

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

FANTASY 5

13 14 16 20 32

DAILY LOTTO

Daytime: 2 6 8

Evening: 3 0 9

DAILY DERBY

1st: 01 Gold Rush

2nd: 11 Money Bags

3rd: 08 Gorgeous George

RACE TIME: 1:44.22



NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ China Daily reported in May that businessman Hu Xilm, who claims that a housefly in the food 10 years ago ruined a big business deal for him, has since spent thousands of dollars on an obsession to eliminate as many flies as he can; with help from a team of volunteers he recruited, he claims to have killed 8 million. And in May, white supremacist Ms. Karleana Zuber was arrested in Kootenai County, Idaho, and charged with spitting in a state trooper's face; Zuber was isolated from the other inmates for her protection because in her not-too-distant past, before surgery, she was a male white supremacist.

TODAY IN HISTORY

ON JULY 16, 1945, the United States exploded its first experimental atomic bomb, in the desert of Alamogordo, N.M.

■ In 1790, the District of Columbia was established as the seat of the United States government.

■ In 1862, David G. Farragut became the first rear admiral in the United States Navy.

■ In 1918, Russia's Czar Nicholas II, his empress and their five children were executed by the Bolsheviks.

■ In 1951, the novel "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger was first published.

■ In 1973, during the Senate Watergate hearings, former White House aide Alexander P. Butterfield publicly revealed the existence of President Nixon's secret taping system.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The fear of becoming a 'has been' keeps some people from becoming anything."

— ERIC HOFFER, AMERICAN AUTHOR

INDEX

Horoscopes

Keep costs down, Gemini 2

Local

SM employees get political 3

Surf Report

Water temperature: 68° 3

Opinion

Breaking promises in City Hall 4

Entertainment

"I, Robot" is "Terminator" quality 8

State

Los Alamos lab troubles 11

Comics Page

Word up 12

Classifieds

\$3.50 a day 13

City's cell phone law no longer fuzzy

BY SHRADDHA R. JAISWAL

Special to the Daily Press

CITY HALL — Officials here have now made it possible for Santa Monicans to have better cell phone reception.

The City Council passed an ordinance Tuesday that regulates antenna installation applications from companies such as Verizon and AT&T.

The ordinance allows wireless companies to apply for a permit to build antennas in public areas, including above or below streets, in alleys or on sidewalks.

But wireless companies are restricted — City Hall will give preference to companies that construct in commercial areas as opposed to neighborhoods. City

officials also prefer companies to build on private instead of public property and camouflage their wireless antennas on existing street poles instead of creating new ones.

"We ask that they not be directly outside of someone's bay window, (that they are) painted to match surroundings, landscaped," said Dave Britton, a civil engineer in City Hall. "It's a matter of controlling the aesthetic impact of these installations."

The new law was passed in response to months of disputes between City Hall, Verizon and AT&T. The two phone companies filed federal and state lawsuits against City Hall when their applications to put up antennas were denied because Santa Monica did

not have a law regulating the installation, said Deputy City Attorney Cara Silver.

Although the new law will not go into effect for another 30 days, Britton said there already are applications in the works. He expects more once the ordinance goes into effect.

Because City Hall complied with AT&T's general demands, it could be the first company to put up an antenna in Santa Monica. Pending the application approval, AT&T's first camouflaged antenna will be placed on a street light on the corner of 19th Street and San Vicente Boulevard, officials said.

"(The new law) allows many benefits for residents as far as pro-

See CELL PHONES, page 5

AT&T heard loud and clear via lawsuit

BY SHRADDHA R. JAISWAL

Special to the Daily Press

CITY HALL — Officials here settled a lawsuit this week with AT&T. The suit claimed City Hall was preventing the company from giving its customers better cell phone reception.

AT&T Wireless and Verizon Wireless sued the city last year after their applications to install cell phone antennas were denied — not based on merit but rather because City

See AT&T, page 5



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Signs warning residents of the West Nile Virus are being posted in area parks. This sign is located next to the children's playground in Reed Park.

Warning: West Nile Virus headed this way

DANIELE HAMAMDJIAN

Special to the Daily Press

WILSHIRE BOULEVARD — Health officials suspect the West Nile Virus might hit Santa Monica.

"The virus is moving pretty fast. It could take a week or two, but it's coming," said Robert Saviskas, executive director of The Los Angeles County West Vector Control District.

The Vector Control District has posted signs in area parks that ask Santa Monica residents to take precautions. The latest sign appeared

See WEST NILE, page 6

Weller's statement to stay under seal

Other details to become public today, first anniversary of Farmers' Market crash

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

SM COURTHOUSE — A 42-page statement given to police one year ago today by elderly driver Russell Weller will remain sealed under court order, a judge ruled Thursday.

In a written decision opposing her earlier ruling, Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Valerie Baker indicated the lengthy statement could impair a pending criminal trial against Weller, 87, who faces ten counts of vehicular manslaughter for the Farmers' Market crash of July 16, 2003.

"The Constitutional Rights of Privacy and the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution provide substantial weight in favor of" the protective order, Judge Baker wrote.

Weller's statement is just one part of a 914-page California Highway Patrol report. Judge Baker also ordered sealed an interview with Weller's wife, Harriet, as well as documents detailing Weller's medical history, unreported traffic accidents, medications taken and toxicology results.

Other portions of the report will become public as early as today under the ruling. This includes nearly 600 pages of witness statements, a detailed mechanical description of Weller's 1992 Buick LeSabre, autopsy and injury reports, Weller's driver's license history, and expert analysis and opinion.

The ruling punctuates a seven-month struggle between lawyers involved in the criminal and civil cases against Weller. Weller's defense attorneys and prosecutors wanted to keep the entire report sealed and worried pre-trial publicity would affect Weller's right to a fair trial. Civil attorneys split on the issue, though most said there was no good reason to keep the report private.

A lawyer for The Los Angeles Times joined the courtroom proceed-

See WELLER, page 6

Jacquie Banks

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LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Santa Monica city employees get political

By Daily Press Staff

A group of city employees have formed a committee to consider and act on local ballot measures and candidates. The Coalition of Santa Monica City Employees is comprised of more than 1,400 personnel in nine bargaining units.

The new Political Action Committee will provide a forum for the discussion of issues facing the city, particularly with regard to ensuring the continuation of quality city services, officials said. Candidates and ballot measure proponents will be invited to speak to the committee at meetings organized by the PAC.

The PAC will consider endorsements of candidates and ballot issues. It also may provide off-duty volunteers and donations.

Any candidates interested in receiving the PAC's endorsement may contact the Coalition of Santa Monica City Employees PAC at P.O. Box 3007 Santa Monica, Calif., 90408-3007 or via e-mail: CoalitionSMCE@aol.com.

Labor relations committee wins award

By Daily Press Staff

Susan Aminoff, a candidate for the Santa Monica College Board of Trustees this November, is one of several people who have been recognized for her labor-management efforts.

The Joint Labor/Management Benefits Committee of the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild has been selected as one of six winners of the Saturn/UAW Partnership Award for collaborative labor-management relations.

Established in 1997, the award pays tribute to exemplary models of union and management collaboration that utilize trust, teamwork, shared decision making, training, accountability, focus on quality and ability to survive conflict and change in order to achieve their common goals.

"Employees work closely with management to design a comprehensive health benefits program," Aminoff said. "Throughout the year, we meet regularly to design the plans, select vendors and determine the appropriate level of employee cost sharing. The Joint Labor/Management Committee model is an efficient way to develop a health care program."



CityTV receives Emmy nomination for documentary

By Daily Press Staff

CityTV of Santa Monica has received an Emmy nomination for its documentary "The Lucky Man."

"This Emmy nomination is very special," said Robin Gee, station manager for CityTV. "The story of 'The Lucky Man' is about one of our own producers who passed away last year. We had hoped that Brian Murphy would still be with us to savor coming this far. We are all keeping our fingers crossed for a win because we want to win the Emmy award for him."

Murphy, an Emmy-winning filmmaker stricken with ALS, began a video documentary of the last year of his life. Friends at CityTV of Santa Monica completed the documentary with the words of his online journal. Murphy died on Feb. 5, 2003.

The 56th Annual Los Angeles Emmy Awards presentation will be held on Aug. 28 in North Hollywood. Murphy's wife and children will join CityTV staff at the ceremony to see if his dream of winning a second Emmy award will be fulfilled. The Local Area Emmy Awards are presented by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

CityTV is the government access cable station for the city of Santa Monica. Seen on cable channel 16, CityTV airs live coverage of City Council meetings, local news and other programming for Santa Monica residents.



SURF REPORT

On Friday look for a mix of fading SSE swell, building SW swell and a touch of wind swell. Northern LA County spots see the SSE/SW mix for knee- to chest-high surf at many breaks and occasional shoulder-high sets at best spots. Average South Bay spots stay below waist-high off the wind swell. Best SW/combo breaks in the north half of the bay see waist-high and occasional bigger sets. Look for light and variable wind in the morning to build out of the W in the 8-12 knot range for the afternoon.

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HIGH TIDES

	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	10:37	1.8	N/A	N/A	5:25	3.2	5:33	5.2
SUNDAY	12:53	1.0	11:28	2.2	7:00	3.2	6:15	5.4
MONDAY	1:44	0.5	12:18	2.5	8:13	3.3	6:54	5.6
TUESDAY	2:26	0.1	1:04	2.7	9:06	3.4	7:30	5.8
WEDNESDAY	3:02	-0.2	1:44	2.7	9:45	3.5	8:05	5.9
THURSDAY	3:36	-0.4	2:21	2.7	10:18	3.6	8:39	6.0
FRIDAY	4:07	-0.5	2:56	2.6	10:48	3.7	9:13	6.1

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The Q Line

More than a dozen new retail outlets, restaurants and other merchants are expected to open locations in downtown Santa Monica this summer, which officials hope will fuel the Third Street Promenade and its more dormant side streets with new life.

One objection often raised in recent years regarding the Promenade and its surrounding streets is the increasing presence large corporate chains have in this area. City Hall officials struggle to control the mix of merchants, but some say that it is uncertain where the balance of businesses should be. After all, the corporate

chains are the ones that have — and often bring in — the money.

So this week, Q-line wants to know, "What mix of businesses would you like to see on the Promenade and its surrounding areas? Should all businesses have equal access or should City Hall closely regulate the balance of independent owners and corporate chains?"

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

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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

City Hall wasting your money

Editor:
Todd Smilovitz’s coverage of my federal lawsuit over due process and a \$38 parking citation touched some sensitive nerves (SMDP, July 12, page 4).
The City Attorney’s office calls it “outrageous” that I have spent all of this time over such a modest issue. But I do it not just for me, but for all of us, and those who come after us. If the city isn’t going to put up the signs that the law requires, telling us what we ought not to do, then it is unlawful for the city to enforce one of its secret local parking laws. Before I took the matter to court, before the city spent one cent on the issue, I presented the City Attorney with my memorandum of law and copy of a parking citation case I had won in San Diego on similar issues, and was totally ignored.
The city will probably spend \$25,000 of lawyer time to fight the \$38 ticket, win or lose. I do not think the City Attorney is paying any attention to the costs of government, or the citation would have been withdrawn and \$50 spent on some signs so the problem would not happen again. Hopefully the City Council will express its view that these problems should be nipped in the bud, (sic) especially when the request is accompanied by legal authorities and is presented by an attorney. That’s a no-brainer.

Mike Schaefer
Las Vegas

Election time is ousting time

Editor:
So it’s come down to this. The city is so desperate to build low income housing that they are actually attempting to build the project at Main Street and Pacific Avenue at a cost of \$500 per unit and each would rent for \$500 to \$700 per month. The project is out of whack in every way. If a private builder wanted to build it, the city wouldn’t approve it. It’s oversized and doesn’t have enough parking.
I was thrilled to see that we will have lots of options for the upcoming council race, as we really need to get rid of the current group of social engineers. They are so out of touch with the people on so many issues and must be removed.

Irving Baron
Santa Monica

A history lesson

Editor:
Barney Thompson is to be credited with writing a glowing letter on behalf of President Bush (SMDP, July 12, page 4). No one can doubt that Mr. Bush is in need of all the help he can get, and certainly it could not have been easy to come up with all those positive points in favor of Mr. Bush. Come to think of it though, it wasn’t so much positive things about Mr. Bush as negatives about other leaders and/or the time frames within which they made important decisions (but who’s paying attention to such trivial details?).
Now I could take issue with some of the points Mr. Thompson made (actually all of them), but I shall focus for the sake of brevity and clarity on his first — that FDR led us into a war against Germany when it was Japan who had attacked Pearl Harbor.
Yes Barney, it was the Japanese, not the Germans who attacked Pearl Harbor. However, on Dec. 8, when FDR asked Congress for a declaration of war, it was only against Japan. Germany was not mentioned. On Dec. 10, Hitler (in the second stupidest decision of the 12-year Reich) declared war upon the United States. We returned the favor the following day.
Thus Barney, despite all the efforts by yourself and other like-minded people to rewrite history to better suit the needs of the present administration, Bush II remains the only president ever to launch a pre-emptive war against another country. Second place in this category goes to Bush I, who invaded Panama to arrest its sitting president (who had decided it was more lucrative to work for the drug lords than it was to do the CIA’s bidding).
This may well be cause for pride among folks who think like yourself, but for myself and like minded Americans (it is our flag, too), it is a matter of not a little embarrassment.
Our country is dependent upon the marketplace of ideas. I would hope as Americans, we can all agree to disagree about our politics. It would be helpful if everyone also treated the truth with the respect it deserves.

Marc Sanschagrin
Santa Monica

City Council politicians still serve up broken promises



MY WRITE
BY BILL BAUER

Election season has begun for the City Council, Santa Monica College Board of Trustees and local school board candidates. All four multi-term incumbents on the City Council are seeking reelection.
Mayor Richard Bloom announced that his campaign would be centered on “social justice and affordable housing.” Oy! It’s not surprising he’d avoid real issues such as our army of street transients, traffic, school funding, parking, property rights and the squandering of city resources on services for nonresidents — problems he and his council cronies promised to solve during previous elections but where they have failed miserably.
Worried about increasing community discontent with ongoing issues that are never addressed? “Speed Bumps” Bloom and his Santa Monicans for Renters’ Rights stooges deride anybody who dares complain. Do they want us to pretend everything is “A-OK?” Do they think we’re all simpletons?
Incumbents Herb Katz and Ken Genser, seeking their fourth and fifth terms respectively, still “do their own thing” too, and somehow “we” get left out of the process.
Councilman Michael Feinstein, also seeking a third term, cites parks and open space as a priority. But, he, along with the other incumbents, can’t vote fast enough for overly large, low-income apartment projects on any bit of open space. Feinstein talks “sustainable” but doesn’t walk the walk.
For example, they all encourage and support our large vagrant population. Public feedings continue unabated, tens of millions of dollars are wasted annually on ineffective services and public safety concerns are ignored. Their reaction? “You’ll get used to it.”
Traffic increases yearly, yet they consistently support air polluting traffic jamming schemes that make it harder and more dangerous to drive. And, continued assaults on single-family homeowner’s property rights have many neighbors claiming it’s a war between the “haves” and “have nots.”
I haven’t seen a bunch of self-righteous council persons this out of touch with reality since the mid-1970s when three politicians voted to demolish the Santa Monica Pier and lost their council seats because of it.

It’s a grab bag of everything including projects left off the list from SMC’s \$160 million bond approved by voters just two years ago. Their latest bond proposal provides yet another \$75 million in projects for SMC plus \$25 million for city/college partnership projects in Malibu and \$75 million in Santa Monica.
Monies would be earmarked for mostly non-academic, physical improvements on the campus and for community cultural, athletic and recreational facilities. Even though less than 10 percent of SMC students are from Santa Monica and Malibu, we’re still being asked to pony up for a veritable cornucopia of “cake icing,” including a botanical gardens, child care, children’s fitness park, career center, community theater and an aquarium on the Santa Monica Pier.
Funny. I thought SMC’s mandate was to provide educational services. When did it become a provider of cultural, recreational and child care facilities for the Westside?
A news article in the Los Angeles Business Journal, (July 5, 2004) says SMC could be hit with a \$10 million state funding cutback because of a 28 percent decline in enrollment. It lost almost 7,000 students last year.
Even more disturbing is the Accrediting Commission for Community Colleges Report on Santa Monica College (page 14) that says: “... the college does not have a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the ongoing planning and resource allocation process.” It looks like their \$175 million bond proposal is less about educational excellence and more about marketing, opportunism, political clout and grabbing the brass ring.
City Hall still beats the college when it comes to borrowing and taxing. City Hall is considering the issuance of up to \$8 million in revenue bonds for development of a controversial, 44-unit, low-income, apartment complex at Main Street and Pacific Avenue in Ocean Park. Depending on the interest rate and length of the loan, the total cost to taxpayers could be between \$16 and \$25 million, or a half-million bucks a unit.
It’s another classic example of how the incumbents’ — and SMRR’s — social agenda takes priority over the public’s needs and only benefits a very small number of people, many of whom may not even be Santa Monicans.
Funding for voter-based rental housing projects and \$10 million homeless shelters is done with a snap of a finger. We have to back them against a wall to get support for our services, such as schools.
The bond for the Community Corp. of Santa Monica, the low-income housing provider here, is scheduled for approval by the City Council at on July 27 at 5:45 p.m.
(Bill Bauer is a longtime Santa Monica resident and a freelance writer).

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



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LOCAL



Cell phone antennas will be hidden from public

CELL PHONES, from page 1

viding more efficient, competitive utility services,” Britton said. “It’s not just telecommunication. It effects the gas company and Edison ... It provides a more effective way to provide utility services to the public.”

Under the new ordinance, companies will file an application with the city’s environmental and public works management department that includes the time, location and extent of the construction. The general review process by the public works department and the city’s planning commission would take up to three weeks.

Phone companies are eligible for two types of permits in regard to placing antennas. A minor permit would be granted when the wireless infrastructure to be built does not affect the aesthetic character of the area and relates “harmoniously” with the neighborhood. That would include underground facilities and micro-cell antennas that are incorporated into existing utility poles and street lights.

But if the equipment appears to change the aesthetics of the neighborhood — such as extending above the height of existing poles or if new poles are needed all together — a major permit would be necessary, and it would undergo extensive public review.

If the company is asking for a major permit, the ordinance requires that the applicants send out a notice of the impending construction to all property owners, residents and tenants within 500 feet of the proposed site 14 business days before a final decision is made. Santa Monicans may appeal the construction to the City Council within those 14 days.

Santa Monica hasn’t updated public utilities regulations for more than three decades. Up until now, no law regulating underground utilities and wireless telecommunications existed because applications from outside companies were few and far between.

The placement of the antennas, under or above ground, will take place most likely during the daytime, Britton said. However, if the company is asking to install in a high-traffic area, Britton said they would be asked as an exception to work during the off-peak hours between 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Although the companies had security concerns with the ordinance’s requirement that they provide a network diagram of the project in their application, Silver said that the diagrams would remain confidential and would only be used to avoid extra costs for the city.

“What we want to do is require all of the private utilities to give information regarding their underground lines and

Verizon’s lawsuit still pending against City Hall

AT&T, from page 1

Hall didn’t have a law regulating the application and construction process for new utilities.

The agreement between AT&T and City Hall rests on whether the company gets approval to install an antenna in Santa Monica. AT&T’s permit application will now go through a new process mandated by a recently approved ordinance.

Although the settlement has not yet been drafted, Deputy City Attorney Cara Silver said AT&T and the City Council had agreed on most of the major terms. Once the agreement is signed by both parties, AT&T’s application to build an antenna on 19th Street and San Vicente Boulevard will be considered within two weeks. If approved, the lawsuit will be formally dropped, and Santa Monicans with AT&T cell phones will have better service once the antenna is installed, officials said.

“If the permit does go through, it will be subject to most of the new regulations in the new ordinance,” Silver said. “We hope that the installation will be a model installation for other installations, so the city has taken extra time to work with AT&T to ensure that the design is as camouflaged as possible.”

However, officials said if the permit approval doesn’t go through, the lawsuit will remain.

Verizon filed the first complaint in state court in September 2003 and refiled in federal court in April. AT&T followed suit and filed its federal case in December 2003 and amended its complaint this past May.

Despite the resolution with AT&T, the City Council has not reached an agreement with Verizon. Because a six-month moratorium on new utility construction will end this month, City Hall and Verizon will either have to come to an agreement or move forward with the case.

If an agreement with City Hall is not reached, Verizon won’t be able to install the three antennas for which it has applied. Company representatives say these would provide better service for customers.

other equipment to the city,” said Silver. “This way when the city does its projects, we know exactly where all of these underground lines are so that we will not run into them when we go in for construction.”

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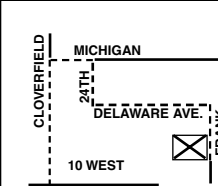


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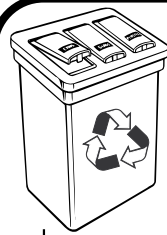
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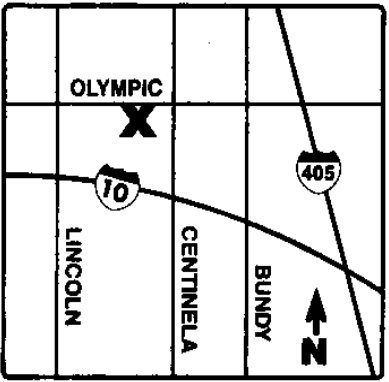
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LOCAL

Lawyers get full report

WELLER, from page 1

ings last week, after Judge Baker indicated she would keep the entire report sealed until Weller's preliminary trial was complete. Judge Baker reversed course after hearing from The Times and issued a tentative ruling to release the entire report. She heard further argument Wednesday before issuing her final decision, a compromise.

Lawyers in the civil cases are expected to receive specially prepared CDs today with the full 914-page report, and all supplemental diagrams and photographs.

More than two dozen victims have filed civil lawsuits related to the Farmers' Market crash. Because Weller's assets likely will be easily exhausted, they've targeted Santa Monica City Hall. Lawyers argue the city should have erected barriers to keep cars from entering the market.

A community on the mend

Today is the one-year anniversary of the Farmers' Market crash in downtown Santa Monica that left 10 people dead and 63 injured. Here's a look at various events:

- At 1:30 p.m. today a service will be held at the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Monica, at 1220 Second St. Call (310) 451-1303 for more details.
- "The Rouge Shoes," a 74-minute black-and-white movie by Kevin McCarthy, will be aired Saturday at 11 a.m. at the Laemmle Theaters at 1332 Second St. McCarthy, 50, and his wife were killed in the July 16 Farmers' Market crash, just days after he finished editing the film.
- A service will be held midday Saturday to close the Farmers' Market. The Bay Interfaith Council on Wednesday morning held a service to re-consecrate the ground and open the market.

Officials urge WNV precautions

WEST NILE, from page 1

recently just feet away from the children's playground at Reed Park, located on Lincoln and Wilshire boulevards. There is also a sign in Douglas Park on Wilshire Boulevard and 25th Street.

Health officials estimate the West Nile Virus will infect all areas of Los Angeles County by the end of the year. In response, the Vector Control District plans to post the warning signs in recreational areas throughout the region, including Santa Monica.

"Nothing's been found here," said City Hall spokeswoman Judy Rambeau.

However, Saviskas said the virus might have already hit Santa Monica.

"It takes a couple of weeks before they succumb to the disease and die," he said of birds infected with West Nile.

In a health advisory sent to Santa Monica City Hall on July 7, the Los Angeles County West Vector and Vector-Borne Disease Control District warned local officials it would be posting signs reading, "Disease warning, West Nile virus has been confirmed in or near this area," in recreational areas within five miles of the known westward front of the West Nile Virus activity. According to the advisory, the pre-emptive measure also is because of "the increase in the number of people who will be visiting parks and other recreational areas during the dusk and dawn hours during the summer months."

The most recent human cases to be reported include an individual from Los Angeles County and two from San Bernardino County, according to the California West Nile Virus Surveillance Information Center.

All three were diagnosed with the mosquito-borne virus on July 14. This brings the human yearly total to 24; however, no fatalities have been reported in California. Health officials reported on July 9 that dead birds infected with the virus had been found for the first time in Inglewood, Rancho Palos Verdes and West Hollywood.

Although no infected birds or mosquitoes have been found in Santa Monica, health officials are advising the general public of ways to reduce their chances of acquiring the virus. People are encouraged to eliminate standing water on or around private properties — about 80 percent of all mosquito breeding occurs in residential yards.

Health officials ask residents to follow the "four Ds":

- **DAWN and DUSK** — When possible, avoid spending time outside at dawn and dusk.
- **DRESS** — Wear shoes, socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors for long periods of time, or when mosquitos are most active. Clothing should be light-colored and made of tightly woven materials to keep mosquitos away from the skin.
- **DEET** — For additional protection from mosquitoes, use an insect repellent containing DEET. When using DEET or any repellent, be sure to read and follow all instructions on the label. In most circumstances, products with 25 to 35 percent DEET provide adequate protection for conditions experienced in normal urban and rural settings.
- **DRAIN** — Reduce the amount of standing water in or near your property by draining and/or removing it. Mosquitoes lay eggs in areas with standing water.

Since 1999 — the year the West Nile Virus was first detected in the United States — it has spread to 46 states. It has been detected in 14,245 individuals and killed 566, health officials said. West Nile encephalitis — infection of the brain caused by the virus — can't be transmitted from person to person and can't be contracted from handling live or dead infected birds. Health officials say that out of the people who are infected by the virus, about 80 percent will not show any symptoms at all. Up to 20 percent will display mild symptoms, including fever, headache and body aches, typically lasting a few days, and less than 1 percent will become severely ill — neck stiffness, high fever, coma, tremors, convulsions, paralysis and, rarely, death.

For mosquito complaints, call (310) 915-7370. The Vector Control District will arrange for a technician to visit and locate the mosquito breeding source.

STATE



INS officials focus on LAX in smuggling crackdown

BY LAURA WIDES

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Sixty-four suspected illegal immigrants were arrested in 48 hours during a crackdown on human smuggling at Los Angeles International

Airport, authorities said Wednesday.

The airport is the initial focus of the Los Angeles-area effort because the region has become a hub for smuggling rings in recent months since a crackdown in Arizona that began last fall, said Asa

Hutchinson, the U.S. undersecretary for border and transportation security.

The plan involves adding more than 20 Border Patrol and immigration agents, undercover and uniformed, to the airport.

Immigration officials slowed smuggling rings at the Arizona border and in the Phoenix area, but the operations responded by shifting to Southern California, Hutchinson said from Washington, D.C.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent Kevin Jeffery said at an airport news conference that the Los Angeles crackdown will expand to focus on identifying and breaking up so-called "drop houses," where illegal immigrants are housed before being released to families or sent to other cities.

Those arrested Tuesday night and Wednesday morning at the airport were from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica. All planned to board flights out of the airport en route to other parts of the country, said Virginia Kice, a spokeswoman for Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Jeffery said authorities targeted the airport because of recent smuggling rings identified there, including 88 illegal immigrants who flew to the East Coast on a Continental Airlines flight in April.

He said it was easier to identify such groups at the airport rather than in drop houses where they can be transported under cover of darkness.

"Here, it's 2 in the afternoon, and there they are," Jeffery said.

Immigration officials met Wednesday with local community groups to detail the operation and allay concerns. More than 420 arrests last month by a Border Patrol unit based in Temecula have prompted fear among immigrants and allegations of racial profiling.

Jeffery said authorities were focused on the increasingly sophisticated smuggling operations, which can charge up to \$3,000 per person, rather than focusing solely on immigrants.

"It's ghastly the way these guys are treated," he said. "(Smugglers) do not look at them as people. To them, it's like buying firewood in winter."

Hutchinson said Homeland Security officials would also be investigating those who attempt to hire illegal immigrants. But Jeffery told The Associated Press last month that such a move would be politically difficult.

"We're dependent on the labor," Jeffery said. "I don't see American citizens going out and picking strawberries."

Hutchinson said that since the Arizona crackdown began in November, the Phoenix area has seen an 84 percent drop in crimes related to human smuggling.

Kice said the Arizona crackdown was boosted by support from residents outraged by violence among the smuggling rings. In Los Angeles, a larger and more sprawling urban area, such community organization may be more difficult.

CALIFORNIA BRIEFS

Stricter shopping cart regulations coming

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The city is targeting abandoned shopping carts.

The City Council voted unanimously Wednesday to craft strict new regulations requiring supermarkets and other stores to clear stray carts from the streets. Businesses with more than 10 shopping carts would be required to hire a cart retrieval company to pick up carts within 24 hours.

"You see them all over the place," said Councilman Greig Smith, who said he recently counted 12 carts during a 1 1/2-mile drive through his San Fernando Valley district.

Stores that could not show they had a valid retrieval contract would be fined \$1,000 a month and would be unable to renew their business licenses.

The city attorney's office has 60 days to draft an ordinance, which could be approved by the council this fall.

The ordinance would also require stores to post signs at exit doors and around parking lots warning customers that it is a misdemeanor to remove or possess a shopping cart.

Bed tax could jump 2 percent

By The Associated Press

CATHEDRAL CITY — Residents will decide in November whether to raise hotel bed taxes to build up city reserve funds and possibly promote tourism.

If voters approve the ballot measure Nov. 2, the increase in the city's transient occupancy tax would take effect in January 2005. The current 10 percent bed tax would jump to 12 percent by January 2007.

The tax increase could bring in \$230,000 a year. City Council members said the money would help ease the city's financial troubles and could be insurance against budget raids by legislators in Sacramento.

"Nobody likes talking about raising a tax but were in an economic bind," said Councilman Paul Marchand. "Every dollar that comes in and is not taken from us is a dollar we can rely on."

Gang killings skyrocketing

By The Associated Press

SAN BERNARDINO — Gang-related killings are up considerably in the county since 2001 and a task force report blames ineffective gang prevention programs for the failure to corral street thugs.

The San Bernardino County Gangs and Drugs Task Force preliminary report released Wednesday showed gang homicides were up 25 percent in 2003 over the previous year and up nearly 70 percent from 2001.

The coalition of law enforcement, education and community officials and leaders also found that despite the steady growth of gang violence since 2001, proven gang-intervention programs are almost nonexistent in San Bernardino County.

"I don't know that it's a surprise to me ... but there appears to be a problem and seems to be a disorganized approach in dealing with it," task force chairwoman Karen Bell said.

Response to gangs in the county is mostly reactive and fragmented, the report concluded.

Though law enforcement continues prosecuting criminal gang activity aggressively, there is no comprehensive plan to change an at-risk juvenile's behavior afterward or deal with a family that has multigenerational gang involvement, Bell said.

The report said the county has more than 11,000 gang members and 9,383 of those are on probation or parole. The county spends at least \$25 million annually for detention in county institutions, placements or the California Youth Authority.

Summit trail anniversary celebrated

By The Associated Press

LONE PINE — The 100th anniversary of the completion of the trail to the summit of Mount Whitney will be celebrated this weekend with a ribbon cutting for the new trailhead structure at Whitney Portal.

The Saturday morning event takes place exactly 100 years after completion of the trail to the Whitney summit. Among the guests will be George Marsh, grandson of Gustav Marsh, who led the volunteer trail effort.

The three-day centennial celebration begins Friday with events in Lone Pine, at the Lone Pine Campground and at the Whitney Portal.

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Entertainment

WHAT'S PLAYING:

ANCHORMAN
Ron Burgundy is Will Ferrell's most side-splitting character to date.
Starring: Will Ferrell, Christina Applegate

RIDING GIANTS
There's plenty here to capture the imagination of damn near anyone with the slightest sense of adventure. An entertaining and highly informative tutorial on the history of big-wave surfing.
Starring: Laird Hamilton, Greg Noll

KING ARTHUR
Nothing but another bromidic sword-fighting flick. A hocus-pocus-less downer from the Jerry Bruckheimer factory.
Starring: Keira Knightley, Clive Owen

SLEEPOVER
Bring pillows because this party is sure to induce slumber.
Starring: Alexa Vega

SPIDERMAN 2
Outclasses any of this summer's big-budget pretenders. The best comic book flick of all time.
Starring: Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst, Alfred Molina

BEFORE SUNSET
A most unusual entity in American cinema: An exemplary sequel motivated by aestheticism rather than avarice.
Starring: Julie Delpy, Ethan Hawke

THE CLEARING
A conventional kidnapping caper elevated to excellence by deftly nuanced performances by a veteran cast.
Starring: Robert Redford, Helen Mirren and Willem Dafoe.

DELOVELY
Fans of the golden age of jazz will no doubt revel in this celebration of the era's most accomplished songwriter, Cole Porter.
Starring: Ashley Judd, Kevin Kline

FAHRENHEIT 9-11
No matter which side of the political fence you choose to stand on, it's impossible not to be moved by the film's most powerful images. Well-deserving of all the attention it's garnering.
Starring: Michael Moore

THE NOTEBOOK
Rachel McAdams is the best thing going in this otherwise limp flick.
Starring: Rachel McAdams, Ryan Gosling

WHITE CHICKS
Diarrhetic house pets produce better crap than this. "White Chicks" is fit for the Pooper Scooper.
Starring: Shawn and Marlon Wayans

THE TERMINAL
It's easy to relate to the main character, who is stuck somewhere awfully boring (when was the last time anyone had fun at an airport?) for what feels like an eternity.
Starring: Tom Hanks, Catherine Zeta-Jones

DODGEBALL: A TRUE UNDERDOG STORY
It's inane, implausible and at times very funny. Anyone who shows up expecting highbrow humor deserves to get whacked in the noggin by a red rubber ball.
Starring: Vince Vaughn, Ben Stiller

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

‘Door in the Floor’ will make you laugh

Basinger and Bridges share an appreciation of music in the trailer

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Academy Award winner Kim Basinger and multiple nominee Jeff Bridges star in “The Door in The Floor,” a dramedy about love and sexuality based on John Irving’s novel, “A Widow for One Year.” The film is a reunion for the decorated duo, who previously collaborated in 1987 on Robert Benton’s “Nadine.” Basinger, whose recent films include “People I Know” and “8 Mile,” and Bridges, still riding high in the wake of the smash hit “Seabiscuit,” spoke with a group of reporters at a recent press conference.

QUESTION: What was it like working together again after all those years?

JEFF BRIDGES: It was kind of like a long weekend.

KIM BASINGER: Jeff has always been one of my dearest, most favorite actors of all-time, and it was an honor to work with him on “Nadine” and (“The Door in the Floor”). We were talking earlier about how our methods are so different, but the two of us seem to work well together.

Q: Jeff, can you tell us anything about Kim that we might not already know? Something surprising?

JB: She’s got a wild side to her, that people don’t know too much. It’s kind of a funky, down-home, very accessible, sweet side. But I don’t know if there are any big surprises. What I know about her is she’s a wonderful actress, but that’s certainly no surprise.

Q: Kim, you seduce a teenage boy in this film. Did you enjoy playing the older woman?

KB: “Harold & Maude” is my dream. I love that movie so much. So this was my “Harold & Maude” or my “Summer of ’42” all wrapped up together. It was my dance, and I loved it.

Q: What do you keep in your trailers on location?

KB: Oh, lots of water. Nuts. Great music. I have to have my music. I have to have it more than anything.

JB: (To Kim) What sort of music were you listening to on this shoot?

KB: I always pick one song, or one piece of music to get me through.

JB: And what was it on this one? Do you want to share?

KB: Um, God, I’ve finished two movies since then and have gone through two other pieces of music (laughs).

JB: Music is so important.

KB: It is so important. I’ve got to have music and antibacterial soap. And great towels. Clean white towels, not the expensive kind. I want the kind that really absorb water. You can get them at Target or K-Mart.

JB: When I’m doing a movie, I’ll go through my computer and burn CDs that I’ll play in the trailer. I don’t care much about the towels.

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Jeff Bridges, Kim Basinger and newcomer Jon Foster make great acting look easy in this wistful adaptation of the John Irving tome, “A Widow for One Year.” Marrying the whimsy of “The World

Review

According To Garp” to the profundity of “The Cider House Rules,” writer-director Tod Williams has fashioned an amply-layered study of relationships and how they form and come apart. This is a film, to borrow an old chestnut, that will make you laugh, and make you cry. Bridges, as a philandering, spiritually bleary New England author named Ted Cole is stupendous, and his co-stars follow suit. Basinger, at 51, remains one of Hollywood’s most stunning leading ladies, and her graceful portrayal of an unhappily married woman broken by the death of her teenaged sons is the stuff Oscar nominations are made of. Foster, last seen as a gas station attendant in “Terminator 3,” simply refuses to be outshined by the marquee names with whom he shares the screen. As Eddie, a writer’s assistant who moves in with the Coles and winds up in bed with the missus, he serves as the movie’s conscience. His coming-of-age scenes with Basinger, reminiscent of “Summer of ’42,” are both titillating and haunting. It’s as clear to us as it is to them that things will end badly, yet there’s something so powerful about their union that the ensuing anguish seems worth it. Mimi Rogers and six-year-old Elle Fanning (Dakota’s younger sister) are stellar in prominent supporting roles.

(Rated R for strong sexuality and graphic images, and language.)

‘I, Robot’ ahead of its time



SEE INTERVIEW NEXT PAGE

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

The robots are out to get us again, and this time it’s up to Will Smith to stop them. The pumped-up former Fresh Prince is certainly up to the task, deftly mixing humor, toughness and a good measure of heart in this eye-popping futuristic whodunit from director Alex Proyas (“The Crow”) inspired by the writings of science fiction demigod Isaac Asimov. “I, Robot,” with a screenplay co-written by Academy Award-winner Akiva Goldsman (“A Beautiful Mind”) is

Review

an unparalleled special effects marvel featuring, hands-down, the coolest film-bots ever, with an exemplary cast, compelling narrative and one whale of a fantastic finish. This is earthbound sci-fi entertainment most everybody can appreciate, and one that merits mention alongside such popular favorites as “The Terminator” and “The Matrix.”

In 2035, robots are as common as cell phones are today. The sleek technological marvels tend to their masters’ every need and are bound by the ironclad “Three Laws of Robotics”: A robot may not harm a human, must obey all orders (except those in conflict with Rule No. 1) and must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not violate the first two laws. When Dr. Alfred Lanning (James Cromwell), the scientist responsible for the robotic revolution, turns up dead in a dubious suicide, technophobic Chicago cop Del Spooner (Smith) points an accusatory finger at an anthropomorphic NS-5 (automated domestic assistant) named Sonny. Everyone from his captain on the force (Chi McBride) to a fetching shrink named Dr. Susan Calvin (Bridget Moynahan) thinks Spoon’s off the mark — robots, after all, are programmed never to harm people — but when the machines start behaving badly, it’s up to our anachronistic hero to save humankind.

(Rated PG-13 for intense stylized action and some brief partial nudity.)

ENTERTAINMENT



Will Smith is no 'I, Robot' when it comes to discussing his toilet matters in public

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

He's a big celebrity with a reputation for being a nice guy, but Will Smith talks a lot of crap. Literally. In what was certainly one of the most far-flung press conferences in recent memory, the gregarious star of such blockbusters as "Men In Black," "Bad Boys" and the new sci-fi extravaganza "I, Robot," got together with a herd of recorder-toting scribes recently and shot the, uh ... crap ... about everything from Michael Jackson and running, to the curious things he does with his pants down in rest rooms.

Q&A

QUESTION: It's been rumored that the secret to your toned physique is a diet that consists primarily of pie.

WILL SMITH: Sweet potato pie. See, the thing about carbs is, you can burn them off, but you've got to be willing to work. And if you don't eat anything but sweet-potato pie you'll be fine.

Q: You pretty much bare all in this movie. Were you nervous?

WS: There's a certain comfort level of nakedness that you can display in a movie, and this one ventured outside of my comfort zone. But I worked really hard on my body, and after I saw the reaction Brad Pitt got in "Troy" I was, like, I think I can get a little of that.

Q: Is "I, Robot" as a cautionary tale?

WS: It's somewhat cautionary, but the reason I'd say no is that (the future and technology) is almost something that can't be avoided. It's like saying, "You be careful, and don't wake up tomorrow." It's something that's inevitable. We are 100 percent committed to the idea that our logic will lead us wherever it is we need to go. We don't need to concern ourselves with cutting down the rainforests, or the problems of war, or any of that stuff because we feel confident that whatever issues arise, we'll be able to figure it out.

Q: Your character is a technophobe. What about you?

WS: I'm the worst techno-geek around. I need everything. The worst thing that ever could have happened is that I earned enough money to buy all the gadgets that I want. There's a music program called "Reason" for Macintosh, and for the first time ever I recorded, mixed and printed a CD of a complete record in my laptop in a hotel room. Technology has gone to a place where ... I tear up just thinking about it.

Q: You run a lot in your films. Ever get tired?

WS: No, no. That's what I do, I run. If you look at all my films, Will Smith runs. When people look back 50 years from now, they'll say, "Wow, that guy could run."

Q: It's been reported that "Men in Black" director Barry Sonnenfeld sends you a case of Tucks towelettes every year. What's that all about?

WS: (Laughs) Listen, I'm the type of person who likes to share. When I've experienced something that is special and incredible, I like to share it with people. And anyone who is using dry toilet paper, you're really doing yourself a disservice.

Q: So you find moist towelettes to be "special and incredible?"

WS: Think about it — if somebody put excrement on your arm, would you wipe it with dry toilet paper? No, you wouldn't. You'd use something that was medicated, that has soap, and you'd really clean it. The Tucks medicated wipes are like a shower in the middle of the day. It's like running through a field. It refreshes you.

Q: Almost makes crapping sound fun.

WS: I'm having my morning coffee, so probably in about a half-hour I'm going to go get clean, and you're still going to have stuff on you.

Q: You've cited Michael Jackson as your biggest musical influence. What is it about his career that impresses you most?

WS: The high level of perfection. My life as a musician, specifically with my videos, I've been chasing "Thriller" my entire career. I've been spending everything I can spend on music videos just to capture the feeling I had watching "Thriller."

Q: What's the secret to your success, Will?

WS: I believe in, and feel very comfortable with, the idea that the guy who works the hardest generally wins.

'Cinderella' turns into pumpkin

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

My teenaged brother professed to be a Hilary Duff fan prior to a screening of the excessively exposed multi-media doll's latest film. He's not anymore. Don't think he likes me all that much either, since I'm the one who subjected him to the intolerable tediousness that is "A Cinderella Story." Leaving the theater, the young lad issued a most damning denunciation that does not bode well for Ms. Duff's box office prospects: "Even my girlfriend would hate that movie." She's 16. Ouch!

Touted by its producers as a smart, contemporary story with comedic parallels to the classic, "A Cinderella Story" is instead a rapid collection of clichés and stereotypes that have already been exhausted in at least three other teen-girl-in-turmoil films this year. To make matters worse, the plight of poor Sam Montgomery (Duff) isn't exactly the stuff that rivers are cried from: After her totally terrific, though nuptially-challenged pop mysteriously perishes in Southern California's Northridge earthquake, Sam finds herself at the mercy of her vain and wicked stepmother (Jennifer Coolidge). She's banished to the "attic" (which looks a lot like an artist's loft in SoHo), works at a family-owned eatery, and is forced to get around in a weathered old convertible. Enter the idol-appellated Austin Ames (Chad Michael Murray), a poet trapped in a football star's body, who sees something in Sam that the others inexplicably missed: Hilary Duff.

(Rated PG for mild language and innuendo. Running time: 95 minutes)

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ENTERTAINMENT

Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night' has two more nights in town

By Daily Press staff

The Shakespeare Festival/LA's final performances will take place July 14-18 in Downtown Los Angeles' Pershing Square. The 19th annual festival celebrating the bard will end this year with a performance of "Twelfth Night."

Theatre

The final play in the summer series is a gender bending comedy of love and disguise. The play is set on a sandy beach where the shipwrecked twins land sepa-

ately, and in their journey to survive and find each other, they fall into humorous love triangles.

For reserved seats through the SFLA membership program for \$15 to \$250 or for general admission seats, call (213) 975-9891. Information also is available at www.shakespearefestivalla.org. Although general admission seating is free, it must be ticketed by phone 48 hours in advance. Seating is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Pershing Square is located at 532 S. Olive St.

International Guitar Night comes to SM

By Daily Press staff

Grammy Nominated steel guitarist, composer and producer Pierre Bensusan will perform today at McCabe's in Santa Monica.

He will feature songs from "An Evening With International Guitar Night Live," which gathered 14 nylon and steel string acoustic guitar performances from the IGN 2004 Winter Tour, featuring California natives Gore (steel string guitar) and Andrew York (nylon string), Grammy winning Brazilian

Music

legend Guinga (nylon) and French Algerian born Pierre Bensusan (steel).

International Guitar Night is more than an annual gathering of the international music community's most beloved and acclaimed guitarists, IGN is about breaking down artistic and cultural barriers and promoting a joyful spirit of global harmony.

Bensusan hooked up with IGN in 2001 representing, according to Gore, "what we're all about, trying to cross boundaries and have a varied collaborative spirit."

Each member contributes to the boundary-breaking musical vibe and chemistry of the current International Guitar Night.

"Bensusan has shown that the steel string guitar can be a forum for a high form of art," Gore said. "He's one of the first people in the history of folk to successfully blend world music impulses with the music of his cultural upbringing."

Born in Oran, French Algeria in 1957, Bensusan's

family moved to Paris when he was 4 years old. He began studies on piano at 7 years old and at 11, he taught himself guitar. Performing folk music while exploring the music of his diverse heritage, he landed his first recording contract at 17 years old and his first album, "Pres de Paris," won the Grand Prix du Disque upon his debut at the Montreux Festival in Switzerland. Working exclusively in the unusual Dadgad tuning, Bensusan has developed a bittersweet melodic approach that incorporates many musical languages. International tours and numerous innovative recordings (the most recent is 2002's Anthology) have established him, in the words of pianist George Winston, one of the truly gifted musicians of our time. His latest solo recording, "Intuite," was released in 2001 by Favored Nations.

Summing up the great appeal of the acoustic guitar based music of the current IGN lineup, Gore said, "Solo guitarists have a way of expressing the vast poetry of life with a unique signature, which you can't find on other instruments. They tap into a special dialogue of emotions. An 'Evening With International Guitar Night' conveys the essence of what I have been trying to accomplish through this unique musical setting. In a very subtle but significant way, Pierre's production helps us show the positive manifestations of that realized potential. It's a celebration of how the guitar can facilitate global harmony and contribute peace and healing to a world so in need of it."

The show starts at 8 p.m. For more information, call (310) 828-4497. The guitar shop is located at 3101 Pico Blvd. Tickets are \$20.

Veteran musicians play for veterans

By Daily Press staff

Hurricanes are coming to town today from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The '70s and '80s rhythm and blues band The Hurricanes are set to perform at the first year anniversary celebration of the Veterans Village Diner. The restaurant was created to benefit the city's homeless veterans by New Directions, Inc., a long-term drug and alcohol treatment program that provides

housing, food, clothing, counseling, job training and psychiatric services for more than 800 homeless veterans a year.

The musical celebration will allow veteran supporters to purchase lunch that includes a wide variety of items including barbecue and grilled salmon, all priced from \$5.50 to \$6.50. The lunch also will satisfy the sweet tooth with a free piece of cake and a drink.

The Veterans Village Diner is located on the VA campus at 11303 Wilshire Blvd., Bldg. 306. For more information contact Erin Leistico at (310) 914-4045 ext. 125.

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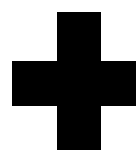
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Santa Monica Daily Press

STATE



UC officials vow to fix problems at Los Alamos lab

BY MICHELLE LOCKE

Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — University of California officials announced Thursday they are stopping all classified work at the troubled Los Alamos nuclear weapons labs and will conduct a wall-to-wall inventory of sensitive equipment.

The stand-down, which began at noon MDT, follows the loss reported last week of two items containing classified information.

The missing items, identified only as removable data storage devices such as floppy disks, are the latest in a series of embarrassments at the New Mexico lab that prompted federal officials to put the management contract up for bids for the first time in the facility's 61-year history.

UC officials haven't decided yet whether they'll compete to hold on as stewards of Los Alamos when their contract expires next year, but they said Thursday the security lapses must stop.

"These types of incidents are unacceptable and they really do have to come to an end," UC President Robert

C. Dynes said as UC's governing Board of Regents was briefed on the incident Thursday.

Lab officials are searching for the items and investigating how they went missing. Individuals directly involved have had their security access suspended and work has been shut down on the unit involved, the Weapons Physics Directorate, while the investigation continues, lab officials said.

Meanwhile, the National Nuclear Security Agency, the federal agency overseeing the labs, sent a review team to Los Alamos this week to investigate the loss.

Pete Nanos, director of the Los Alamos lab, told regents he told lab employees at a meeting Wednesday that security rules at the lab must be followed.

"It's time for all the employees at Los Alamos to take a stand and ask themselves what do I believe in," Nanos said. "The challenge before them is clear."

His meeting with lab employees was closed to reporters. But the lab's online employee newsletter reported that Nanos said told employees that there is talk in Congress of prohibiting the University of California from bidding on the

lab's contract, which expires in September 2005.

"People in Washington just don't understand how any group of people that purports to be so intelligent can be so inept," Nanos was quoted as telling employees.

The lab on July 9 announced that a search was on after two items containing classified information turned up missing. The items were discovered missing from the Weapons Physics Directorate during an inventory check.

Lab officials declined to say whether the items contained information that could jeopardize national security if in the wrong hands, but said the items could include products like compact flash disks, CDs and floppy disks.

After the material was discovered missing, Nanos ordered a stand-down for a portion of the weapons physics unit, and entry into the facility was suspended for lab workers with access to the missing items. Those workers can only enter their workspace under escort.

This is the second such incident in recent months. Similarly classified material was reported missing in May. That data had been set to be destroyed before it went missing, lab officials said at the time.

Celebrity governor limps toward budget deal in state capital he promised to change

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD AND TOM CHORNEAU

Associated Press Writers

LOS ANGELES — The Governor is human after all.

After stomping across California's political landscape with all the subtlety of one of his Hollywood action heroes, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has found himself looking short of invincible in the unruly statehouse he once vowed to bring to heel.

Passage of his \$103 billion budget is more than two weeks overdue, despite his vow to produce an on-time spending plan — which would have been only the third time in 10 years. Schwarzenegger's predictions of a new era of cooperation and bipartisanship have deteriorated into flinty talk of a Legislature with "a certain arrogance" that "didn't see it our way."

The budget that bears his imprint, which increases spending and takes on hefty new debt, has been compared to those that contributed to the downfall of his predecessor, Democrat Gray Davis. And newly emboldened Democrats, and even members of his own party, have found common ground to grumble.

The budget "is dangerously out of balance and relies on borrowing that is out of control," said state Sen. Tom McClintock of Northridge, a conservative Republican who was among the candidates who challenged Schwarzenegger in last year's recall election. "The basic budget problems have not been corrected."

Schwarzenegger, who was elected after promising to bring order to the state's balance sheet, "was overly optimistic that a charming personality ... and sheer force of will could get the Legislature to do its job," said Garry South, a Democratic consultant who was one of Davis' closest advisers.

"He's been larger than life until now. This has exposed him as a mere mortal," South said.

There has been speculation for weeks that a deal was within reach, but issues including a scrap over funding for local governments has forestalled a settlement.

Schwarzenegger advisers dispute that the former actor, who has enjoyed lofty poll numbers in the Democratic-leaning state, suffered any damage in his first budget scrum.

"The whole budget process, by definition, is a bunch of people in the weeds," said Don Sipple, a media consultant who has crafted Schwarzenegger TV ads. "He remains in high standing with the people of California and he's up there doing what they elected him do."

Up until the budget stalemate, Schwarzenegger looked virtually unstoppable. He bested a huge field of candidates to win the recall election, despite being shadowed by allegations of womanizing. Once in office, he cajoled Democrats to support \$15 billion in new borrowing to refinance a multibillion dollar debt in inherited and to help him close next year's budget gap estimated at \$17 billion. Then he pushed through reforms of the state's costly workers' compensation system.

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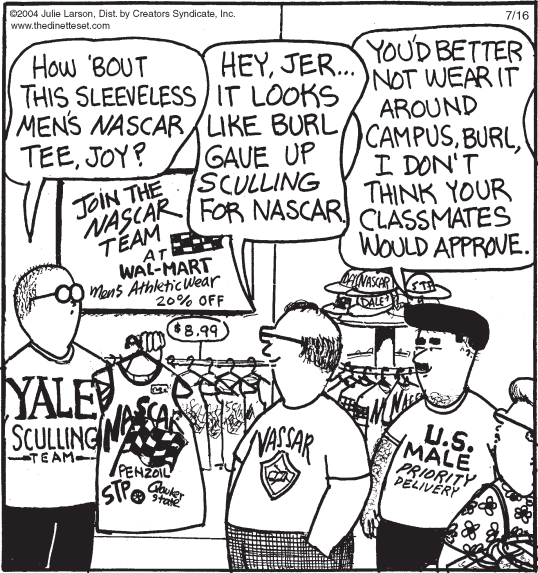
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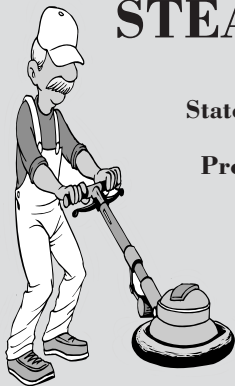
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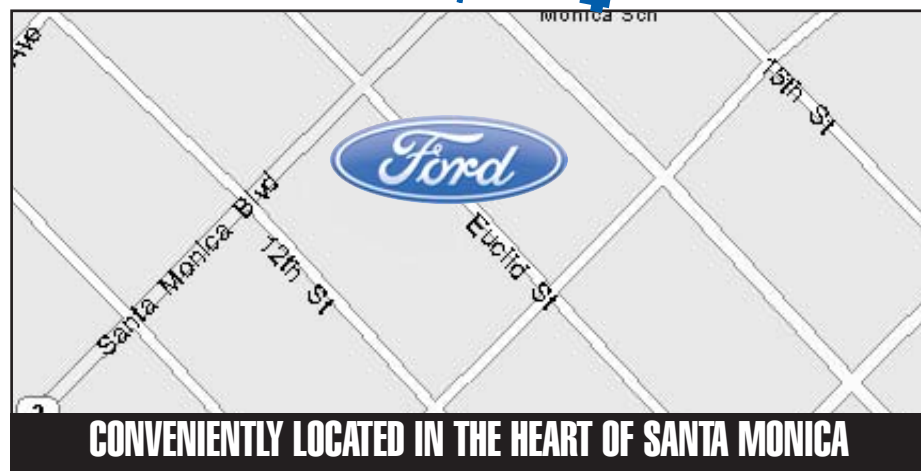
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