

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTO

FANTASY 5

33, 35, 8, 24, 11

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 4, 8, 7

Evening picks: 1, 0, 7

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 11, Money Bags

2nd Place: 09, Winning Spirit

3rd Place: 04, Big Ben

Race Time: 1:48:84



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

The U.S. Court of Appeals in San Francisco overturned the "armed robbery" conviction of Deshon Rene Odom in May, saying that even though Odom had a gun in his waistband, he hadn't meant for anyone at the bank he was robbing to see it, and therefore that he was not legally "armed." The court said that the federal law speaks only of using a gun, not carrying one; on the other hand, the court acknowledged that if Odom had waved around a toy gun that looked real, that would be enough for "armed" robbery.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"You don't know anything about a woman until you meet her in court."

— Norman Mailer



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Local mechanic awaits verdict in murder trial

Michael Ward Bell shot and killed a transient

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

Deliberations began Friday in the case against Michael Ward Bell, a Pico Boulevard mechanic who shot and killed a transient last July.

Bell, 54, a second-generation Santa Monica charged with first-degree murder, nodded solemnly to his aunt, Bea Bell, as he was ushered out of the courthouse after lawyers delivered their closing arguments.

After one hour of deliberations, jurors broke for the weekend. They will reconvene Monday morning at the Airport Courthouse near LAX, where the case is being heard by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Steven Van Sicken.

John Raphling, Bell's public defender,

told jurors that Bell acted in self defense after being stalked by Andre Watson, a homeless man with a history of mental problems who was heavily intoxicated on the night of the shooting.

Raphling said Watson attacked Bell with a box cutter after a series of heated arguments that began when Watson made a gesture indicating he wanted to slash Bell's throat.

"Had Mr. Bell not fired the gun, he may not have survived," said Raphling, who told jurors Bell is still haunted by the shooting. "Had Mr. Bell not fired the gun, his throat may have been cut by that knife. Had Mr. Bell not fired the gun, he may have been the one laying bloody on that grass."

"Had Mr. Bell not shot that gun, his friends who have stood by him during this trial, may instead have been standing over his grave."

Bell, a mechanic and engine builder

See TRIAL, page 5

Keep on truckin'



Del Pastrana/Daily Press

Morris — who didn't give a last name — pilots a remote controlled truck near the beach recently.

Judge denies Montana shopper's legal theory

BY DAVE DANFORTH

Daily Press Staff Writer

The over-the-top expectations of a Montana Avenue shopper were deflated in a court case in which a novel legal theory was proffered.

A parking lot owner in the high-end district is not liable for a \$4,233 fender-bender just because there was no parking attendant there, a Santa Monica commissioner ruled.

Susanne Strimling said she received a rude shock when she returned from a shopping expedition April 25 to find her trunk crunched. She blamed the damage on the lack of a parking attendant at the small private lot where she parked. An attendant, she reasoned, could have pre-

"We've owned the lot for 20 years and nothing like this has ever happened. We have no control over how people drive."

— JULIE FRIEDMAN
Parking lot owner

vented the mishap.

Strimling brought her case to court with the following legal theory: The Montana Avenue district, which stretches from Seventh to 17th avenues, is so high-end that it has become "normal and customary" for the nine private lots to provide parking attendants. Since the lot where she parked at 1201 Montana Ave. didn't have an attendant, it should pay for dam-

age to her car, she reasoned.

"The attendant could have watched the circumstances" in the lot, Strimling told small claims Commissioner Roberta Kyman in her quest for her claim, which fell just short of the \$5,000 small claims limit. She photographed other Montana lots that provide attendants. One pictured a valet in a straw hat.

See THEORY, page 5

Car taxes set to jump, GOP promises court challenge

BY TOM CHORNEAU

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Although it's a key component of the latest budget proposal from the Senate Republican leader, a \$4 billion hike in taxes paid by car owners has been targeted by the GOP for a court challenge, officials

said Thursday.

The tripling of the vehicle license fee, which would cost the average car owner about \$130 annually, is expected to be triggered in the coming days by Gov. Gray Davis. Along with most Democrats and at least some Republicans, Davis says state law allows him to return the tax to 1998 levels if cash reserves

fall to dangerously low levels.

Assemblyman John Campbell of Irvine, the ranking Republican on the Assembly's budget committee, said a new opinion from the legislative counsel supports his contention that Davis is wrong about state law and the car tax cannot legally be raised — either by the

See TAXES, page 6

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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Saturday, June 21, 2003:

This year has an element of tension built into it. Use this force as an energizer rather than a downer. You will get a lot done far more quickly as a result. With organization, you'll become a whirlwind of efficiency. Your ability to move higher in professional circles will be emphasized. Others look to you as a role model. If you are single, a relationship will become a strong possibility in September, when you will be more open. This person could be very special and cross your path when you least expect it. If you are attached, your relationship will grow as long as you are willing to give it the time it needs. ARIES pushes you at work.

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 ★★★★★ You'll remember this weekend as you greet the Summer Solstice. Why not throw the party of parties? With the Moon in your sign, you'll christen the next few months in a manner that seems appropriate. No matter what you do, the call is yours. Tonight: As you like it.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 ★★★★★ Knowing when to pull back is important. You might want to kick up your heels on the longest day of the year. Consider doing it as a private event, with a few friends. You could be reading more into someone's behavior than there is. Tonight: Personalize the evening.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 ★★★★★ Where your friends are is certainly where you belong. You tumble into a sequence of parties, which might be difficult to extract yourself from, not that you'll want to. Recognize that you could easily go overboard whether you want to or not. Tonight: Obviously, where the action is.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 ★★★★★ You might want to carefully think through a decision that involves a parent or older person. Though the sun moves into your sign celebrating the Summer Solstice, you might not be able to party and play to your heart's delight. Tonight: In the limelight.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 ★★★★★ In the next month, you might be a little more cautious than previously, though you will let go for now. If you don't have a day trip scheduled, why not gather the troops and get going? Choose to explore a new area or do something totally different. Tonight: Accept a special invitation.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 ★★★★★ If you do not understand what is going on with a partner, why not find out? Before you join friends or head to the beach, clear the air with your sweetie or pal. Express your priorities in a manner that makes a difference. Tonight: Wherever the happening is.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 ★★★★★ You might want to take a deep breath before you take off with your friends or loved ones. A parent or group of associates might expect your presence, but you have other priorities. A special friend really needs your time and input. Tonight: Do what feel right. Express your sensitivity.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 ★★★★★ Others come together for a project, or you might already be involved in a project, not quite willing to take off at this very second. Now be honest, how many Summer Solstices do you have a year? Meet a friend halfway. Tonight: Let your mind wander.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 ★★★★★ Your playful, childlike side emerges, delighting a loved one and/or friends. Lead your pals into the Summer Solstice festivities. Your sense of when to risk helps others relish the moment more. Tonight: Be the host or hostess and help others enjoy.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ★★★★★ One-on-one relating takes you down a new path, if you're open. You could opt to spend this first day of summer at home, sprucing up your surroundings. Invite your friends over for a spontaneous get-together later. Tonight: Happy at home.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ★★★★★ Keep the ball rolling, helping others, as well as yourself, enjoy the weekend. You say the right thing at the right time. You help those around you feel much more comfortable. Put up your feet and relax. Remember, this is your weekend, too. Tonight: Catch up on a friend's news.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 ★★★★★ First deal with a money issue and establish a budget for the next few days. In your mood for play, you'll discover that everything could get out of control. Express your caring to those who count. An important friendship could enter your life if you're single. Tonight: Romp away.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Art museum receives \$2 million in donations

By Daily Press staff

Two foundations have pledged \$1 million each to the Santa Monica Museum of Art. Good Works Foundation and the Annenberg Foundation made the pledges as part of the museum's new fund-raising drive called the Innovation Fund.

The money from both foundations will be dispersed over a four-year period, though three-fourths of the Annenberg money will become available when the museum secures matching funds, according to a museum press release.

"The creation of the Innovation Fund ensures that there will be consistent, significant resources of support for the Santa Monica Museum of Art to explore and exhibit the extraordinary in contemporary art for many years to come," said Laura Donnelley-Morton, president of the museum's board of trustees and a co-founder of Good Works Foundation.

Said Elsa Longhauser, the museum's executive director, "We are grateful for the courage and cultural foresight of both foundations for their support of the visual arts even during difficult economic times."

The Santa Monica Museum of Art, which was founded in 1984, is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. It is located at Bergamont Station, 2525 Michigan Ave. For more information (310) 586-6488, ext. 31 or visit www.smmoa.org.

Gay, lesbian groups awarded more than \$200,000

By Daily Press staff

A foundation has awarded more than \$200,000 to 15 organizations working on issues faced by local lesbian, gay and transgender communities.

Liberty Hill Foundation gave \$206,250 to the groups, which include Fringe Benefits, Gay-Straight Alliance Network and Teen Line. Those groups are working in schools to help implement the California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000, which prohibits discrimination in state schools on the basis of sexual orientation.

Other organizations include groups working to affect change through film — DeepFocus Productions and Outfest.

"Liberty Hill is one of the few foundations LGBT organizations can turn to for funding and we're happy that in a year when budgets have been so tight for so many, we were able to give away a record-breaking amount of money," said Torie Osborn, Liberty Hill executive director.

Special Olympics needs cycling volunteers

By Daily Press staff

Westside Special Olympics is looking for volunteers for once-a-week rides with the group's athletes.

No experience is necessary, according to a press release, just a desire to be outdoors and have fun on the bike path.

For more information, contact the Westside Special Olympics Cycling Program at (310) 458-8300 and leave a message with Ginger.

Santa Monica skies to remain dark on July 4th

By Daily Press staff

City officials want to remind visitors and locals alike that the only fireworks display in Santa Monica this summer will be at Santa Monica College Stadium on the night of Saturday, June 28.

There is no fireworks display planned for anywhere in Santa Monica — including the pier and surrounding beach — on July 4, according to a city press release.



Bad conditions are putting a damper on things, but at least there's some pulse in the water. We'll know more by this morning about what to expect over the weekend.

BAD NEWS: All swells are at a low point this morning.

GOOD NEWS: A new SW will build throughout the day.

OUTLOOK: A steep S builds on Monday and hangs tough through the early part of next week. If you're lucky — and resourceful — you may find some quality waves. Good luck.

Today the water is:

62°

Sunrise: 5:50 a.m.
Sunset: 8:15 p.m.

	LOW TIDE				HIGH TIDE			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
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SUNDAY	10:55	1.2	N/A	N/A	4:45	3.5	5:53	4.8
MONDAY	12:37	1.6	(11:38)	1.5	6:08	3.3	6:25	5.1
TUESDAY	1:26	1.0	12:17	1.9	7:19	3.3	6:54	5.3
WEDNESDAY	2:06	0.5	12:53	2.1	8:17	3.3	7:23	5.6
THURSDAY	2:42	0.1	1:27	2.3	9:05	3.4	7:53	5.8
FRIDAY	3:16	-0.2	2:00	2.4	9:47	3.5	8:23	5.9

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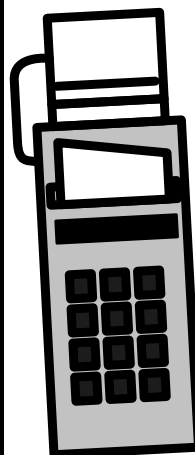
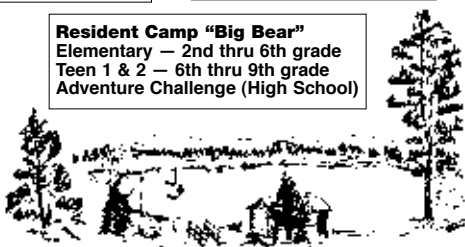
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OPINION

LETTERS

If true, 'action is outrageous'

Editor:

If Bill Bauer's allegations that members of the Santa Monica Rent Control Board approached landlords with a proposition to exchange support for Measure S for a pass-through of its costs to renters proved true, Rent Control Board members should resign en masse.

Although Bauer acknowledges that his evidence of this exchange remains circumstantial, the fact that the Apartment Owners Association of Los Angeles endorsed Prop. S suggests strongly that it took this position at the urging of members who had heard from the Rent Control Board members.

If any board member concluded that it was OK to approach landlords with a promise that they would pass alone Measure S's costs to renters in exchange for support, that action is outrageous.

Joanne Gamlin
Santa Monica

Perhaps they're for the benefit of all

Editor:

Those are handicapped ramps that the city is building? I thought that the city put those in so the bums wouldn't have to push their shopping carts full of crap up and down the curbs.

Jeff Bender
Santa Monica

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"MAN IN THE MIRROR"

AMOR?
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THINK ABOUT
THIS NEW
TWIST ON
THE HULK'S
ORIGIN:
THAT THE
REAL SECRET
OF HIS RAGE
COMES FROM
BEING AN
ABUSE VICTIM?



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GOOD THING YOU RECYCLE YOUR PAPER...
CHANCES ARE YOU'RE READING IT AGAIN.

We lie to our doctors because we don't want trouble

MODERN
TIMES

By Lloyd Garver

I am the most health-conscious person in the world — for the two weeks prior to my physical exam. I eat right, I get plenty of exercise, and I think positive thoughts.

However, as soon as I leave the doctor's office after the exam, I drive — not walk — to the deli down the street and eat whatever I want. It's as if I "study" for my physical, then after I pass the test, I celebrate by undoing all that good stuff. Why do so many of us try to "cheat" on our tests like this? Why do we try to trick our doctors?

One of the most common things that people misrepresent — not just to doctors but to everyone — is their weight. When some people weigh themselves at the doctor's office, they don't just disrobe, they

also take off their watches.

Sex is another area that people tend to wander away from the absolute truth. Doctors report that patients are reluctant to admit that they have any sexual problems. Depending on one's gender, age, and self-image, people might either exaggerate or minimize how frequently they have sex. We spend our whole lives not being completely honest about sex, so I guess it's not surprising that even though they're adults in a doctor's office, some people are still embarrassed about S-E-X.

If your doctor suggested that you cut back on alcohol a year ago, odds are that you'll report that you are no longer drinking as much at your appointment this year. If you exercise once or twice a week, you'll say you exercise twice a week. If you drink anywhere from two to six cups of coffee per day, you might say that you drink two cups. If you eat three strips of bacon every morning, you're likely to fudge about that. And if you eat fudge every day, well, you get the point.

I think the main reason that we don't always tell our doctors the whole truth and nothing but the truth is because of one of our most basic fears — WE DON'T WANT TO GET IN TROUBLE. We don't want to be yelled at. We don't want that authority figure to shake his or her head and make that disappointed face. So, sometimes when we're with that person in the white coat, we become like children wanting to please their parents.

Some people resent this power that they give to doctors, and that can also lead to them not being forthcoming. They'll think, "He doesn't know everything just because he's a doctor," or "If he's so smart, why doesn't he look healthier?" or "What's it his business how often I go to the bathroom?"

The other thing that keeps us from being completely truthful with our doctors is denial. This leads to rationalizations like, "I'm only taking these extra pills during this really stressful time," or "Why should I exercise and watch my diet? I

heard about this guy who was a vegetarian marathon runner but got flattened by a bus."

But I am finally mature enough to realize that this is a foolish way to approach my health. The purpose of my physical exam is not to win my doctor's approval. From now on, I'm not going to go through the charade of being extra healthy right before my physical.

I'm going to try to be healthy all year long, and face up to any physical problems I might have. I feel passionately about this, but I should stop talking about it for now. I have a dentist appointment in two weeks, and I have to start flossing.

(Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from "Sesame Street" to "Family Ties" to "Frasier." He has also read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes the "Modern Times" column for CBSnews.com's Opinion page and can be reached at smdp@lloydgarvermoderntimes.com.)

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LOCAL



Jury to decide whether man is guilty of murder

TRIAL, from page 1

who managed BT Automotive on the 2600 block of Pico Boulevard, attracted a small group of friends and colleagues to the trial that came from as far away as Connecticut to support him.

Los Angeles Deputy District Attorney Mark Burnley admitted Watson was unstable but said he didn't deserve to die. He called on jurors to find Bell guilty of first-degree murder.

Burnley said Bell made a deliberate decision to search out Watson when he could have locked himself in his office or fled to look for help.

"There are two boxes of ammunition, a loaded .357 (Magnum), a telephone, barred windows and a locked door (in the office)," Burnley said. "Mr. Bell was golden.

"When Mr. Bell walked out of that shop, he thought about life and he thought about death — and he chose death."

The jury of eight women and four men shifted back and forth in their seats and took notes during the lawyer's closing arguments, which concluded the seven-day trial.

Bell, the son of a former Santa Monica Police Department officer, has been in custody on \$2 million bail since July 1, when the shooting occurred. On the night of the incident, Bell said Watson tried to enter his shop with a knife in his hand. When he went to lock the door but heard a noise in the garage, Bell said he panicked and grabbed his handgun from an office drawer.

He ran into the street and walked more than 100 feet down the sidewalk, toward a trash bag he believed to be Bell's belongings. When he leaned down to inspect the bag, Bell said Watson said, "F--k, a f--king gun," and attacked him.

Bell unleashed six rounds, hitting Watson's hip, calf and thigh with four of them. Watson, who carried two box cutter knives in his front left pocket, died about 90 minutes later from blood loss.

Court: Parking lot owner not liable for car's damage

THEORY, from page 1

Strimling couldn't sue the perpetrator, who simply left the lot without leaving a note. Instead she sued the owner of the lot, the Julie Friedman Family Trust of Santa Barbara.

"We've owned the lot for 20 years and nothing like this has ever happened," Julie Friedman said in court. "We have no control over how people drive."

Friedman suggested the suit was as silly as if a motorist who'd been sideswiped while parked on Montana had sued the City of Santa Monica.

Kyman agreed, but tacked on another legal twist. She warned Strimling that even if she won her claim and the parking lot was liable, she would be docked at least half the award for "contributory negligence."

"You chose to park there," Kyman said. "If you were to win, I'd reduce the award by at least half."

But after deliberating, Kyman ruled that the lot had no liability. She'd noted that if a customer slipped on a rug in a shop and fell, the shop might be held liable. But if

More than 30 expert and eye witnesses testified in the trial.

Doctors who evaluated Watson, who had an I.Q. of 130, said he suffered from "assaultive" ideas and had been medicated for paranoia. Shortly before the incident, Watson was ordered to serve 15 days in jail for threatening two teenage girls on Santa Monica Beach with a box cutter. At the time of his death, Watson's blood alcohol content was two or three times the legal limit to drive.

"Had Mr. Bell not shot that gun, his friends who have stood by him during this trial may instead have been standing over his grave."

— JOHN RAPHLING
Public defender

But Burnley said Bell wasn't simply protecting himself from Watson. He said Bell took deliberate aim and methodically shot at him.

"The question you really have to ask," Burnley said, "is 'Did Mr. Watson deserve to die?'"

"Mr. Watson had a lot of problems ... but he was not a thing, remember that. He was a transient, yes. But he was not a thing."

While the jury deliberates, Bell's friends and family are waiting anxiously for a verdict.

Dan Hanrahan, a graphic designer from Topanga Canyon, said he speaks to Bell often by telephone.

"He's really upset," Hanrahan said. "He killed someone. But he's an engine builder, not a killer."

another shopper had pushed the customer, there would be no such liability.

Strimling complained that Friedman had admitted liability by later posting a sign at the lot, which stated that management isn't liable for any damage there. But Kyman didn't buy the argument, noting only that Strimling had gone to "further extremes" to satisfy her curiosity. The later appearance of a sign had no bearing on the case, Kyman said.

Kyman also noted that an attendant couldn't have necessarily prevented an accident. Such an employee might be on break or looking the other way at the moment of truth, the commissioner suggested.

Some lots or the businesses owning them provide attendants as a courtesy to customers, Kyman said. But they are not required to do so. Kyman reserved her ruling to determine whether any local merchants association had enacted rules holding the district to a higher standard. But her ruling apparently indicated that she found none, and free parking — liability-free — remains.



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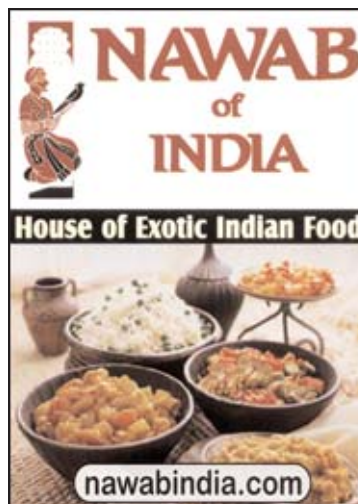
Dennis C. Hardin, M.F.T., Ph.D., is a licensed psychotherapist and marriage counselor specializing in personal growth and goal achievement. He is the author of *THE ETHICS OF PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT*. He has also been certified by the Albert Ellis Institute in the techniques of rational-emotive behavioral therapy. His specialty is developing self-help methods which enable clients to retake control of their lives and remake their own destiny.

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**FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ARE ENCOURAGED
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By The Associated Press

RIVERSIDE — A University of California, Riverside, student allegedly hacked into a university computer in April to alter student election results.

Prosecutors said Thursday that Shawn Nematbakhsh, 21, of Moreno Valley cast 800 write-in votes for "American Ninja" to demonstrate how easy it was to hack into the UC Riverside computer.

Nematbakhsh was charged with accessing computers illegally, a felony. If convicted, he could be sentenced to three years in prison and fined \$10,000.

"His point was not to influence the election, but to allegedly show how easy it is to hack into the UC Riverside computer system. But that's like a guy burglarizing a home to prove how cheap its locks were," Chief Deputy District Attorney Rod Pacheco said.

Nematbakhsh hacked into a student services computer server, university spokesman Ricardo Duran said. Prosecutors say the server included students' grades and school financial information.

"The potential was there for a great deal of harm," Pacheco said.

Pellet gun used in drive-bys

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Five people were wounded in a series of drive-by pellet gun shootings in the Griffith Park and Hollywood areas.

"There's a person out there, or persons out there, being cowardly. They're shooting people who are minding their own business," Lt. Art Miller said Thursday.

KABC-TV newsman Gene Gleeson, 59, was riding his bike home through

See BRIEFS, page 7

**California shortfall could
grow to \$38 billion by 2004**

TAXES, from page 1

governor or at this point in time.

Campbell, who said he will support a lawsuit to challenge the car tax hike, explained that the law requires state Controller Steve Westly to actually decide when and if the tax hike should be imposed. Further, he said, the law says the state coffers must literally be depleted before the tax can be legally raised — a condition, he claims, that does not exist today.

"I am not going to sit around and let one of Davis' phantom bureaucrats triple the car tax. It won't fly in the courts, and it won't fly with taxpayers," said Campbell during a news conference at the Capitol.

Davis said he has delegated the responsibility for triggering the tax and does not know if or when the tax will be raised. "Whether or not the VLF goes into effect is up to the financial officers of the state."

Campbell insisted that Republican lawmakers are united against the car tax, even though the same \$4 billion tax hike was included in an informal budget plan prepared by Sen. Jim Brulte only a few weeks ago.

Brulte, R-Rancho Cucamonga, said he does not support the car tax increase and included it in a budget proposal he made two weeks ago inside the Republican caucus only because the governor had said the higher fees would be imposed and that the money needed to be accounted for. Brulte said he supports Campbell's position that the tax hike is illegal.

Steve Peace, Davis' director of finance and the man the governor's attorneys believe will actually pull the trigger on the car tax, was quick to denounce Campbell's legal interpretation.

Peace said the opinion from Legislative Counsel Diane Boyer-Vine is not new and was fully analyzed months ago by a bevy of in-house attorneys and outside legal experts.

"We've had many lawyers look at this, as you can imagine," Peace said. "We've been very conservative about how to evaluate this.

"At the end of the day, this is going to be litigated and the answers will be provided for us in the court," Peace said.

Peace noted that proceeds from an \$11 billion bond sale have been deposited into state accounts, which means the state — for the first time — is operating completely on borrowed money. Still, he would not say when the higher car tax would be imposed.

With a current deficit of close to \$10.7 billion, California faces a shortfall that could grow at large as \$38.2 billion by July 2004 because spending continues to far outpace tax collections.

The governor and Legislature have agreed on cuts and saving proposals that would trim the shortfall by about \$12 billion. Davis and Democrats have also counted the \$4 billion that would be raised next year by the increase in the car tax as another important component for reducing the deficit.

Davis proposed a budget plan last month that includes an additional \$18 billion in cuts and savings as well as additional tax increases that would bring in about \$8.3 billion.

Republicans have said they will not support a budget that includes higher taxes and thus far have refused to support the governor's plan.

Any lawsuit that would be actually filed to block the tax hike is likely to come from one or more taxpayer groups that have close ties to the Republican Party. Legislators have said that while they would support the challenge, they would not use any public money to push the court case.

Meanwhile, mayors from the state's biggest cities also came to the Capitol Thursday to lobby lawmakers on the budget and concerns that funds not be reduced for public safety and other local programs.

Among them was Los Angeles Mayor Jim Hahn who urged the Legislature to protect police funding. "Our thin blue line is already thin enough," said Hahn.

STATE



CALIFORNIA BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 6

Griffith Park late Wednesday afternoon when he was shot in the lower back. "All of a sudden there's this 'pow!' and I felt a sting," he said Thursday.

Gleeson said he yelled at the car as it drove away, and cycled faster to catch up to it, but lost the car at an intersection.

Theresa Neill, 47, of Simi Valley was jogging uphill against traffic when she heard a loud noise and felt a sharp pain and then blood from the upper left side of her chest.

"I was concentrating on finishing my run," said Neill, who regularly runs in the park after work. "It could have hit my eye. It was so scary."

Three other people were shot later Wednesday night in the Hollywood area.

A 15-year-old boy was walking on Serrano Avenue in east Hollywood about 9:20 p.m. when pellets struck him in the arm. About an hour later, a man was shot in the chest as he took out trash on Fountain Avenue. The fifth victim was shot a few blocks away about 11 p.m.

There were no arrests.

Golf course managers charged with pimping

By The Associated Press

NORCO — Naked and scantily clad women enticed male golfers into tents near putting greens at Hidden Valley Golf Club to offer lap dances and sex for money, investigators testified.

Thomas Gstrein, a senior investigator with the Riverside County district attorney's office, said during a preliminary hearing Thursday that the women performed various acts on the men inside tents and under canopies during private golf club functions in May and June last year.

Darren James Bollinger, 28, and Jason Wood, 37, managers of the golf course who live in Wildomar, are charged with felony pimping and pandering.

A third defendant, Sandy Juarez, 37, of Palmdale faced the same charges, but she pleaded guilty in February to two counts of conspiracy and agreed to testify against Bollinger and Wood. She will serve 120 days in jail on weekends.

Defense attorneys Steve Harmon and John Barnett said that no one actually saw their clients take part in the prostitution operation. Juarez will testify against them only because "she got the deal of a decade," Barnett said.

Superior Court Judge Christian Thierbach, who will decide if there's enough evidence to order Bollinger and Wood to trial, decided to finish the preliminary hearing on July 18 after he has heard taped testimony from Juarez and the alleged prostitutes.

Deputy District Attorney Arthur Chang said that Bollinger and Wood, as the golf course managers, had to know about the prostitution ring.

"Of course they had to know what was going on on the course," he said.

Pedestrian killed by suspected drunk driver

By The Associated Press

ROSSMOOR — An 80-year-old pedestrian was killed when a suspected drunken driver steered onto a sidewalk and dragged the woman for a block before colliding with another vehicle, investigators said.

Cathleen Elaine McGann, 56, was arrested Thursday and booked for investigation of driving under the influence and felony manslaughter in the death of Peggy Ferguson, 80, of Los Alamitos, the California Highway Patrol said.

CHP Officer Mark Andreozzi said Ferguson was across the street from the Rossmoor Library when the Lexus struck her near the corner of Brimhall Drive and

Montecito Road in Rossmoor, an unincorporated Orange County area between Seal Beach and Los Alamitos.

Ferguson was dragged to the intersection of Montecito and Tigertail Drive.

Witnesses told officers that McGann was "driving reckless," and Andreozzi said, "She was out of control."

The CHP was investigating the crash.

"We don't know whether (the second accident was) just a continuation of the reckless driving, or if (she) exceeded speed trying to flee the scene knowing there was an accident here," CHP Officer Garry Goldenberg said.

It's noisy enough at Long Beach Airport

By The Associated Press

LONG BEACH — City noise studies continue to show there's no room for additional commercial flights at Long Beach Airport.

Officials caution, however, that only the data from an independent noise consultant will legally determine whether there could be more than the limit of 41 daily commercial flights next year. Data collection from that noise survey is three months from completion.

Members of the city's Airport Advisory Commission were briefed Thursday on the ongoing noise study by Newport Beach-based Mestre Greve Associates Inc., a noise engineering consultant hired by the city for the critical survey.

Vince Mestre told commissioners the study will look at every commercial jet flying into and out of Long Beach Airport, beginning with data compiled starting Oct. 1, 2002, and combined with real-time measurements through Sept. 30.

Noise levels are measured by "listening stations" set up at either end of the airport's main 10,000-foot runway. Under the city's existing unique noise ordinance, a maximum level of noise is set for commercial jets.

The airport will reach 41 daily flights when JetBlue uses its final flight slot to begin another nonstop to New York City, set for later this month, and the city uses a lottery drawing to award a flight slot given up by America West Airlines this month.

America West was unable to fully use one of its five slots and the city reacquired it. American Airlines, Alaska Airlines and JetBlue all have requested the now open slot and the city will use a random drawing to designate who gets it.

Bank robberies less frequent, more dangerous

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — There's been a drop in Southern California bank robberies, but the FBI said they are becoming more dangerous.

Last year, bank robberies in the region dropped to 645, nearly a 10-year low.

But rather than quiet thieves who pass notes or whisper their demands, more and more bank heists are staged in commando-style takeover robberies with automatic weapons.

"In sheer numbers, it's not that we're necessarily seeing an increase," FBI spokeswoman Laura Bosley said. "We're seeing a rise in the violent style."

In 2001 and 2002, takeover robberies made up nearly 30 percent of the 1,322 bank robberies in the Los Angeles area. During the early 1990s, when the FBI routinely investigated 1,500 robberies a year, only about 20 percent were takeovers.

If the trend continues, the FBI estimates that, by next year, takeovers will account for about 40 percent of all bank robberies in Southern California. The reporting area includes the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo.

John McEachern, supervisory special agent for bank robberies, said the violence and the screaming associated with takeovers makes them especially volatile situations.

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INTERNATIONAL

Hamas called 'enemy of peace' by Colin Powell

BY KARIN LAUB
Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM — Calling Hamas an "enemy of peace," Secretary of State Colin Powell said Friday the Palestinian Authority must strip the group of its terror network and negotiating a truce is not sufficient.

As Powell addressed a news conference with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, an Israeli motorist was killed and three were wounded in a Palestinian shooting attack in the West Bank. Since a Mideast peace summit two weeks ago, 27 Israelis and 40 Palestinians have been killed. Four of the Palestinians were killed carrying out attacks on Israelis.

Powell said the violence was all the more reason to implement the U.S.-backed peace plan launched at the summit. "The pace and urgency of our work needs to be maintained in order to capitalize quickly and decisively on this moment that history has given to us," he said.

Powell spoke after discussions with Sharon and Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom. He then began meeting with Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, who has been trying to negotiate a cease-fire with Hamas.

Powell said he was "anxious to speak to Prime Minister Abbas about efforts they are making to bring violence under control, to end violence, not just through the means of having a cease-fire, but going beyond that ... to end violence and the capacity for violence."

Abbas has said he will not launch a crackdown for fear of triggering a civil war.

After meeting with Powell, Abbas demanded that Israel take steps to ease restrictions on Palestinians, stop settlement building and "change itself from an enemy into a partner."

"The logic of confrontation cannot match the logic of peace," Abbas said.

Powell said he and Abbas spoke mainly about security arrangements. Powell said he again stressed that Palestinian attacks must end. "Violence and terror is not the way to build a state," he said.

Powell did not say how far he wants the Palestinians to go in a crackdown on militants including Hamas, whom he singled out as an "enemy of peace." The Islamic militant group has killed hundreds of Israelis in recent years and has been trying to scuttle peace efforts, including the latest, the so-called "road map" to Palestinian statehood by 2005.

"We must make sure that all international pressure possible is brought to bear on these organizations, so that they know they will not succeed, they will not prevail, they will be dealt with," Powell said, referring to the Palestinian militias.

Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi responded angrily, calling Powell a "big liar."

"This is a statement that reflects and proves that he is a little slave to the Zionists and to his master Sharon, that he is the real enemy of peace and justice in the world," he said.

Sharon said no progress will be made on the road map as long as attacks continue. He said Palestinians must realize that a decisive war on terrorism "is the way to make way and move ahead in a sincere and genuine process."

The two leaders appeared to differ on how much time the Palestinian security

forces should be given to get organized. Powell urged both sides to show patience, while Sharon suggested that once the Palestinians have accepted security responsibility in areas from which Israel withdraws, they will be held accountable for any attacks launched from there.

Israel and the Palestinians are also at odds over Israel's targeted killings of wanted Palestinians and the scope of Israel's withdrawal from parts of the Gaza Strip. Both issues were discussed, without result, at a meeting between Israeli and Palestinian security officials and U.S. monitors late Thursday.

Palestinians say that in order to persuade militant groups, particularly Hamas, to accept a truce, they need an Israeli guarantee that targeted killings will be halted.

Sharon refuses to give such a blanket promise, saying he reserves the right to go after "ticking bombs," a term generally understood to refer to an assailant about to carry out an attack. However, Sharon's aides have said this also applies to those planning attacks. In trying to kill Rantisi in a missile strike last week, Israel referred to him as a ticking bomb. Rantisi, who was wounded, is a Hamas spokesman and has insisted he has no ties to the military wing.

Powell suggested Friday that a broad definition of a ticking bomb is unacceptable.

"When one goes beyond that and expands those kinds of activities (targeted killings) to individuals or situations where it might not be a ticking bomb, then ... the consequences of such actions and how they play into our broader efforts for peace must be taken into consideration, and that is the position that we have discussed with the Israelis on many occasions," he said.

Powell said agreement has not yet been reached on the terms of an Israeli withdrawal from large parts of Gaza but that there was some progress. In first stage of the road map, Israel is to withdraw gradually to positions held before the outbreak of fighting in September 2000.

One issue in the security talks is control over the main north-south road in Gaza. Israel insists that roadblocks it erected after the outbreak of fighting remain in place. The Palestinians insist the barriers, meant to protect Jewish settlers from attack by Palestinian militants, be removed so Gaza residents can see an actual improvement in their daily lives.

The checkpoints have caused great hardship in the past 33 months. Palestinian motorists are often unable to get from one end of Gaza to the other, meaning they can't reach schools and jobs. Before September 2000, Israeli and Palestinian security forces jointly patrolled the road.

Powell said Israel has begun carrying out one obligation under the peace plan — the dismantling of West Bank settlement outposts. "We have begun to execute the road map," Powell said, adding he would talk to Israeli leaders about taking additional steps.

In the first stage of the road map, Israel must remove dozens of outposts. In recent days, it has dismantled 11, including an inhabited one, Mitzpeh Yitzhar. At that outpost, hundreds of settlers brawled with about 1,000 Israeli troops. Thirty people were hurt and more than a dozen arrested.

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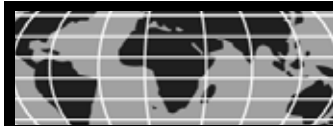
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WORLD BRIEFLY

European Union constitution drafted

By The Associated Press

PORTO CARRAS, Greece — A draft constitution was formally presented to European Union leaders Friday, launching what is expected to be a protracted debate over how much power countries are willing to surrender to a strengthened union.

Later Friday, the leaders of the 15 EU members and 10 other countries set to join next year planned to discuss efforts to improve relations with the United States, which were strained by the U.S.-British war in Iraq.

In the latest trans-Atlantic rift, the United States announced Thursday that it was calling on the World Trade Organization to decide whether the EU moratorium on biotech foods and grain violates international rules after U.S.-EU talks failed to resolve the issue.

The draft calls for an EU president, a foreign minister, and a more effective European Commission. It also aims to streamline and accelerate decision-making. Some countries oppose the draft because they fear it will threaten national sovereignty and bolster the power of large countries, notably Germany.

RPG attack takes out transformer

By The Associated Press

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Insurgents used a rocket-propelled grenade to blow up an electrical transformer in the Iraqi city of Fallujah, witnesses said Friday, in the latest sabotage against the infrastructure needed for Iraq's reconstruction.

U.S. tanks guarding the gates of the power station in Fallujah, 35 miles from Baghdad, returned a barrage of gunfire into the darkness, said the supervisor of the station, Soadad Khalil.

There were no casualties among the soldiers or the station's employees, he said. The explosion around 11:30 p.m. Thursday sent a tower of flames into the night, and the transformer was still smoldering 12 hours later.

The attack knocked out one of the two transformers at the power plant, which provides nearly half the electricity to this city of about 75,000 people. Fallujah has been a center of resistance against the coalition occupation of Iraq.

Daily attacks against the U.S.-led coalition have grown increasingly lethal in the last week. On Thursday, assailants fired a rocket-propelled grenade at a military ambulance south of Baghdad, killing one American and

wounding two others. He was the third soldier to die from hostile fire this week alone.

Stewart's lawyers have work to do

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With Martha Stewart's trial set for January, her lawyers will now sort through boxes of evidence the government has already amassed in its investigation of the domestic style maven.

Prosecutors say their case also includes copies of Stewart's computer hard drive and the hard drives of some employees at Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, her media empire.

U.S. District Judge Miriam Goldman Cedarbaum set Stewart's trial date for Jan. 12 on Thursday, granting the request of defense attorneys who said they needed plenty of time to review the evidence.

Stewart is accused of lying to investigators and deceiving her own company's shareholders during a probe into her sale of nearly 4,000 shares of ImClone Systems stock. She and stockbroker Peter Bacanovic have pleaded innocent.

During a brief hearing in federal court, Stewart quietly made notes in a spiral-bound notebook. She spoke only two words — "I agree" — to answer the judge's question of whether the trial date was appropriate.

Bishops say reforms are on-track

By The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — After days of outside criticism of their commitment to ridding the church of sexual abusers, the nation's Roman Catholic bishops insist their reform plan remains on track.

And they got a strategic boost from prominent Washington, D.C. attorney Robert Bennett, a member of the National Review Board, a lay monitoring panel whose chairman quit in disgust Monday.

Following a closed-door session Thursday, Bennett said "the overwhelming number" of U.S. bishops fully support the board's efforts. The meeting involved all bishops, three review board members and staffers conducting a review board investigation of the extent of past abuse.

"If we don't get cooperation, we'll name names," Bennett added.

With tensions seemingly resolved, the bishops are holding more private sessions all day Friday on whether to call an extraordinary national meeting, known as a "plenary council," to address the American church's problems. It would be the first such event since 1884.

Charges dropped in Canadian bombing

By The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — The Air Force has dropped criminal charges against two F-16 pilots who mistakenly bombed Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan last year, killing four. But while both pilots have avoided court-martial and lengthy prison sentences, one may not have been entirely cleared in the incident.

Maj. Harry Schmidt, who released the 500-pound bomb, still faces two counts of dereliction of duty. The charges are for not ensuring that the troops he attacked were the enemy, and for disobeying air controllers' directions to "stand by" before he dropped the bomb.

Schmidt's lawyer, Charles Gittins, said he might take the case to trial instead of accepting the dereliction allegations.

Schmidt and Maj. William Umbach had been charged with involuntary manslaughter and aggravated assault, and faced up to 64 years in prison if convicted in a court-martial.

Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, commander of the Louisiana-based 8th Air Force, announced Thursday that all charges against Umbach would be dropped.

Wildfire burns more than 200 homes

By The Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — Firefighters working to rein in a

wildfire that has already burned between 200 and 250 homes in a mountaintop vacation hamlet were pessimistic that the weather would be of much help.

With high winds and low humidity expected to hinder their efforts, "there's not a thing happening that's on our side," said Larry Humphrey, who is leading the team fighting the fire.

Driven by winds reaching up to 60 mph, the fire roared across Mount Lemmon in less than an hour Thursday, destroying some homes while sparing others.

Humphrey said firefighters managed to save about 60 homes and had thought they would be able to preserve another 30. But he said it could take two to three weeks to contain the fire, which had grown to around 4,000 acres.

The fire had forced the evacuation of Summerhaven, a community with hundreds of vacation homes and about 100 year-round residents, shortly after it started Tuesday.

The town post office, a coffee house and the Alpine Lodge were destroyed while almost every other building on the town's main road was damaged by the fire, the Arizona Daily Star reported.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Senate passes generic medicine plan

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senators overwhelmingly endorsed a plan to bring generic medicines to the market more quickly, while negotiations were under way over how much money Congress should set aside to entice private companies into Medicare.

A 94-1 vote attached the generic drug measure to the Medicare prescription drug bill moving through Congress, where approval in the House and Senate was expected by the end of next week.

"This is a very good day for consumers," Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., said after the generic drug provision was added Thursday.

As the Senate wrapped up its first week of Medicare debate, a block of conservatives was lobbying to boost support for private companies. They see private insurance as the future of Medicare in delivering both drugs and routine health care.

Fearful that seniors would stay away from new managed care options being created by the bill, they want to pay private companies more, hoping the benefits would be good enough to attract a significant number of the elderly.

The generic drug provision essentially codifies regulations issued by the Food and Drug Administration last week to make it more difficult for brand-name companies to block generic competition.

Trucker pleads guilty to al-Qaida plot

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An Ohio truck driver who met Osama bin Laden and admitted plots against trains and the Brooklyn Bridge has pleaded guilty to felony charges and is cooperating in the investigation of al-Qaida, federal authorities said Thursday.

Ilyman Faris, 34, of Columbus acknowledged in court documents that he met bin Laden in 2000 at an al-Qaida training camp in Afghanistan and provided operatives there with sleeping bags, cell phones and other assistance.

Later, Faris received attack instructions from top terror leader Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, authorities said, for what they suggested might have been a second wave planned for New York and Washington to follow the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

"This case highlights the very real threats that still exist here at home in the United States of America in the war against terrorism," Attorney General John Ashcroft said at a Justice Department news conference. "While we are disabling al-Qaida, we don't believe it is disabled."

Under an agreement reached May 1 and unsealed Thursday in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Va., just outside Washington, Faris pleaded guilty to providing material support to terrorists and conspiracy to provide support. Sentencing was set for Aug. 1.

He is a native of Kashmir who originally came to the United States in May 1994. He became a naturalized U.S. citizen in December 1999. Also known as Mohammed Rauf, he has been working as an independent trucker based in Columbus for several years.

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SPORTS



Vitali Klitschko is confident of chances against Lewis

BY TIM DAHLBERG

AP Boxing Writer

LOS ANGELES — Vitali Klitschko speaks four languages, has an advanced degree and travels widely to help further the education of children in poor countries.

With all that brainpower, you wouldn't think he would be too eager to fight Lennox Lewis.

Then again, Klitschko is no dummy in the ring, either.

"I am not a god and nobody's perfect," Klitschko said. "But I am really confident to be in the ring and fight against Lennox Lewis."

A giant of a heavyweight at 6-foot-7, Klitschko takes a giant step up in class Saturday night when he meets Lewis for the WBC heavyweight championship.

It's a fight that two weeks ago he thought he might never get. Suddenly he has it, and Klitschko must now figure out a way to beat one of the most talented heavyweights of recent times.

It won't be easy. Klitschko is seen as a fighter with limited skills and not even the best heavyweight in his family. That honor went to his brother, Wladimir, until he got knocked out a few months ago by Corrie Sanders.

Still, Klitschko is big, strong and can hit. He thinks he sees something in the champion's style he can exploit, and is ready to take advantage of a fight that fell into his lap.

"It is a very big moment," Klitschko said. "I was fighting for this moment for seven years in pro and almost seven years in amateur. Lewis is the best in the heavyweight division and everyone knows it."

Klitschko has wanted to get Lewis in the ring ever since rising to No. 1 contender in the WBC. As part of a deal to fight Lewis later this year, he agreed to fight Cedric Boswell on the undercard Saturday night of what was supposed to be a Lewis fight against Kirk Johnson.

When Johnson was injured two weeks ago, Lewis turned to Klitschko.

"I was at first surprised. I thought the whole evening might be canceled," Klitschko said. "It shows that Lennox Lewis is pretty confident, a real champion."

Lewis has reason to be confident, even though he hasn't fought since knocking out Mike Tyson a year ago. At 37, Lewis is a rarity in boxing — he seems to be getting better with time.

Klitschko will prove a lot different test than Tyson, though. For one of the few times in his career, the 6-foot-5 Lewis will be punching up at an opponent instead of down, and Klitschko has the punching power to test the most glaring weakness Lewis has — a tendency to go down after getting hit on the jaw.

That hasn't swayed oddsmakers, who make Lewis a 4-1 favorite in the scheduled 12-round fight at the Staples Center.

Lewis weighed in Thursday at 256 1/2 pounds, the heaviest he has ever been in his pro career. His previous high was 253 pounds when he was knocked out by Hasim Raham in their first fight in April 2001. Klitschko weighed in at 248 pounds.

"Klitschko has never seen a boxer like me," Lewis said. "I am the last great heavyweight."

Lewis seems reinvigorated at fighting Klitschko, and his confidence probably rose after seeing Wladimir Klitschko get knocked out by Sanders.



Vitali Klitschko

"My brother made a lot of mistakes in that fight and he has to pay for his mistakes," Klitschko said. "He's very motivated to come back."

First, though, Wladimir will work Vitali's corner Saturday night. Wladimir has helped his brother in training, and showed him some moves that Lewis put on him when they filmed a boxing scene in 2001 for the "Ocean's 11" movie.

The two brothers grew up boxing in the Soviet Union amateur system, then for Ukraine. Their father is a helicopter pilot, and they grew up valuing education as much as sports. Klitschko has a doctorate in sports training from the University of Kiev.

"I don't just want to be in the ring Saturday night, I want to win, too."

— VITALI KLITSCHKO
Heavyweight boxer

Klitschko fights with the stilted style that used to be taught to amateur boxers in the Soviet Union, displaying none of the smoothness a fighter like Lewis brings into the ring. But he is 32-1 with 31 knockouts, with his only loss coming to IBF champion Chris Byrd when he quit after the ninth round with a shoulder injury in a fight he was winning.

That fight led some to question whether Klitschko has the heart to be a heavyweight champion, but Klitschko came back to win five fights in a row and moved up in the rankings.

"I may not have the smooth and nice technical style but the result is very important," Klitschko said. "It looks not so nice maybe when watching, but I find for me my style is very effective."

It will have to be effective for Klitschko to counter Lewis, who knocked out the last big guy he met, Michael Grant, in the second round in April 2000.

"I do well against big guys," Lewis said.

The future of both Klitschko brothers could be riding on the outcome. Before the year began, both seemed well on their way to a goal of being heavyweight champions together.

After Wladimir's shocking loss, Vitali now goes into a fight he's not supposed to win. If it bothers him, he's not showing it.

"I don't just want to be in the ring Saturday night, I want to win, too," Klitschko said.

Lewis vs. Klitschko

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- 29 Posh
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- 32 Bedrock pel
- 33 Proof-reading mark
- 34 Finn carrier
- 36 Tie
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- 40 Cold
- 43 Menu
- 44 "Arthur" star

45 Down

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- 46 Conductor
- Previn

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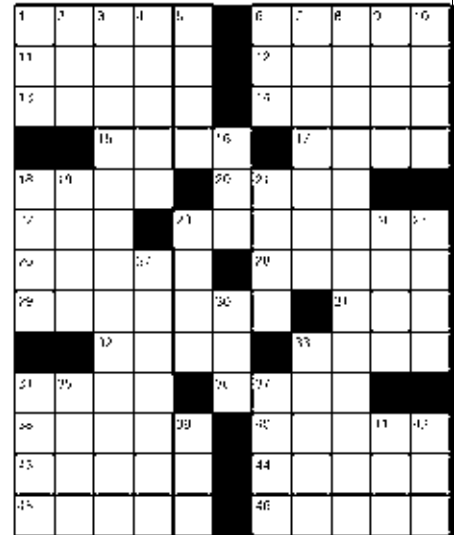
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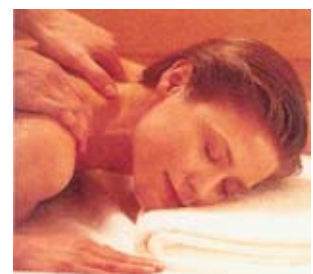
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Ozzy offers Prince William a place in his house

By The Associated Press

■ **LONDON** — Prince William, who turns 21 on Saturday, got birthday greetings from shock rocker Ozzy Osbourne.

Osbourne, whose chaotic family life is the subject of an MTV reality series, invited the prince to come stay at his Beverly Hills mansion.

"I've been told that you want to come and live in America. You're more than welcome to come and live in my house," Osbourne told a TV special celebrating William's birthday. Excerpts from Friday's show were released in advance by broadcaster ITV.

"My daughter would be thrilled. My wife would. I would. And the dogs would!," the 54-year-old rocker said. A British newspaper reported last month that William, who is second in line to the throne, was considering moving to New York when he completes his university studies in 2005.

British-born Osbourne, the former lead singer of heavy metal wailers Black Sabbath, performed for the royal family as part of a Buckingham Palace concert marking Queen Elizabeth II's golden jubilee last June.

Osbourne said he thought the royals had appreciated his performance.

"I'm doing 'Paranoid' and I'm looking at the Royal Box and they're all head-banging! I was kind of shocked but pleasantly surprised how normal they are," he said.

His birthday advice to William: "Have as much fun as

you can, play Black Sabbath on record and have a blast."

■ **LOS ANGELES** — The author of "The Exorcist" and the director of the 1973 movie of the same name have filed a lawsuit against Warner Bros., alleging the studio didn't do enough to make them money.

William Peter Blatty, who wrote the novel and screenplay, and director William Friedkin, claim Warner Bros. breached its fiduciary duty by self-dealing the rights for a newer version of the film. They claim the studio would sell the rights to its sister cable television networks, TNT and TBS, for little to no profit.

On Thursday, a Superior Court judge heard arguments but did not rule on a request by Warner Bros. to dismiss the lawsuit. The studio claims it has no financial responsibility to both men, who were hired to perform a service and were paid for that service.

"They received a specified percentage of the net profits," said Warner Bros. lawyer David L. Burg.

Blatty and Friedkin's lawyer, Lawrence Iser, argued that when Warner Bros. wanted a new version of "The Exorcist," the studio asked them to return to work. The studio made hundreds of millions of dollars and made promises of profits to both men it didn't keep, Iser said. Blatty and Friedkin are seeking unspecified damages.

Superior Court Judge Laurie Zelon did not indicate when she might make a final ruling. In a tentative ruling prior to Thursday's hearing, Zelon denied Blatty and Friedkin's claim of breach of fiduciary duty. However, a July 14 trial is set for the pair's claims of breach of con-

tract and misrepresented accounting.

■ **TOKYO** — After he was presented with a 10-foot chocolate statue of himself, David Beckham told adoring Japanese fans he wants to set up soccer schools in Asia and England when he's done playing.

Thousands of screaming Beckham buffs looked on Friday as the larger-than-life confectionery was unveiled by Meiji Chocolate, one of the companies Beckham is plugging on a publicity tour through Japan and other Asian countries.

"It looks absolutely amazing, and I'm sure it tastes delicious," said the former Manchester United midfielder, who signed a \$41.3 million transfer to Real Madrid earlier this week.

Beckham, 28, said he's interested in soccer schools because he honed his skills at such schools.

He later elicited shrieks of jealousy from elementary schoolgirls when he pecked the cheek of one pupil while visiting her school to pass out chocolates.

Another girl asked Beckham, known for triggering fashion trends with his wild hairdos, including Mohawks and braids, what his next hairstyle will be.

Beckham, who now sports a shaggy ponytail he calls a "samurai topknot," replied: "My next hairstyle? I really don't know. Have you got an idea for me?"

A recent marketing study in Tokyo found Beckham was the most-liked male foreigner appearing in TV commercials. Beckham and his wife, former Spice Girl Victoria Beckham, landed in Tokyo on Wednesday.

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