiss banking authorities approve the agreement, Credit Suisse and UBS AG will publish the names of 3,000 accounts opened during the Nazi era. They will open databases of Nazi-era accounts for comparison with a list of thousands hoping to recover family assets from Swiss banks.

A claims resolution center will open in New York to ease the process.

The agreement, made public on Wednesday, could resolve much of the outstanding contention between the banks and Holocaust survivors, who agreed to a \$1.25 billion settlement of their lawsuit in 1998. It is expected to be sent to Switzerland for final approval as early as Thursday.

Southern Baptists keeping the faith

By The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — With over 16 million members, the Southern Baptist Convention remains America's largest Protestant denomination and continues to grow even as more liberal Protestant groups decline. But as the SBC ended its annual meeting, some leaders said the denomination appears to be stagnating.

The Rev. Jimmy Draper, president of the SBC publishing house, reminded the 8,500 church representatives this week of a decline in new member baptisms in each of the past four years. He said it reflects "a denomination that's lost its focus."

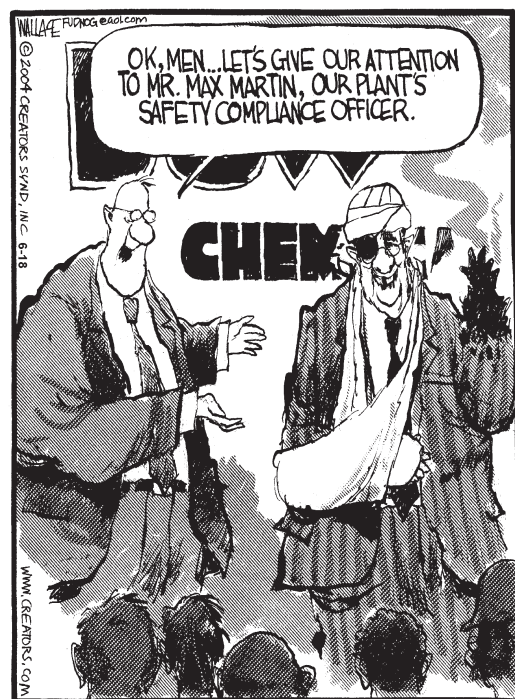
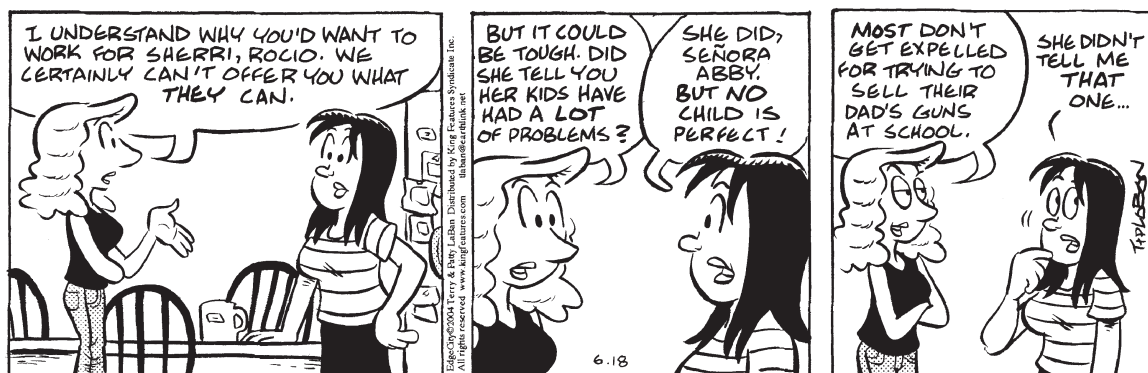
The SBC's newly elected president, the Rev. Bobby Welch of Daytona Beach, Fla., said at a news conference it would be a compliment to say the SBC has "plateaued." In fact, he said, baptism figures show "we are declining."

Associated Baptist Press, operated by moderates who oppose the SBC's conservative leadership, reported that statistics show a slowdown since the denomination began its rightward swing in 1979.

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



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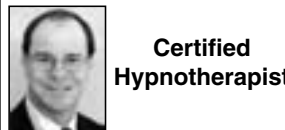
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