

FREE

FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2002

Volume 1, Issue 209

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues.

City to examine public feeding regulations

It may be one way to reduce number of transients in city

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

There's a good chance that the homeless won't get a free lunch in Santa Monica much longer.

Feedings in public spaces for the homeless could be eliminated if the Santa Monica City Council acts on a recommendation made by the Bayside District Corp. Board on Thursday.

The board will ask the council to consider crafting an ordinance that would

limit the number of people who can be fed in a public place by a group, as well limiting the number of feedings. The city issues permits for events in public spaces, which applies to church groups who feed the homeless.

The Bayside District Corp., which manages the downtown area and works with the city, has been dealing with complaints by business owners for the past several months, if not years, that the transients are ruining the charm and economy of Santa Monica. Residents said the high number of homeless people was their No. 1 concern in the city, a recent survey said.

Dozens of vagrants sleep in doorways in front of businesses on the Third Street Promenade, as well as urinate and defecate in public. Transients spend their days pan-

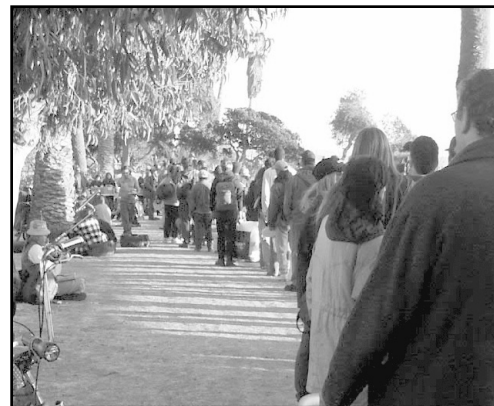
handling — sometimes aggressively — which scares many tourists and residents away from the outdoor shopping mall.

Officials believe the root of Santa Monica's vagrant problem stems from outside church groups that host public feedings in Palisades Park and on the front lawn of City Hall, which draws hundreds of hungry homeless people to the downtown area.

The Bayside board formed a public safety subcommittee a few months ago that began looking at ways to deal with the problems plaguing the Promenade. Committee members, Bayside board members, city representatives and residents hashed out their solutions on Thursday.

As officials continue to grapple with

See POLICIES, page 5



File photo

Outside church groups host public feedings like this one at Palisades Park up to 21 times a week. Some officials believe the feedings attract transients to Santa Monica.



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

Protesters gather outside the Doubletree Hotel on Fourth Street to demonstrate their disdain for unions, which are making a push into area hotels.

Union rallies for better health care

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Living wage and union supporters on Thursday rallied for more affordable health care for hotel workers.

A group of about 50 gathered in front of the Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, which is behind the Civic Center on Fourth Street, to ask the hotel's management to allow workers to vote on unionization and better health insurance.

Union organizers say 60 percent of the Doubletree's workers have health insurance but on average they pay \$1,300 a year for their coverage. They also say one out of every three children of Doubletree workers is on some form of public assistance.

Many workers sympathetic to the union said when their health insurance premiums were raised almost 100 percent at the beginning of the year, they could no longer

afford insurance.

For Flora Andrade, a Doubletree maid, being without health insurance has been particularly devastating because one of her three sons has been diagnosed with a heart condition that requires regular doctor visits.

"I don't want to live off the government and I have never asked the government for anything," said Andrade through an interpreter while tears streamed down her cheeks. "So I must continue this fight for my children."

Francious Khoury, the Doubletree general manager, said the hotel has no control over the escalating cost of health care or insurance.

"It's a national phenomenon and it's terrible," Khoury said. "But it's not something that's confined to just our workers."

See RALLY, page 6

County courthouse opens new \$2 million jury room

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Jurors in Santa Monica can now grab a gourmet coffee, check their e-mail, enjoy ocean views and recline on plush couches watching DVDs on a 42-inch television screen while waiting for their trials to begin.

Superior Court officials opened the new \$2 million juror assembly room on the third floor of the Santa Monica Courthouse Thursday, which has been heralded as the "crown jewel" of the county's court system.

Juror assembly rooms are waiting areas where jurors gather before being selected for a trial. Court officials say about 150 jurors are called into Santa Monica court on a daily basis, and the average juror will spend two hours waiting to be selected for a trial.

"Probably the longest any one would wait ... they might be sitting around here for two hours," said Allan Parachini,

"I know what everybody is going to think — these quiche-eating, Chablis-sipping westsiders get everything..."

— ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
L.A. Superior Court Supervisor

Superior Court director of public information. "But two hours with an ocean view-patio isn't a bad gig."

The new facilities include a kitchenette area with refrigerator, microwave and vending machines — 20 oz. sodas are \$1.15 and a large Starbucks coffee is 75 cents.

There is an office center with coin-operated fax and photocopy machines, along with 17 cubicles where jurors can plug their laptops into digital modem lines free of charge and surf the Internet or check their e-mail.

The west side of the room is connected to a large outdoor patio where splashes of the ocean can be spotted through rows of beachfront hotels and office buildings. More than 30 lockers have been installed to give jurors a place to store their belongings for free while they listen to lawyers pontificate in the courtrooms below.

"I know what everybody is going to think — these quiche-eating, Chablis-sipping westsiders get everything," said Los Angeles Superior Court Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. "Well, Santa Monica was well behind the rest of the county for a long time and this make-over was long overdue."

No clocks have been posted in the waiting room, but officials said it was an oversight. One has been ordered.

Yaroslavsky is credited in helping raise money from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for renovating the third floor of the courthouse, which used to be a cafeteria before it was closed several years ago.

Ninety percent of the money for the project came from the county, which owns and operates the Superior Court

See JURY ROOM, page 5

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

- ♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)**
★★★★★ Speak your mind, adding your innovative touch, which makes a difference. Carefully consider options that surround communication. An associate says something rather sternly. He or she means it; that is the reason for the overly grim tone! Tonight: Out for the weekend.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Don't hold back so much. You might feel as if you need to guard your feelings and defend yourself. A close associate does care, but isn't always great at expressing his or her feelings. Open up, and so will another. Tonight: Head on home.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ You might be acting far more seriously than you realize. Stop being the grim reaper and lighten up. Add that vintage Gemini humor, and situations will finally fall into place. You do make a difference. Count on your happy ways. Tonight: Join your friends at a favorite spot.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Listen well to another who shares good will and a perspective unlike your own. Let go of being uptight about a money issue. Your mood won't change the balance in your checkbook. A positive attitude draws opportunities to you. Tonight: Fun doesn't need to cost.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Don't lose your pace now when it really counts. Now that you're this close to the finish line, zoom in on a long-term goal, refusing to sit back or stop. The world is your oyster. Know that anything could be possible, despite another's sobering comment. Tonight: Keep on grinning.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★ Know when to slow down. You might need to focus on a work-related matter, but just the same, don't take on anything new right now. Emphasize conclusions, as opposed to beginnings. Understand your needs better. Cater less to others. Tonight: Head on home.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Keep your long-term goals in mind, refusing to take an unnecessary risk. You understand far more than others do, though it might be smart not to let them know. A meeting proves to be positive, drawing the results you want. Tonight: Party the weekend in.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ All eyes turn to you for solutions, especially when an associate or partner tests his or her limits. A financially tight associate could force your hand. Realize that you might have also pushed this person too far. Understand your limits when dealing with others. Tonight: Do only what you must.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Reach out for those at a distance. Don't allow a situation to stop you, especially if it involves a somewhat touchy associate or partner. You know how to move this person; you just might not be up for the effort. Tonight: Start your weekend quickly.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★★ You might be overly stressed about a project. You psyched yourself up for the job today, and you might have difficulty leaving work. Loosen up or let a dear associate or loved one help you. Follow someone else's lead. Tonight: The only answer is yes.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Others push and pull to have their way. You don't need to worry about what is going to happen, even if two different interests pull you in opposing directions. Follow your instincts with a close loved one. Know who butters your bread. Tonight: Go along with standing plans.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Others have their ideas about what will work. Meanwhile, you could be left holding the bag at work. Be good-natured if you have to stay later than your associates. Just take extra time off next week or in the near future. Tonight: Do errands on the way home.

CORRECTION — In the July 10 edition the market rent for retail and restaurant space on the Third Street Promenade was not clear. Restaurant space that is currently unoccupied is being listed for as much as \$7 a square foot and retail space that is vacant is being marketed between \$10 and \$12 a square foot. Businesses occupying space are not paying those prices.

QUOTE of the DAY

“There is more to life
than increasing its speed.”

— Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

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LOCAL

Music for all ages



Del Pastrana/Daily Press
The kids of the Crossroads Summer Jazz Camp draw a large audience as they put on a concert in the center court of the Third Street Promenade Thursday afternoon.

Rotary gives historical society \$1,500K grant

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Historical Society Museum has received a \$1,500 grant from the Rotary Club of Santa Monica for its educational programs.

The funds will be used to produce informative booklets in conjunction with a “Discovering California” exhibit and will be given to students on their free classroom tours of the museum.

The exhibit features scale models of all the California Missions with figures of the Padres and Indians. It also delves into the lives of the Gabrielino and Chumash Native Americans and their interaction with the California Missions. The Missions paved the way for the early development of California, its cities and the Santa Monica Bay region.

Teachers are invited to bring their classroom for tours. For reservations call 395-2290.

The Q Line

Transit mall has done nothing for traffic

Here are your responses to this week’s Q-Line question: “Now that construction of the city’s \$15 million downtown transit mall is complete, is driving any easier? If not, what do you believe should be done to better alleviate congestion?”

■ “I do not shop in downtown Santa Monica. The only time I go down to the Third Street Promenade is to go to the movies. The traffic is still a mess. When they narrowed the driving lanes to one for cars they created more of a mess. I live at Seventh and Wilshire and traffic comes to a standstill on the weekends. The same is true for Lincoln Boulevard, Colorado and Broadway. The city needs to stop construction of any new buildings and apartments. When there are more tenants and employees traffic is a mess, as well parking. There is not much that can be done. You can’t close the barn door after the horse is loose.”

■ “It certainly isn’t any easier driving downtown. It took me 20 minutes to get from Lincoln on Broadway to the bike shop on the corner of Fifth. \$15 million? HA! It’s a joke.”

■ “The transit mall seems nice except when there is an emergency situation or a response to a Code 3 with lights and sirens. People are afraid to pull over into the transit lanes because they think they will get a ticket. It’s confusing. Second, if there is an accident on the corner, people

need to pull over to the side of the roads but, those are transit lanes. It blocks all traffic!”

■ “It’s little wonder that the Santa Monica City Council finds themselves short on the 2002-2003 budget. Why they wasted all that money redoing the street, chopping down the trees, replacing the sidewalks, and putting chairs out for the bums and alcoholics and punk kids to sleep on is beyond me! The City Council re-did the entire downtown so they could draw all the Westwood crowd to Santa Monica along with the traffic that it entails. Now that they have all this done all weekend and most nights all one hears is a nut in the middle of the intersection blowing that little whistle trying to get the traffic to move, North, South, East and West. And I can say is that it is a lost cause. My hats off to the Santa Monica City Council for proving that it doesn’t take brains to run City Hall. P.S. Thanks for giving Adelphia Cable the run of the city. Good going Adelphia! It’s belly up time! Santa Monica picks another winner.”

■ “It’s deplorable now. It used to be

See Q-LINE, page 6



surf report

Information compiled by Jesse Haley

More surprising than the clean, glassy, chest-high local surf spots that have been enjoyed the last couple days is the mere handful of surfers out enjoying it. Without trying to overcrowd good breaks, the Daily Press strongly urges locals to paddle out for a session before the south swell fades.

Today south swell holds as steep northwest swell creeps down the coast, missing most of LA County.

Saturday activity will start to decrease, surf losing a foot on average. Onshore, afternoon winds expected for the weekend.



Today's Tides:

Low-	5:59 a.m.	-1.00'
High-	12:31 p.m.	3.94'
Low-	5:17 p.m.	2.27'
High-	11:17 p.m.	6.00'

Location	Tuesday	Wednesday	Water Quality
County Line	3-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	A
Zuma	3-4'/Fair	3-4'/Fair	A
Surfrider	1-3'/Fair	1-2'/Fair	A
Topanga	1-3'/Fair	1-2'/Fair	A
Breakwater	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
El Porto	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A



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OPINION LETTERS

Daily Press is an alarmist tabloid

Editor:

Serious newspaper or tabloid? Seems like the Daily Press has decided to be a tabloid. The latest example is the headline screaming "Council allows corporate naming of public property." Yet again, the Daily Press latched onto the most alarmist, and unfounded statements that were made at the meeting without analyzing the issues.

The policy that was adopted includes a public process for consideration of naming city property after individuals or organizations (which also includes non-profit corporations and foundations) if they have made "important donations of land, funds or materials, equipment and/or facilities." (And that was only one of seven guidelines that were adopted).

It was clearly stated — although this wasn't alarmist enough to get used by the Daily Press — that the city was NOT adopting a policy to sell naming rights. The adopted policy does not provide any mechanism that would enable the city to sell naming rights or solicit funds from anyone in exchange for naming rights. The resolution states that "requests for naming city-owned land, buildings and facilities may be submitted by the public, city staff, and related advisory bodies such as the recreation and parks commission, library board and landmarks commission" and the requests must be accompanied by justification for the recommended name. Nowhere does it allow anyone to solicit or sell naming rights.

And in my opinion, if a corporation, organization, or individual ever steps forward and offers to donate land or funds a new public park, for example, and all they request in exchange is to be commemorated in its name, then I believe the community should consider the offer. City treasures such as Miles Playhouse, Douglas Park and Mary Hotchkiss Park, have been available to generations of Santa Monicans because of the generosity of their namesakes (individuals and corporations).

Pam O'Connor
Santa Monica City Councilmember

Homeless coverage one sided

Editor:

RE: "More Panhandlers ... pg. 1, 7/09/02.

As a homeless resident I am shocked — as I am sure many other readers and residents are — at the one-sided view that seems, with regularity, to be taken by this newspaper in its news section on the important issues concerning homelessness in Santa Monica. A paper that truly supports a positive business environment does the business community no favor by just presenting business's — and the virulent anti-homeless's harping views — about homeless people; and not seeking out, equally, the many other representatives of dedicated organizations advocating for more enlightened, productive, approaches to solving homelessness in Santa Monica.

The high calling of a general interest newspaper journalist is to give, with regularity, the balanced information that the public needs to form their own informed views — in order to build a responsible caring, prosperous, community. I suggest consulting groups like OPCC, The Westside Hunger and Shelter Coalition, Children Helping Poor and Homeless, (CHPHP) and the "Homeless Awareness Project" at the Leo Baeck Temple — or our own homeless "advocacy" newspaper, "Making Change..." for fairly balancing the views of police and business in this community on homelessness. Regarding the Promenade, current police practices are exacerbating the community homeless tensions.

Wealthy, privileged, Santa Monica's homeless population is about 1 percent of the city. This can be confirmed by reading the homeless census on the city's own homepage. This 1 percent is very close to the entire countywide homeless population. Additionally, about one in six persons on this planet, today, is pretty much homeless — all intelligent people keep this in their perspective.

Best wishes.

David Busch, member, "Making Change..." the homeless newspaper
Santa Monica

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 530 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 200, 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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LOCAL

Jury room 'crown jewel' of Los Angeles County

JURY ROOM, from page 1

building. The other 10 percent came from court fee revenues.

"It is an inconvenience to be called in for jury duty, under the best of conditions," Yaroslavsky said. "We in the government who have called these folks into duty have to remember that it's an inconvenience, and this room clearly shows how much we value them."

Court officials said jurors in Santa Monica are called in from a 10-mile radius, and the group tends to have a lot of needs. A high percentage of them cannot go a day without their computers or being connected to the Internet, they said.

"Today jurors want to be able to check e-mail and work," Parachini said. "To the extent we can, we want to provide them with that."

Even Yaroslavsky said Santa Monica's courthouse draws a unique cadre of jurors.

"This is one of the busiest courthouses around — it tends to draw a lot of attention because of the high profile cases it attracts," he said. "But we now have a 21st Century jury room for a 21st Century jury."



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

The new juror room at the Santa Monica Courthouse has plenty of room for people to lounge while awaiting their trials. New chairs, couches, DVD players and an ocean view are some of the amenities.

City officials ready to act on public feeding laws

POLICIES, from page 1

why Santa Monica has earned the reputation as a haven for the homeless, they look to other cities to figure out why they don't have the same problem.

Beverly Hills, for example, only allows permitted events in public places that have no more than 10 people at a time.

Joel Schwartz, the city's homeless service director, said there are about 21 scheduled feedings each week hosted by church groups outside of Santa Monica, and there are more than that that are unscheduled.

Santa Monica Police Chief James T. Butts, Jr. said while the feedings are noble and operated by compassionate people, they cause public safety and health issues.

"(21 weekly feedings) is outrageous and I think we need to set that much lower and enforce it and that will get rid of (our) reputation," Butts said. "I don't know if (public feedings) are the best land use policy."

Santa Monica City Attorney Marsha Moutrie warned the group that by enacting an ordinance that limits the number of people that can attend a permitted event in a public place also limits picnics and city-sponsored events.

But, she said, there may be a way to write a law that exempts picnics and major events from the ordinance, and focuses just on public feedings.

Parks and public spaces are places for everyone to enjoy, but they shouldn't be dominated by one group, Moutrie said.

"Special interest groups are monopolizing the parks," she said.

The Bayside board also voted to recommend to the city council that the aggressive panhandling law be more heavily enforced, particularly on the Third Street Promenade.

And because the state trespassing law only requires that people not stay in one place if they have been asked to leave, the homeless can move from one doorway to

another along city streets. That makes it difficult for police to keep people from sleeping in doorways, which are considered private property.

The city may look at creating a new ordinance that would specifically address "vestibules" so no camping or trespassing can occur ever. In the meantime, Butts said he is committed to at least protecting the spirit of the trespassing law.

"We will provide an exceptionally high number of uniform police officers at night and keep a log of those people who have been asked to leave," within roughly a three-block radius, he said.

When the city successfully addressed the number of homeless 10 years ago, public feedings were reduced by limiting park use and an effort by the police to curb drug dealing led to 1,200 people arrested in three months, Butts said.

But for many reasons, Santa Monica's homeless population has grown again.

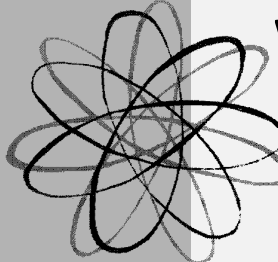
"We agree something needs to be done," Moutrie said. "I think when the city adopted its policy in 1994 it was determined that the city does not support people in the street, but to get them housed."

"I think this is a good time to remind people that that is the city's policy ... we should not allow this to continue and if we can stop it and get people off the streets then we ought to."

There are a host of non-profit organizations designed to help the homeless get their lives turned around — by providing shelter, programs and permanent housing — for those who are willing to accept the help. The city also has many similar programs.

But as City Manager Susan McCarthy pointed out, the policy doesn't mean much if all the forces that have the power to effect it don't align and address the problem together.

"It's time to step back and think about our actions and how they relate to our policies," she said.



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LOCAL

Rally demonstrated by anti-union hotel workers

RALLY, from page 1

Union organizers said workers at Santa Monica's two unionized hotels, the Fairmont Miramar and the Viceroy, are provided free health insurance. Monthly union dues for workers at the hotels average \$35, they said.

The rally was organized by clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, or CLUE, but there were just as many Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees Union organizers and living wage activists.

Three hotel workers who were scheduled to speak to the crowd almost did not make it to the rally because they said hotel managers detained them by giving them extra rooms to clean before they could take their noon lunch break — the time during which the rally was scheduled.

However, a half dozen hotel workers were allowed to gather across the street from union sympathizers to wave anti-union posters and chant in English and Spanish for the union to disappear. They were supervised by one of the hotel's security guards.

Union supporters and living wage activists seemed unfazed at their rally being protested by the very workers they



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press
Supporters of the union rally outside the Doubletree Hotel on Thursday.

are trying to organize.

"Almost in every labor battle, workers are manipulated by hotel management to do what's not in their best interest," said Danny Feingold, a CLUE spokesman.

In his closing prayer at the rally, Ft. Michael Gutierrez prayed for the protesters of CLUE's demonstration.

"Lord, we pray to the management of this hotel who use good people to say bad things," he said. "The management uses these good people to spread their sins."

The QLine

Q-LINE, from page 3

bad but now it's almost intolerable. I would suggest going back to the one way streets to alleviate some of the traffic. Also, synchronize the stop lights on Lincoln and Wilshire. It's impossible to get down those streets. Santa Monica made a bad decision with the traffic."

■ "The traffic is clearly no better than it was before. It's visibly worse. Since the end of construction it's still my observation that traffic is backing up into the intersections creating gridlock for every direction. It's also been my observation as a Santa Monica resident that now the city is posting police officers at intersections to prevent this problem and ordering cars to stop and direct them to prevent these tie-ups. At what cost does this come to the residents in Santa Monica? There are two solutions that you have here. Eliminate the bus only lanes in the downtown area, or, as a Santa Monica resident, avoid the downtown businesses all together. My wife and I used to go to the Reel Inn restaurant, we have not been in two months."

■ "I'm a business owner in the downtown Santa Monica area and the bus only lane is absolutely ridiculous. It seems to be more congested than it was before. I cannot understand why they do not have the buses use Fourth Street as their route to the beach area and make this more of a walking community. I will never understand what makes Santa Monica tick and why they make some of the decisions that they make but in my humble opinion it's a nice upgrade, however, it does not truly flow traffic any better that it had before and is sometimes worse."

■ "Heck no! It's twice as congested as it ever was and I've lived here my whole life. People who can't get down Santa Monica Boulevard are now using side streets and blocking up those streets! Everything is jammed. I avoid downtown like the plague these days, especially on weekends. Try one-way streets people like every other city has done!"

■ "I think that the traffic situation in Santa Monica is now a disaster and that the mayor of Santa Monica should take a hint from another mayor. I believe it was in South America who closed off downtown completely and bused people in. It made it much better and businesses are thriving supposedly in this area, so, look it up!"

■ "Driving is worse. They should make the streets back into one-way streets. That makes too much sense for this city. Everything is backwards."

■ "I still believe very strongly that the Broadway exit for the mall is very confusing. Who has the right of way? When is your turn? There is still blowing of horns and confusion. The traffic never stops coming. The cars that want to go into the structure just keep piling up. It's been like this for years. It's no good!"

■ "Who are we kidding? We have fewer lanes and no one-way streets. Of course the traffic is worse. Santa Monica Boulevard is unbelievable! The intersections are full when the signals change. There is no improvement and there won't be as long as we have this misguided traffic calming policy."

STATE



Perot questioned on energy



Rich Pedroncelli/Associated Press

Former presidential candidate H. Ross Perot leans over to listen to his attorney, Gordon Greenberg, while appearing before a California State Senate committee looking into the price manipulation of the California energy market, held in at the Capitol in Sacramento, Calif. on Thursday.

Hollywood consults the Drug Enforcement Agency

BY GARY GENTILE
AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES — The people waging the war drugs have come to Hollywood.

Officials with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration hit town Wednesday to brief producers, directors and writers on the connection between drug trafficking and terrorism and to offer to consult on movies and television programs.

About 40 people, including film directors like Michael Mann and Arthur Hiller and people behind TV series such as "Third Watch" and "E.R." gathered at the Beverly Hills Hotel for several hours to hear DEA Director Asa Hutchinson as well as the agency's intelligence chief and a former undercover agent.

"I was stunned," said Anne Sweeney, president of ABC Cable Networks Group, a unit of The Walt Disney Co. "It helped deepen people's understanding of the challenges our country faces in the war on drugs."

The meeting was organized by the Entertainment Industries Council, a non-profit group that helps writers and producers depict social and health issues such as AIDS, alcohol abuse and gun violence.

"The DEA knows more about terrorism and drugs than anybody," said Brian Dyak, the EIC's president and chief executive. "If they're willing to open their doors a little and the information becomes a part of story lines, it's a service to the public."

A DEA spokesman said the agency is trying to emerge from its often necessary shroud of secrecy to help offer technical assistance on films and shows in the same way the Pentagon and the CIA consults on movies such as the recent blockbuster "The Sum of All Fears."

"We don't expect to try and directly shape what some screenwriter is going to write," DEA spokesman Chris Battle said. "Our goal was simply to provide a more realistic and accurate version of the drug war and what kind of challenges, what kind of threats our agents face every day."

The session turned out to be just the thing for David Mills, the creator of a television drama called "Kingpin," about a family-run drug cartel, set to air next year on NBC.

"I have been relying on a retired DEA agent, not even bothering to deal with the official DEA because I figured they had better things to do than to help me tell a story," Mills said.

State's oldest inmate dies after jumping from bridge

By The Associated Press

OROVILLE — Less than two weeks after being released from the Butte County Jail despite his pleas to stay behind bars, a 92-year-old man who may have been the state's oldest inmate died when he jumped from a bridge over the Feather River, a friend and investigator said.

The body of Coval Russell was found Wednesday under the 40-foot bridge.

Russell was released from jail and put on three years probation on June 26. He served 426 days while waiting for sentencing on a criminal assault charge in which he admitted to stabbing his 70-year-old landlord.

A judge last month denied Russell's appeal to stay in jail, saying that was not

the appropriate place for a man of Russell's age and health. In an interview with a Los Angeles Times reporter last week, a distraught Russell said his remaining options were to purposely violate his parole so he could return to jail, or maybe even take his own life.

"They took care of me, treated me like I was a human being," said Russell, who corrections officials believe may have been California's oldest county jail inmate. "And I showed them respect too."

Jim Pihl, a Chico private investigator who talked to Russell by phone on Tuesday and saw him in person Monday, said Russell kept putting off sentencing and was hoping not to be released.

"He was in constant pain, and he was running out of living options," Pihl said.

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STATE

Lawyer says officer was justified in punching teen

BY PAUL WILBORN

Associated Press Writer

INGLEWOOD—A police officer who was videotaped slamming a handcuffed teenager's head onto a police car and punching him in the face was justified and "restrained" in his use of force, his lawyer said Thursday.

"We will put that videotape into context. ... You cannot see what the subject is doing with his hands just prior to being hit in the face," John Barnett told CNN.

"He took action which required that he be punched and ... the facts will show that the use of force was restrained given all of the circumstances."

Officer Jeremy Morse is on paid leave as federal, state and local agencies investigate Saturday night's arrest of Donovan Jackson, 16, and his father at a gas station here.

The amateur cameraman who videotaped the arrest was himself arrested Thursday. Mitchell Crooks, 27, was picked up outside CNN's television studio in Hollywood on outstanding warrants from Placer County for petty theft and driving under the influence with a hit-and-run, Los Angeles County District Attorney's spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons said.

Placer County sheriff's Capt. Rick Armstrong said he had no details about the warrants or which police agency issued them.

As he was arrested, Crooks let out several bloodcurdling screams, yelling: "Help me, help me." The arrest was captured by security cameras at CNN.

At a news conference Thursday, Inglewood Police Chief Ronald Banks said he was "quite concerned" after watching the videotape of Saturday's arrest.

"I was somewhat disappointed ... It

was not reflective of our normal practices and way of doing business," Banks said.

It is too soon to determine whether Morse should be fired, the chief said. There have been complaints lodged against the three-year department veteran but "I can't discuss this officer's complaint history," Banks said.

The chief also said he saw "no evidence" the incident was prompted by racial profiling, although the officer is white and the youth is black.

Banks, who returned from a Hawaiian vacation on Wednesday, urged people to wait for investigations to be completed before passing judgment about the confrontation.

Before his arrest, Crooks had been subpoenaed to appear before a county grand jury investigating the encounter. He was doing a phone interview on KFI-AM's "John and Ken" radio show Wednesday when a Los Angeles County prosecutor called in.

"We want you before the grand jury and we want that original tape," Chief Deputy District Attorney Curt Livesay said.

"I want to cooperate," Crooks replied, but he hung up when Livesay demanded that he tell investigators his whereabouts.

Two sheriff's deputies involved in the arrest did testify before the grand jury, the sheriff's department confirmed.

A full account of the videotaped confrontation remains fuzzy. However, Morse filled out a police report in which he acknowledged punching Jackson after the handcuffed youth grabbed his testicles, the Los Angeles Times reported Thursday.

That report is "consistent with all of the evidence that we have seen and will be seeing," Barnett said.

DNA testing clears yoga guru in paternity dispute

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES—Followers of a late yoga guru say DNA testing has cleared the man of accusations that he broke his vow of celibacy and fathered a child.

But the man who claims to be the son of Paramahansa Yogananda, one of the first Indian masters to introduce yoga philosophy to the West 80 years ago, disputes the results.

Yogananda's organization, the Self-Realization Fellowship, released the results to followers on Wednesday. It was the latest development in a seven-year paternity dispute over whether the guru, who died at age 59 in 1952, fathered Ben Erskine during an affair with a married disciple.

"For members who revere Paramahansa Yogananda as their profound spiritual guide and guru, the claims were very hurtful and very sad," fellowship spokeswoman Lauren Landress said. "But these results conclusively show there is no truth to them."

Erskine, informed of the results, told the Los Angeles Times he still believed "Yogananda is my father."

His attorney, Shane Reed, said they would review the results to decide whether to continue with a court request to disinter Yogananda's body, which was buried in Glendale, for further testing.

The Self-Realization Fellowship oper-

ates more than 500 temples and meditation centers in 178 countries. Its members have ranged from late Beatle George Harrison to famous botanist Luther Burbank.

Yogananda introduced Mahatma Gandhi to kriya yoga and authored "Autobiography of a Yogi."

The paternity dispute first surfaced in 1995 when Erskine's daughter approached the fellowship with the paternity claim and financial demands. Erskine said his mother, Adelaide, had been a disciple and photographer of Yogananda in the late 1920s.

Erskine, now a 69-year-old Oregon miner, acknowledged his mother never told him he was Yogananda's son or that she had been physically intimate with the famed guru. But he said his mother hinted at the "wonderful blood" in his veins.

An initial round of DNA testing on hair samples was found inconclusive. A second round of testing on blood samples last July showed no apparent relationship. But Reed and Erskine rejected the results as biased because the blood specimens were collected and sent to labs by a fellowship monk.

Last year, the fellowship hired former San Diego criminal prosecutor G. Michael Still to establish an independent testing process to compare the DNA of Erskine to samples taken from three of Yogananda's male relatives in India.

NATIONAL



Trouble at home?



Dennis Cook/Associated Press

Secretary of State Colin Powell shows a copy of the new visa prototype while testifying on Capitol Hill Thursday before the House Select Committee on Homeland Security. The State Department is investigating visas being obtained through alleged bribes, after federal investigators rounded up 31 people suspected of entering the country with visas illegally obtained at the U.S. Embassy in Doha.

FBI expands search for sleeper terror cell members

BY CHRISTOPHER NEWTON
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — FBI agents are searching for Americans and others they suspect of advising al-Qaida cells operating underground on U.S. soil and preparing for another terror attack, law enforcement officials say.

Some of the suspected advisers are believed to be longtime U.S. citizens, fully immersed in American life and able to financially direct an attack without directly participating in it, the officials said.

Al-Qaida manuals recovered in Afghanistan suggest that terror operations have a "senior adviser or wise man" who does not take part attacks, said a law enforcement official who is familiar with the investigation.

Some intelligence officials estimate there may be as many as 5,000 people in the United States with some sort of connection to al-Qaida. That number, larger than other estimates, includes all those in the "realm of suspicion" and those who may know of terrorist activities but not participate, one official said.

The number of hardcore al-Qaida members in the United States who might actually do harm to Americans is in the low hundreds or even less, officials believe.

While law enforcement looks broadly for terrorists, some FBI agents are working closely with Treasury agents to conduct a more specialized search for U.S. residents who might be working in an advisory capacity.

As part of the effort, federal investigators are conducting extensive checks into the backgrounds of longtime citizens who fall under suspicion, looking for operatives who may not have anything unusual in their immediate histories.

The agents are "looking for people who have an affinity toward or sympathy for those carrying out terrorist attacks and provide any kind of support," one law enforcement official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The search for terrorist operatives has frustrated members of the Muslim American community, who are pleased with the Justice Department's prosecution

of backlash hate crimes but feel their own rights are being violated.

The FBI's counterterrorism team played a major role in the search of 14 homes and businesses in Virginia and Georgia in March.

No one was arrested. None of the law enforcement agencies involved would provide further information, saying affidavits filed in support of the search warrants are under seal in federal court.

Days after the raids, Laura Jaghlit, a high school English teacher from Fairfax Station, Va., described the raid on her home as "the most un-American thing I have ever seen."

She is still indignant.

"No one ever had to give us any explanation of why we were chosen for a search or what they were looking for," Jaghlit said. "We're just supposed to forget about it."

Officials searched through photos of her children, threw the contents of drawers on the bed and took her family's computer, credit cards, passports and bank account information, Jaghlit said.

Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said, "We understand and have been told that the FBI is looking for terrorist operatives of all ages and races, but what we're seeing is that people who are well-known and respected citizens are being treated like suspects."

"There are all of these vague references to threats without any evidence. It puts everybody on edge and makes the Muslim community suspect."

Law enforcement officials believe that limiting the search to those suspected of actively planning an attack might allow some who give terrorists support to remain hidden.

The possibility of terror advisers who don't fit the demographics of any of the Sept. 11 hijackers — young, Muslim men, who came to the United States in recent years — has led the FBI agents to seek out contacts in all parts of the Muslim community.

That includes older men and people of different demographics that might have gotten in contact with al-Qaida later in life, one law enforcement official said.

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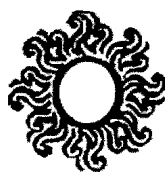
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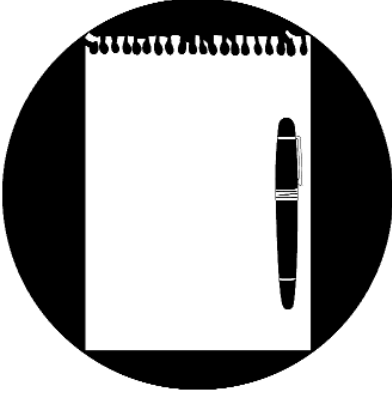


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NATIONAL

Stock market indicators slide to five-year lows

BY AMY BALDWIN
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — If investors haven't thrown in the proverbial towel yet, they might be getting close.

Leading stock indicators sank to levels not seen in five years on Wednesday, and fell again in early trading Thursday, as investors showed no sign that they are ready to look past the accounting scandals that have plagued corporate America this year.

"This market has completely broken the spirit of investors," said Al Mirman, strategist at V Finance in Sarasota, Fla. "It is going to take a good year for investors' confidence to be reinstated."

The latest selloff comes amid a bear market that is already one of the worst in U.S. history. Wall Street has seen a widespread dumping of stocks for nearly eight weeks.

In the first 90 minutes of trading Thursday, the Dow Jones industrial average was down 63.76, or 0.7 percent, at 8,749.74. On Wednesday, the Dow slid more than 280 points, its biggest one-day loss since September, and the average fell below 9,000 for the first time since October.

The broader market was mixed Thursday. The Nasdaq composite index rose 8.29, or 0.6 percent, to 1,354.30, having closed Wednesday at a low not seen since May 1997.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index slipped 0.53 to 919.94, having dropped Wednesday to a closing low not seen since December 1997.

The losses are no doubt stunning, especially when considering the market is just two years removed from one of the most remarkable runs of all time. At the height of the dot-com frenzy, the Nasdaq was above 5,000.

While the latest losses weren't prompted by a new accounting fiasco, there was reason to question the strength and pace of a business recovery.

For example, General Motors in early trading Thursday fell \$1.91 to \$45.70 after UBS Warburg cut its rating on the stock to "hold" from "buy." On Wednesday, Banc of America downgraded GM.

The move left many investors feeling that few, if any, safe havens exist in the market. Losses spilled across sectors.

Pharmaceutical company Merck on Wednesday dropped \$2.18 to \$43.57 after

announcing Tuesday it was postponing for the third time in two weeks the initial public offering of its Medco unit.

Airline stocks closed Wednesday at or near their lows that followed the terror attacks. Delta fell 52 cents to \$17.75.

"This market has completely broken the spirit of investors. It is going to take a good year for investors' confidence to be reinstated."

— AL MIRMAN
Strategist at V Finance

There were some bright spots. Wal-Mart advanced 77 cents to \$54.53 in early trading Thursday after it raised its second-quarter earnings estimate because of stronger-than-expected sales in June.

Although improved earnings in the coming months could provide a boost to the market, analysts say corporate trust is the key factor.

"True, we need better (earnings) numbers, but we need numbers we can trust," Mirman said.

Investors might not be happy sitting on Wall Street's sidelines, but with the problem-ridden market headed for a third straight losing year they see no reason to budge.

After a string of accounting debacles at such firms as WorldCom, Xerox and Enron Corp. and more than two years of declines on Wall Street, investors can't be blamed for sitting on Wall Street's sidelines, analysts say.

"Confidence is so low that the average investor is saying, 'I am fine keeping (my money) in a money market account at 1.5 percent. And when I see the worst is over, maybe I'll think about putting more money in the stock market,'" said Thomas F. Lydon, president of Global Trends Investments in Newport Beach, Calif.

National debt clock started again in New York City

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With government deficits on the rise again, a real estate executive restarted a billboard-sized national "debt clock" on Thursday to remind passersby of how much the government is borrowing.

The sign had been dark since September 2000, when developer Douglas Durst pulled the plug after government debt levels started to fall because of budget surpluses.

But with government debt back on the rise, Durst restarted the clock.

The large green sign flickered to life again Thursday morning, showing a national debt of about \$6.12 trillion or a share of \$66,800 for each U.S. family. The debt was about \$5.5 trillion when the Durst family unplugged the sign nearly two years ago.

The clock had been put up in 1989 by Durst's late father, Seymour Durst, to bring attention to what he felt was a dangerous increase in government borrowing. It sits atop a building at Sixth Avenue and 42nd Street, one block from Times Square.

"If the numbers are increasing over a substantial period of time, my grandfather would want us to start his National Debt Clock once again," said clock guardian Anita Durst.

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SPORTS



L.A. Dodgers show how the West is (halfway) won

BY KEN PETERS

AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES — Their ace is on the shelf and their slugger slumped at the start. They imported a Japanese pitcher who couldn't find the plate in the spring and went with a closer who had never closed in the majors.

Still, there sit the Los Angeles Dodgers atop the NL West, 2 1/2 games ahead of the World Series champion Arizona Diamondbacks, who visit Dodger Stadium for a four-game series beginning Thursday.

Heading into the second half of the season, the Dodgers have been one of baseball's major surprises. After winding up last season at 86-76, six games behind Arizona, the Dodgers are 54-34.

"I don't think anybody in the industry thought in spring training that we would be 20 games over .500 at the break," manager Jim Tracy said.

While ace Kevin Brown has missed most of the season with elbow problems, then back surgery, the starting rotation has been outstanding.

Kazuhisa Ishii, the import who seemed to develop a mental block against throwing strikes when he joined the team in spring training, quickly snapped out of that funk. He has an 11-5 record with a 3.58 ERA.

Odalis Perez, acquired with Brian Jordan in the winter trade that sent Gary Sheffield to Atlanta, has been a

jewel. He has a 10-4 record and 2.81 ERA and has a pair of one-hitters.

"There was a time awhile back when I was being pressed as to who was our ace, in the absence of Kevin Brown," Tracy said. "I think Odalis is giving you a full-fledged view as to exactly who that ace is."

Hideo Nomo, signed as a free agent for a return engagement with Los Angeles, has pitched well with a 9-5 record and 3.16 ERA. Omar Daal has been inconsistent, but still has a 7-4 record and 4.15 ERA. Andy Ashby is 7-6 with a 3.36 ERA.

The most unexpected pitching success has been Eric Gagne, a hard-throwing former youth hockey defenseman from Montreal. He was baseball's best closer in the first half.

Everyone closed during spring training. Then Tracy decided to make Gagne, a so-so starter, the man on the mound in the ninth.

Gagne, imposing with his soul patch and goggle-like glasses, can throw in the high 90s and also mixes an effective off-speed pitch. The combination has given hitters fits.

After going 4-6 with a 5.15 ERA as a starter in 2000 and 6-7 with a 4.75 ERA last year, Gagne has a major league-high 32 saves in 34 chances and a 1.39 ERA in his new role.

"If we can get to the ninth with a lead, it's like we know we've got it," catcher Paul Lo Duca said.

The offense has been led by Shawn Green, who stumbled at the start but broke his slump with a record-tying four-homer game May 23 in Milwaukee.

Green had just three homers in his first 42 games and was batting .231 heading into the series at Milwaukee. He finished the first half with 26 homers and 68 RBIs. He has raised his average to .280, and tied another major league mark with four homers in consecutive at-bats over two games last month.

Lo Duca is hitting a team-high .326, with five homers and 38 RBIs. Dave Roberts, who platoons with Marquis Grissom, is hitting .302, and Grissom has 10 homers and 33 RBIs.

Eric Karros has bounced back from his worst year at the plate and is hitting .292, with nine home runs and 42 RBIs. Jordan has 13 homers and 44 RBIs.

Defensively, Cesar Izturis has provided stability at shortstop, a weak spot the past few years. Izturis, acquired from Toronto, is batting just .230, but Tracy likes his quickness and range.

"We feel that we can play with anybody, anywhere," Tracy said. "I told my ballclub that I am extremely proud of where we are as a club, knowing that there are still some mountains to go over."

"We've put ourselves in wonderful position to be playing in October."

Kirsipuu wins fifth stage of Tour; Armstrong plays it safe

BY JAMEY KEATEN

Associated Press Writer

ROUEN, France — On a day when two riders were hospitalized after a crash, Lance Armstrong played it safe and remained in third place in the Tour de France.

Armstrong, bidding for his fourth straight Tour title, finished in the pack trailing Jaan Kirsipuu of Estonia, who broke out early and later raced to a sprint finish in the fifth stage.

"It was a good day for us, we didn't have anybody in the crash," said Jogi Muller, press spokesman for Armstrong's U.S. Postal Service team. "Our strategy is to stay out of such trouble and keep Lance out of the wind — it was windy out there today."

Kirsipuu, riding for AG2R, was timed in 4 hours, 13 minutes, 33 seconds for the 120.9-mile trek from Soissons to the Normandy city of Rouen. He crossed the line just ahead of Denmark's Michael Sandstod of CSC-Tiscali and Belgian Ludo Dierckxsens of Lampre.

The victory was Kirsipuu's third in the Tour, after stage wins in 1999 and 2001. In '99, when Armstrong won his first Tour,

Kirsipuu was the only other cyclist to wear the leader's yellow jersey.

"The sprint was really hard because everybody sped up in the last kilometer," Kirsipuu told France-2 Television. "My legs gave out on me, and at the end, it was no longer my abilities as a sprinter that gave me the win, but pure courage."

A group of riders crashed near the 105.4-mile mark, with Marco Pinotti of Lampre temporarily losing consciousness. He was forced to quit the Tour to receive treatment at a hospital for a broken nose and severe facial bruises.

Lotto's Rik Verbrugghe, who was also involved in the crash, was able to finish the race, more than 13 minutes after Kirsipuu. But he was taken to a hospital afterward to be treated for a shoulder injury.

The race got off to a quick start. With several groups pushing the pace as they tried to muster breakaways, the main pack of riders covered 29.8 miles in the first hour along the flat course.

"Lance said the first two hours were fast," Muller said. "The team was great. In every major attack early on, there was

someone there."

The main pack, including overall leader Igor Gonzalez Galdeano of Spain and Armstrong, finished 33 seconds later. Armstrong was in third place in the overall standings, 7 seconds behind Gonzalez Galdeano.

Armstrong is the heavy favorite to win the Tour. He plans to keep close to the overall leader in the early, flatter stages, then make a move for the lead when the race moves into the mountain stages next week.

Kirsipuu, Sandstod and Dierckxsens were among seven racers who broke away from the main pack at the 68.2-mile mark. It was the first time in this year's Tour that a small group of breakaway riders kept their lead all the way to the finish line.

Riders passed through farmland full of wheat, potatoes and corn. Thousands of fans lined the route, some waving American flags and others holding up signs with words of support for French rider Laurent Jalabert, currently in 15th place and 37 seconds off the pace. Some fans built a huge statue of a cyclist out of straw.

The course took the 189 riders



Christophe Ena/Associated Press

Lance Armstrong of Austin, Texas, center, strains in the middle of the pack during the fifth stage of the Tour de France cycling race between Soissons, northern France, and Rouen, western France on Thursday.

near the burial place of former Tour champion Jacques Anquetil, one of only four men to win the race five times. It ended along the Seine River in downtown Rouen, capital of the first French region to be liberated by American troops in World War II.

Thursday's stage marked the first withdrawals in the 21-day

competition. Belgian champion Tom Steels, who won nine stages in the 1998, 1999 and 2000 Tours, was the first to pull out of the competition after fewer than two hours of racing.

Friday's sixth stage is a 123.69-mile stretch through Normandy from Forges-les-Eaux to Alencon.

Williams' daughter makes plea to John Glenn, President Bushes

BY MIKE SCHNEIDER

Associated Press Writer

INVERNESS, Fla. — The daughter of Ted Williams is urging former astronaut John Glenn and President Bush and his father to come to her aid in stopping her half brother from keeping the body of the baseball great in deep freeze.

In an open letter released Wednesday night, Bobby-Jo Williams Ferrell said that her father wished to be cremated, not frozen at a cryonics lab in Arizona.

Ferrell has accused her half brother, John Henry Williams, of having their father's body moved to Alcor Life Extension Foundation in Scottsdale, Ariz., where bodies are frozen. Ferrell has said John Henry Williams wants to preserve their father's body for possible future

financial gain.

Williams, the last major league hitter to bat better than .400 in a season, died Friday in Florida at 83.

"I need anyone and everyone, famous or not, if they have knowledge about my Daddy's wishes to be cremated to stand up and be heard at this time," Ferrell said.

She called on Glenn, a former U.S. Senator who flew with Ted Williams when both were fighter pilots in the Korean War, and President Bush and his father, former President Bush, to help.

"John Glenn appreciated my Daddy's being his wingman. I want John Glenn to come forward now and come to his friend's aid," Ferrell said. "President Bush and his father need to come forward and 'work in this campaign' for your old friend — like he worked for you."

But a doctor who treated the Hall of Famer at a

University of Florida hospital said John Henry Williams wanted to freeze his father's body out of love and respect, not for financial gain.

"My sense of John was of a kid who adored his dad and would do anything and everything for him," Dr. A. Joseph Layon told The Gainesville Sun. "I never got a sense of an exploitative relationship, or that he saw his dad as a meal ticket."

Ferrell said she and her husband, Mark, had known for a year about John Henry Williams' desire to have their father's body sent to the cryonics lab after he died.

"It is unfortunate that I have been put into a corner to fight for what is right and for my father's final wishes," she said in the letter. "I too am on a final mission to save 'Ted Williams.'"



INTERNATIONAL

Massacre not forgotten



Amel Emric/Associated Press
Bosnian Muslim women from Srebrenica cry as they lay flowers on the memorial stone in memory of victims of the Srebrenica massacre, in the village of Potocari, near Srebrenica, on Thursday. About 5,000 Bosnian Muslim gathered in Potocari to mark the seventh anniversary of Srebrenica massacre. Up to 8,000 Muslim men are believed to have been killed when Serbs overran the so-called U.N. safe zone during the 1992-1995 war.

Venezuelans march in demand of Hugo Chavez's ousting

BY FABIOLA SANCHEZ

Associated Press Writer

CARACAS, Venezuela — Dissonance from whistles, drums, horns and fireworks accompanied hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans who clogged downtown Caracas Thursday demanding President Hugo Chavez's ouster.

Laborers and business executives, leftists and conservatives chanted "Out! Out!" in a march underscoring the political divisions gripping this South American nation, a top supplier of oil to the United States.

Chavez, who was ousted April 12 but restored to power two days later, earlier appealed for calm.

Thursday's march was the fifth, and perhaps the largest, since the April coup and followed a peacemaking mission this week by former President Carter.

Carter's efforts were rebuffed by Chavez's opposition, though Carter did persuade Chavez to accept international mediation in Venezuela's political crisis.

Thursday's march was called by opposition groups commemorating the shooting deaths of 18 people by guardsmen and civilians during an April 11 protest. Hundreds more were wounded.

The violence and Chavez's order to deploy the army prompted dissident generals to oust him the next day. But the leftist Chavez was restored to power in two days on a popular rebellion against an interim government that abolished the constitution.

Dozens died during that weekend of rioting and looting.

Investigations into who committed the April slayings have stalled.

After the coup, Chavez removed unpopular ministers from his Cabinet and offered to change laws opposed by the private sector.

International observers, including Carter Center delegates, monitored Thursday's demonstration.

National guard troops and riot police manned barricades to keep demonstrators away from Chavez supporters and the presidential palace, hoping to avoid bloodshed.

Opponents insist Chavez, a former paratrooper who staged a failed 1992 coup and was elected in 1998, cannot govern the country, which is mired in recession because of low oil prices and political instability.

Venezuela's main opposition parties demand Chavez leave power well before the 2007 end of his term. They have brought court cases alleging corruption, are organizing a referendum on his rule and are demanding justice for the April 11 victims.

"We are on a war footing," said Carlos Ortega, head of Venezuela's largest labor group, the 1 million-member Venezuelan Workers Confederation.

Ortega was surrounded by protest signs reading "No More Deaths" and "Chavez, Assassin."

Chavez said Wednesday he would accept an offer by the Organization of American States to help defuse Venezuela's crisis.

Israel to put prominent Palestinian leader on trial for Israeli attacks

BY GREG MYRE

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM — Israel announced Thursday it will prosecute Marwan Barghouti — whose popularity trails only Yasser Arafat's among his people — in connection with deadly attacks against Israeli civilians. The trial would be the first involving a senior Palestinian figure in years.

Israel apparently hopes to prove the complicity of the highest levels of the Palestinian leadership in terror attacks during the 21-month uprising against Israel. But the case could backfire by burnishing Barghouti's image as a resistance leader and making him even more popular among Palestinians.

Barghouti, 42, was a fiery speaker at street protests until Israeli troops detained him April 15 outside the West Bank town of Ramallah. He has not been charged.

Barghouti is the head of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement in the West Bank, and in recent public opinion surveys of Palestinians, he has been second in popularity only to Arafat himself.

Israeli Justice Ministry spokesman Yaakov Galanti said Israel planned to try Barghouti together with four other Palestinians in civilian court because of their connection "to several attacks in Israel." The spokesman did not specify the attacks.

Since the Palestinian Authority was established in 1994, Israel has not arrested or tried any senior Palestinian officials, allowing Palestinians to police areas under their control in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

But after the Palestinian uprising began in September 2000, Israel began going into Palestinian areas in search of militants. The military has killed dozens of suspected militants in helicopter strikes and other targeted killings, and the security forces have rounded up about 1,800 Palestinians suspected of involvement in violence.

However, Barghouti would be by far the most important figure to face trial.

The short, stocky Barghouti was

a familiar figure at Palestinian street protests in the early days of the Palestinian uprising, where he delivered impassioned speeches on confronting the Israeli forces.

Israel said he was also the leader of a militia linked to the Fatah movement, the Tanzim, whose members have been involved in attacks. Before his arrest, Barghouti claimed he was a politician and was not linked to militia groups.

A senior Israeli security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Barghouti gradually became involved in attacks, first defending them, then funneling funds to militants and finally orchestrating them. The official said Barghouti was warned that Israel would act against him if he didn't stop.

Israeli authorities claim that during questioning, Barghouti confessed to organizing attacks, with the approval of Arafat. Barghouti's lawyer, Jawad Boulos, has denied the claim and said his client was subjected to round-the-clock questioning and deprived of sleep for days.

"Israel has no right to try him in front of a civil or military court and we are not going to cooperate," Boulos said. Barghouti is being held by police in Jerusalem.

An Israeli statement said the other four facing trial are Nasser Awais, commander of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the Nablus area; Tabet Mardawi, a leader of the Islamic Jihad in Jenin; Abas Sayed, a Hamas leader; and Nasser Abu Hamid, Al Aqsa leader in Ramallah. The Al Aqsa militia is affiliated with Fatah.

In another development, Amnesty International condemned Palestinian suicide bombings and other attacks on Israeli civilians as "crimes against humanity" and unjustified by Palestinian political grievances.

The London-based human rights organization had previously accused Israel of violating Palestinian rights in the Mideast conflict, but the lengthy report focused on the Palestinian violence that Amnesty said had killed about 350 Israeli civilians.

In all, 21 months of violence have killed 565 people on the Israeli side and 1,752 people on the Palestinian side.

George Michael says he feels unsafe in the United States

By The Associated Press

LONDON — George Michael says he's nervous to return to his home in the United States because of the criticism he's received for his new song and video, "Shoot the Dog."

The British pop singer's video condemns Prime Minister Tony Blair for his close ties with the United States, portraying him as President Bush's obedient lap dog. The video shows a cartoon of Bush tickling a poodle representing Blair on the White House lawn.

When it was released, Michael called the video a political satire that should not be seen as unpatriotic in Britain or anti-American. But he also urged Blair to find the strength to challenge Bush's views, including his talk of a possible U.S. military attack on Iraq.

Since then, Michael said in an interview with ITV's

"Tonight" show Thursday night, he's been unfairly criticized in the United States as anti-American, which he blames on homophobia.

The 39-year-old singer, who announced in 1998 that he's gay, has lived mostly in America the past few years with his boyfriend, Kenny Goss.

Michael said a recent article in the New York Post branded him a "past-his-prime pop pervert." Negative media coverage has made life too difficult for him in the United States and forced him to undertake "damage control" interviews, he said.

"It's been very heavily inferred that I was actually an al-Qaida sympathizer, that somehow I thought that there was something not horrific and shocking and undeserved about the attacks on September the 11th," he said. "Americans are very reactionary right now, and I —

because of that article — cannot return to America, even though my partner lives there."

He said he loves his home in the United States, Goss' family, and the time he's spent in Dallas and Los Angeles.

"I don't think that there's any real connection between what I'm saying (in the video) and the fact that I'm a gay man. But there's a lot of connection in the press as to those two things," Michael said.

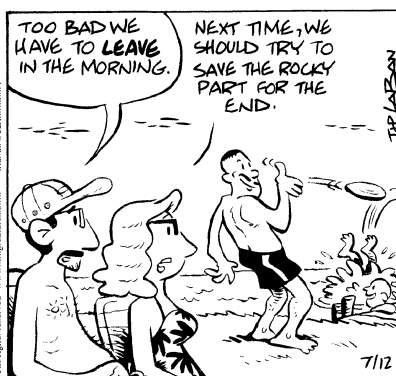
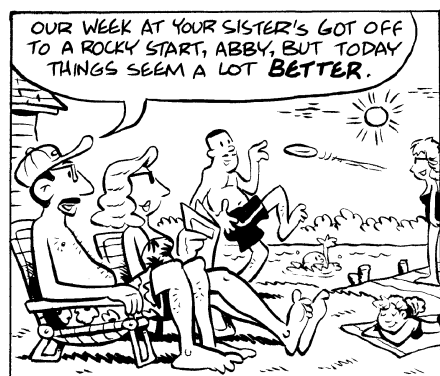
"For some reason I don't have a right to talk about anything because I got caught four years ago ... in a Los Angeles toilet," he said. "Somehow that eradicates all possibility that what I'm saying might be for the best, or is worthy of being discussed. I can't fight that kind of homophobia."

Michael was charged with lewd conduct in a Los Angeles public toilet in 1998. Soon after, he said publicly for the first time that he's gay.

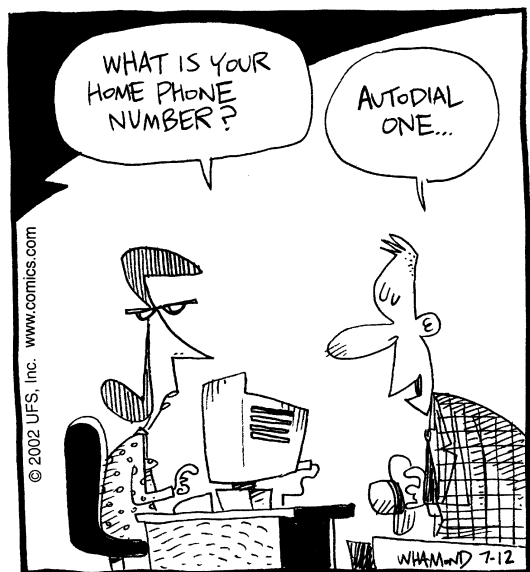
The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



by TERRY & PATTY LABAN



By Dave Whammond



By Dave Coverly



ACROSS

- 1 Used a sponge
6 First anniversary gift
11 Win by —
12 “— by any other name ...”
13 President Bartlet’s portrayer
14 Component
15 Monopoly token
16 Rascal
18 “Mazel —!”
19 Yale student
20 Utter
21 Fury
22 Parish
- 12 Spatium
hero
43 Sports surprise
44 Garden starters
45 Jury members
- DOWN**
- 1 Metal ring
2 Take a breath
3 Ironic punishment of the wicked
4 Jargon suffix
5 Texas city
6 Abner’s father
7 “Exodus” hero

DOWN

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| 2 Take a breath | 8 Writer's liberty |
| 3 Ironic punishment of the wicked | 9 Chaperone |
| 4 Jargon suffix | 10 "The Matrix" star |
| 5 Texas city | 17 Theater feature |
| 6 Abner's father | 23 Youngster |
| 7 "Exodus" hero | 24 Broadcast |

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| 24 Broad-
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| | 39 Free |
| | 41 Gibbon or
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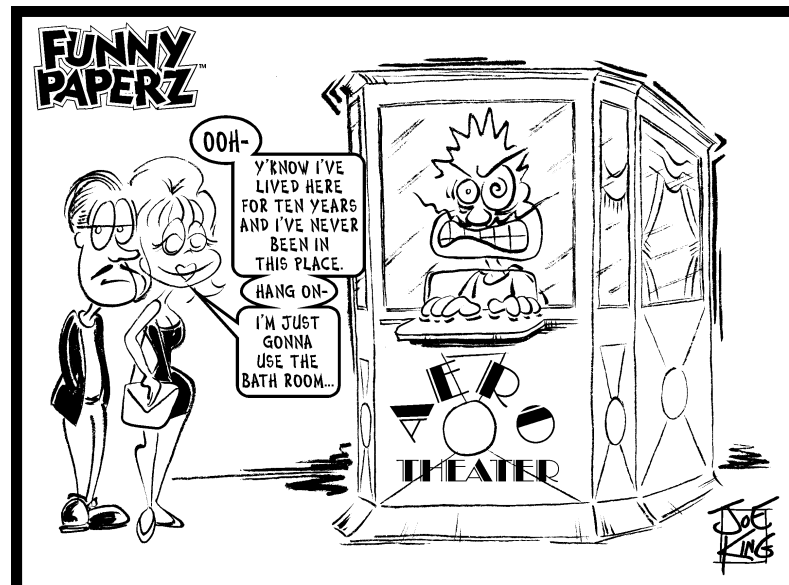
For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-3168!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

"Dozens" of money-making Web sites have recently been created by parents who post photos they have taken of their adolescent daughters (as young as age 6) frolicking in frilly clothing or swimwear, according to a May New York Daily News report. The sites are operated like pornography businesses, with some free teaser photos, but with \$30-a-month "members" getting access to the photo archive and "personal" messages from the "model." Some sites operate chat rooms where members discuss the girls in great detail. One "typical" site has 3,000 daily users, and another had 32 million page views in nine months. The parents say they are helping their daughters with modeling careers or with future college expenses.



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PRO SE of Neighborhood Project needs volunteers for events that honor our heroes. (310) 899-3888 pro.se@adelphia.net.

VOTE FOR Pro Se Santa Monica City Council! Our Residents, Businesses, Schools must come first!

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Calendar

Friday, July 12, 2002

movies

Loews Broadway Cinema
1441 Third St. at Broadway
The Sum of all Fears (PG-13) 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30. The Bourne Identity (PG-13) 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:30, 10:00. The Powerpuff Girls Movie (PG) 12:00, 2:15. Like Mike (PG) 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15. Scooby-Doo (PG-13) 4:30, 6:45, 9:00.

Mann Criterion
1313 Third St.
Minority Report (PG-13) 11:40, 3:15, 7:10, 10:30, 12:15. Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood (PG-13) 11:10, 2:00, 4:45, 7:30, 10:15. My Big Fat Greek Wedding (PG) 11:20, 1:45, 4:30, 7:20, 9:50. Men in Black II (PG-13) 11:00, 12:00, 1:30, 2:30, 4:15, 5:15, 7:00, 8:00, 9:40, 10:40, 12:00. Halloween: Resurrection 11:45, 2:15, 5:00, 7:40, 10:00, 12:00.

AMC Theatre SM 7
1310 3rd Street
Lilo & Stich (PG) 10:35, 12:40, 2:45, 4:50, 7:05, 9:15. Mr. Deeds (PG-13) 11:45, 2:15, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40. Insomnia (R) 11:20, 2:00, 5:05, 7:55, 10:40. Reign of Fire 11:15, 1:50, 4:30, 7:35, 10:20. The Crocodile Hunter (PG) 10:30, 12:25, 2:50, 5:10, 7:25, 9:35. Road to Perdition 11:00, 1:00, 2:00, 4:00, 5:00, 7:00, 8:00, 9:55, 10:50.

Landmark Nu-Wilshire
1314 Wilshire Blvd.
The Fast Runner: Atanarjuat (NR) 11:30, 3:15, 7:30. Lovely and Amazing (R) 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30. Notorious CHO (R) 10:05, 12:00.

Laemmle Monica
1332 2nd St.
Y Tu Mama Tambien (NR) 12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45, 10:15. Sunshine State (PG-13) 12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:10. Me Without You (NR) 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10.

Today

Community

Santa Monica Strutters, a FREE program sponsored by UCLA Healthcare's 50-Plus Program! Walking programs for adults 50 or older looking for safe, low-impact exercise in a comfortable environment. The Santa Monica Strutters meet Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 8 a.m. To 10 a.m., at Santa Monica Place, Fourth St. and Broadway Ave. in Santa Monica.

Classes

Los Angeles Arts Academy, Summer Art Camp in Santa Monica & Westchester. Ages 5 to 13 years old. Lots of fun: art, acting, singing, karaoke, drawing, sculpture, drum circles, field trips & more! June 24 through August 16, M-F, 9 a.m. To 3 p.m. (except field trip days). Now enrolling! laarts@earthlink.net.

Arts / Entertainment

14 Below, 1348 14th St., Santa Monica. If the band stinks, take advantage of commodious booths, pool tables, and fireplace. Full Bar. Over 21. (310)451-5040.

Anastasia's Asylum, 1028 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. Board games, cushiony sofas, a full veggie menu, juices, teas, and coffee that grows hair on your chest. No cover. (310)394-7113

The Joint, 8771 W. Pico Blvd., W. LA. One of the most exotic rooms in the local rock-facility pantheon. Pizza. Cover \$10 - \$5. Full bar. Over 21. (310)275-2619.

Rusty's Surf Ranch, 256 Santa Monica Pier. Walls and ceilings are lined with one of the area's largest collections of pre-1970's surfboards. Cover varies. Full bar. All ages. (310)393-7386.

Saturday

Community

Shots for Tots & Teens- Saint John's Health Center is offering free immunizations and TB skin tests for anyone under 18. 10 a.m.- noon. Saint John's Health Center- Cafeteria, Arizona and 22nd St., (310)829-8234.

"Residents Do It Together!" Wilshire/Montana Neighborhood Coalition will host its Annual Meeting, at Reed Park Auditorium, 12:00 noon to 3:00 P.M. Mayor Pro-Tem, Kevin McKeown, and

City spokesperson, Judy Rambeau, will speak briefly, then address neighborhood concerns. Local expert on historical preservation, Ken Breisch, will also address the group. Newcomers especially welcome. Free, open to public. Refreshments. For info: (310) 840-2257.

Classes

Ever want to write for TV? Learn how to do it from Robert Masello, successful television writer ("Charmed," "Sliders," "Early Edition," etc.) and author of "A Friend in the Business: Honest Advice for Anyone Trying to Break into Television Writing." Class will be held at Santa Monica College (Library Village 7) from 1 to 4 p.m.; fee is \$40. Call 310-434-3400 to enroll.

Theatre / Arts

Santa Monica Children's Theatre Co. presents a newly forming musical theatre company for children. Every Saturday from 10:15 a.m. - 2:15 p.m., Quest Studios, 19th & Broadway in Santa Monica. Tuition is \$325 per month - covers cost of all classes and productions. Contact Janet Stegman at (310)995-9636.

Santa Monica Playhouse is proud to present Picon Pie! The World Premiere of a joyous and poignant musical play about the life and loves of

legendary Molly Picon. Admission is \$23.50. Show starts at 8:00 p.m. 1211 4th Street, Santa Monica. For more information please call (310)394-9779 or visit www.santamonicaplayhouse.com.

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LUSH 2020 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. Three bars, plenty of booths, sofas, leopard-print carpet and a sunken dance floor. Mexican grill serves dinner after 5 p.m. Full bar. Over 21. Cover \$5 - Free. (310)829-1933.

Anastasia's Asylum, 1028 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. Board games, cushiony sofas, a full veggie menu, juices, teas, and coffee that grows hair on your chest. No cover. (310)394-7113.

Calendar items are printed free of charge as a service to our readers. Please submit your items to todayspaper@smdp.com for consideration. Calendar events are limited by space, and will be run at the discretion of the Calendar Editor. The Daily Press cannot be held responsible for errors.

KEEP YOUR DATE STRAIGHT

Promote your event in the Santa Monica Daily Press Calendar section. Fax all information to our Calendar editor:
Attention Angela @ 310.576.9913



BACK PAGE

Britain government seeks to downgrade marijuana

BY BETH GARDINER
Associated Press Writer

LONDON — The British government wants to downgrade marijuana's status as a drug, putting it on par with steroids rather than amphetamines and barbiturates — a move that would let most users off with a warning.

On Wednesday Prime Minister Tony Blair's government outlined a proposal to the House of Commons that would relax marijuana laws, stopping short of legalization. The goal is to let police focus their enforcement efforts on harder drugs.

Blair's Labor Party has a large majority in Parliament and the proposal is virtually certain to pass.

Under the plan, marijuana would be downgraded from a Class B to a Class C drug, making its use and possession less serious crimes. Home Secretary David Blunkett said in outlining the plan to the House of Commons. Police would retain the authority to arrest those caught with marijuana, but in most cases would simply confiscate the drug and issue a warning.

"The message to young people and families must be open, honest and believable," Blunkett said. "Cannabis is a potentially harmful drug and should remain illegal. However, it is not comparable with crack, heroin and Ecstasy."

Blair said the proposal did not amount to decriminalization and had wide support among the police because it would allow them to spend more time fighting more serious drugs.

The opposition Conservative Party criticized the proposal as potentially dan-

"The message to young people and families must be open, honest and believable."

— **DAVID BLUNKETT**
Home Secretary

gerous to the public, and a government adviser resigned in protest.

In the United States, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws praised the British policy shift. "Great Britain's reclassification of cannabis is an honest and common-sense approach to refocus drug policy on those substances that cause the most harm," said the group's founder and executive director, Keith Stroup.

Laws differ among individual U.S. states. But eight states have taken some kind of step toward permitting marijuana for medicinal use: California, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Hawaii, Maine, Nevada and Colorado.

The U.S. Supreme Court, however, ruled last year that there was no exception in federal law for people to use marijuana, so even those with tolerant state laws could face arrest if they do.

In Britain, possession of a Class B drug currently carries a maximum penalty of five years in jail.

Possession of a Class C drug carries a maximum sentence of two years, but the Home Office said that penalty is rarely invoked for first-time offenders, who normally receive only a ticket.

Blunkett said that in most marijuana possession cases police would simply confiscate the drug and issue a warning to the offender.

But, he said, the proposed rules would give officers the power to arrest those possessing small amounts of marijuana if public order is threatened or children are put at risk.

Blunkett said he hoped to have the reclassification in place by July 2003.

In London, though, the change could come more quickly.

Blunkett said the Metropolitan Police would, over the next several months, expand to the entire city a pilot project launched in the Brixton neighborhood to experiment with ticketing marijuana users instead of arresting them.

Oliver Letwin, the Conservative Party spokesman on law and order issues, called the proposal "muddled and dangerous," saying Blunkett had failed to choose between legalizing marijuana and getting serious about arresting those who use it.

"You need to explain how, with a policy that consists of deeply confusing mixed messages, you can conceivably expect to reduce drug dependency and criminality in this country," he said.

Blunkett said the proposed downgrade would be accompanied by a beefed-up anti-drug education campaign, teaching young people that all drugs can harm them and hard drugs can kill.

His announcement followed recommendations from a House of Commons committee and an independent advisory group. He rejected recommendations that Ecstasy be downgraded from Class A to Class B and that "shooting galleries" be set up for addicts to use drugs in controlled conditions.

Blunkett had said last fall that he was inclined to downgrade marijuana, but would wait to hear from the two panels and watch the Brixton experiment before making a final decision.

He said Wednesday that police in Brixton had arrested 10 percent more hard drug dealers since they stopped apprehending marijuana users.

Blunkett's announcement came several hours after a top anti-drug official said he was resigning to protest the reclassification.

Keith Hellawell, a government adviser who previously served as Britain's drug czar, said marijuana was dangerous and led some users to try harder drugs.

"It is a softening of the law and it's giving the wrong message," he told the British Broadcasting Corp.

The Home Office said Hellawell told Blunkett last year that he supported the proposal to reclassify marijuana, and that he had submitted his resignation last month, effective in August, but asked that it not be announced immediately.

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