

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

Council debates ban on 'public feedings'

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

For the first time in more than a decade, the city may be embarking on a major policy change on how it deals with its homeless population.

In a narrow 4-2 vote, the Santa Monica City Council Tuesday instructed its legal and administrative staffs to investigate ways to moderate the number and frequency of "public feedings" for the city's homeless population by outside charity groups.

Officials believe many of the city's homeless are lured to Santa Monica by the dozens of weekly public feedings held in public parks by church groups who come from surrounding communities. The excess homeless population drawn to the city then burdens the city's social services.

However, Mayor Mike Feinstein and Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown voted against directing city staff members in any direction.

Feinstein said it would be unfair to make such a decision without having a copy of the city's annual social services review, which is scheduled to be discussed at the Sept. 24 council meeting.

"We are here tonight without the benefits of a staff report," Feinstein said. "We are giving a lot of direction tonight without having a complete picture of what's out there."

Councilman Ken Genser disagreed and said the council was only giving direction and not taking any final action.

"I think we are guiding staff at what needs to be looked at and what needs to be addressed," he said. "I think we are trying to find solutions to very complex problems."

"We are here tonight without the benefits of a staff report. We are giving a lot of direction tonight without having a complete picture of what's out there."

— MIKE FEINSTEIN
Santa Monica Mayor

The city failed at making a similar change in a 1992 Public Safety Ordinance that was the result of a year-long task force that studied homeless issues. The ordinance called for directing all public feedings in one location and to make sure they take place indoors.

However, the public feedings aspect of the ordinance was successfully challenged in court by civil rights and homeless activists. When the city lost it was

See FEEDINGS, page 6

Crop circle found at CA State Fresno University

By The Associated Press

FRESNO — Four crop circles have appeared in a cornfield at California State University, Fresno, and officials do not believe aliens are to blame.

Fresno State officials were alerted Monday after a television crew spotted the circles while flying over the 48-acre field. The largest circle, about 125-feet in diameter, is connected to three smaller circles, creating a T-like formation similar to the crop circles featured in Mel Gibson's new movie "Signs."

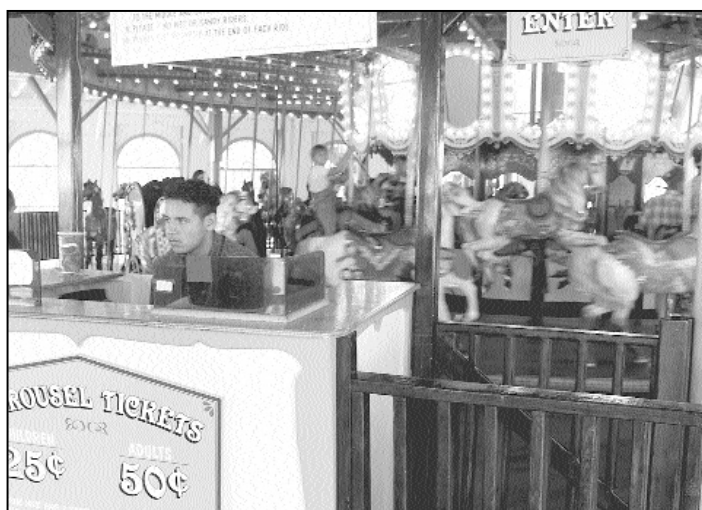
University officials are calling the circles a hoax.

"If aliens shop at J.C. Penney's for

shoes, then we got them," said Carl Pherson, university director of Agricultural Operations. "We don't believe that aliens did it."

The field received little damage because the university's sweet corn crop had been harvested, Pherson said. However, "random acts like this could actually harm students' education. It can be very disruptive to a research project," he said.

About \$3.5 million in revenue for the university's farm lab is raised in the fields, he said. Anyone found without authorization on state property could face trespassing charges, said Fresno State Police Chief Lynn Button.



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

Luciano Aragon (left) sells tickets to children and their parents who ride the Santa Monica Pier Carousel, where ticket prices will be increased by 100 percent.

Carousel fares increase

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Taking a ride on the Santa Monica Pier Carousel is now going to cost twice as much money.

But it's still the least expensive ride on the pier — and one of the least expensive carousel rides in the country.

The city council Tuesday approved a 100 percent fare increase for the carousel, raising the cost of a child's ticket from 25 cents to 50 cents and the adult price from 50 cents to a \$1. Children under five-years-old now ride free with a ticketed adult. The increase will take place in the near future.

Officials say raising the fare will generate \$26,000 more in revenue, which is needed

to help the amusement ride pay its own way.

"It's a move to close the gap between the carousel's operations and its maintenance with the revenue generated from ticket sales and rental fees," said Elana Buegoff, an economic analyst with the city.

"Most of the money will come from rentals, though," she added. "The carousel has been a very popular location for children's birthday parties and as a film location."

In her research on ticket prices, Buegoff called carousel operators throughout California and the United States to find out what they charged.

She found the Griffith Park Carousel costs \$1, Burbank Media Center Carousel

See CAROUSEL, page 6

Delbert McClinton headlines free concert at pier tonight

By Daily Press staff

One of the highlights of the free summer music concert happens tonight at the Santa Monica Pier.

Longtime pier favorite and powerhouse blues singer Teresa James is the opening act of the Twilight Concert Series, held each Thursday at the pier.

The main show is Grammy award winning Delbert McClinton.

Music critics and Nashville scenester

Michael McCall says, "Delbert's raspy, ferocious voice carries in it the history of American popular music."

McClinton won a Grammy for his duet with Bonnie Raitt from her "Luck of the Draw" album and has numerous songwriting credits on albums by Wynona Judd, Vince Gill and scores of others.

The music, performed on the beach next to the pier, begins at 7:30 p.m. and ends at 9:30 p.m.

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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ Aggravation could be the byproduct of pushing to have certain matters fall in your court. Unexpected developments occur, reminding you that you are not in control. Continue to take the back seat for now. Soon you will be in the driver's position. Tonight: Detach. Escape into a preferred pastime.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ You will pull your hair out if you continue to insist on having things as you like. Observe what others are doing. Knowing that you don't have control, allow others to run with the ball. Agreement, much less a clear path of action, could be close to impossible. Tonight: Fulfill a loved one's request

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★ You might feel as if you are literally in the trenches as you attempt to get some key work done. Not everyone sees situations with the same perspective as you. Allow others time. Discussions could be touchy right now. Tonight: Respond to another's overture.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Pull out that creative touch, especially when dealing with demanding loved ones. Not everything needs to be expensive, quite the contrary. Visualize more of what you want. An associate throws a boomerang in your path. Jump! Tonight: Off to the gym.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★ Your temper and ire could easily be aroused by present events. Holding yourself back might be close to impossible. You will be better off if you play your cards close to your chest. Surprises run through the day. Make the best of a difficult situation. Tonight: Breathe a sigh of relief, as the emotional winds change.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ No matter what you do or say, you engender conflict, even when trying to pacify others. A domestic situation might be particularly volatile. Understand that you aren't changing anybody, and you'll head in the right direction. Tonight: Mosey on home.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Recognize when you hit a dead end. As much as you explore your options left and right, you won't find an out or a solution right now. You easily could be hurt by what another suggests or says. Don't react, because by tomorrow you'll see matters differently. Tonight: Swap war stories with your friends.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Make the best out of a difficult situation. Use your magnetic personality to take some of the pressure off. A boss means what he or she says. His or her demand needs to be fulfilled. Confusion surrounds a meeting and finances. Tonight: Pay your bills.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★ Do nothing. Minimize your plans if possible, as a disruptive influence runs through your life. A boss shares ideas that you feel very uncomfortable with. Remain mum, as new information will be forthcoming. Trust your resources. Tonight: Do something just for yourself!

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Keep your long-term goals in mind when making key decisions. Others might not choose to do something that is very important, thus frustrating you. Do not swallow your anger, but express your emotions in a meaningful manner. Tonight: Reflect while taking a walk.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★ What might be important easily could backfire. A friendship could be in conflict with a financial matter. You might not understand everything clearly right now, because someone might be holding back. Eye the long term, and you'll stay calm. Tonight: Find your pals.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Your ability to visualize works for you. Communicating your ideas right now could become a problem. A boss or higher-up could be difficult at best until later. Conflicts arise between those you love. The solution lies within. Tonight: Work late.

QUOTE of the DAY

"Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever."

— Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821)

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LOCAL



Fishin' the day away



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press
Fred McLendon and Jacklyn Mids pass Wednesday afternoon trying to catch the ever-elusive fish off the Santa Monica Pier.

NEWS BRIEFS

Council delays red light camera vote

By Daily Press staff

A proposed red light camera system that would cost taxpayers \$4.2 million has been delayed.

The Santa Monica City Council voted 4-2 Tuesday to delay making a decision on whether to install a system that would take photos of motorists who run red lights, and then send a picture of the infraction and a \$250 citation in the mail to them.

Except for Councilman Robert Holbrook, council members were concerned about recent reports that undermine the effectiveness of red light camera systems, and they were concerned the cameras may trample an individual's civil liberties and violate residents' right to due process.

"I think we need more information," said Councilman Richard Bloom. "I'm not completely satisfied with the information we have been given tonight."

Holbrook, who voted against delaying the program, feels comfortable with the system as it is proposed.

"My impression is that many people are running red lights all the time ... and if they don't get caught, they act like it never happened," he said. "By not addressing this problem now, we are delaying some meaningful action ... that could act as a deterrent to some of these people."

The police department was asked to research red light cameras and consider alternatives to the camera system that would still lead to a decrease in intersection collisions and report back to the city council.

City approves 'habitat' development

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica will become one of the first cities on the westside of Los Angeles County to host a Habitat for Humanity program.

The Santa Monica City Council on Tuesday unanimously approved allowing a one-time exemption from ordinances that forbid Santa Monica from using redevelopment funds to build any type of low-income housing that is not strictly rental.

Habitat for Humanity is proposing between six and eight units on an 8,000-square-foot vacant parcel on 19th Street between Pico Boulevard and Delaware Avenue.

For each condominium Habitat builds, city officials said Santa Monica will chip in between \$100,000-\$130,000 per unit.

Habitat for Humanity works in partnership with local communities to make affordable home ownership more accessible. Through volunteer labor and tax-deductible donations of money and materials, the organization builds and rehabilitates affordable homes with the help of future homeowners. The homes are sold to families at no profit and financed with affordable, no-interest loans. Future homeowners are required to contribute 500 hours of their own labor into the building of their home.

The project is an experiment for habitat for humanity, which typically builds free-standing single-family homes, and Santa Monica, which by law does not allow itself to build low-income housing for residents to purchase.

surf report

Information compiled by Jesse Haley

Good waves Tuesday and Wednesday.

Today, fading southwest swell and holding northwest wind swell make for smaller, less consistent surf. Still, we should see plenty of sets in the waist-high range at south facing breaks.

Patient surfers will wait it out to catch chest-high sets at County Line and Zuma. Venice Breakwater was getting big early in the week, so we could expect to see some sets there as well.

Friday will see current swell fade further. Waves decrease in size and sets may prove inconsistent.

Today's Tides:		
High-	3:59 a.m.	3.33'
Low-	9:11 a.m.	2.03'
High-	3:56 p.m.	5.28'
Low-	11:38 p.m.	0.75'

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

The Q-Line

The headlines continue to indicate the city is in a major economic slump. Budget shortfalls of up to \$8 million annually, 5,000 jobs cut from City Hall and millions worth of capital improvements put on hold, prove that Santa Monica is suffering — not just in government, but also in business.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know:

"Is the City of Santa Monica doing

everything it can to promote and support businesses here? What suggestions can you offer the powers that be?"

Call (310) 285-8106 with your response before Thursday at 5 p.m. We'll print them in Friday's paper. Please limit your comments to a minute or less; it might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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OPINION

LETTERS

Give peace a chance

Editor:

Why do the voices of war drown out those for peace today?

If a Gulf of Tonkin incident is created or occurs by circumstance, which led to Lyndon Johnson's quagmire with the U.S. war on Vietnam, there will be no time for considering any options. Bush will act swiftly and attack with or without the required Congressional approval, as we are now accustomed to.

Two U.S. wars on Iraq — one by Bush senior and the other by Clinton have clearly led only to one thing: more war.

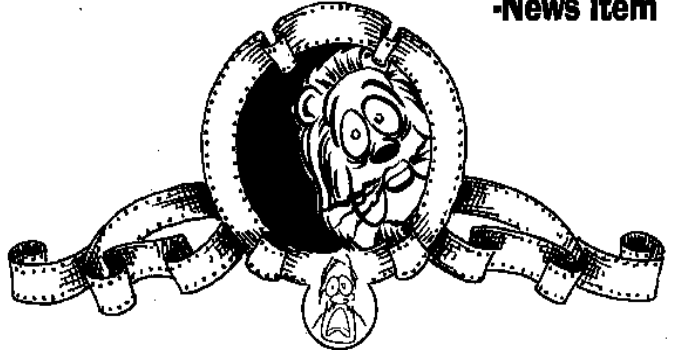
Robert E. Hunter of the Santa Monica-based Rand Corporation says of the apparently imminent U.S. war on Iraq, "... we must summon knowledge and assume due humility. We must finally start widespread, sustained, open, serious and uncensored debate on Iraq, free of cant and emotion on all sides; we must be willing to accept permanent commitment to responsibility in the region — and do all this before the attack to Baghdad."

Give peace a chance. Every Friday afternoon the LA Coalition for World Peace has called for, at 5-7 p.m., Angelinos to assemble at the Westwood federal building in non-violent expression for peace, urging the U.S. to refrain from more war. Park and join the growing world opinion for peace after you drive by to honk your support.

Andrew Kay Liberman
Venice

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The naked truth about the week that was in Santa Monica



TITTINGER'S TAKE

By Michael J. Tittinger

Staring out my proverbial window to the universe this weekend I came to a realization or two. You could say this strategically located window often reveals the naked truth about the issues of our time. Here are some of the highlights from the week that was in our fair-haired city.

■ The Santa Monica Police Department is recommending city council approve a \$4.2 million plan that would provide red light cameras for six to eight of our busiest intersections. Coming to a mailbox near you: More little blue envelopes demanding checks made "payable to the City of Santa Monica." This time, the hefty cost will be \$250, two points on your driving record (ultimately leading to higher insurance costs) and a date with a traffic school instructor. All this for a ticket you neither knew you received nor had the chance to contest at the supposed scene of the crime.

City officials are quick to dismiss any similarities to the paranoia felt by Big Brother's watchful eyes in the classic tome "1984." Of course, they doth protest too much. There is a reason for that gut-

feeling paranoia on the part of many residents, probably because the little cameras snapping pictures of us driving by approaches the type of Orwellian supervision and legislation that doesn't quite sit right in our collective mindsets.

SMPD Capt. Jacqueline Seabrooks contends the Red Light Camera Enforcement Program taking aim at "beat-the-light" motorists is not intended to be a moneymaking proposition for the city. Meanwhile, city officials gush that the system will result in a \$57,300 profit over the next five years in new speeding-ticket revenue. This sounds like a non-money-making proposition in the same vein as the parking Nazis blitzing their way through our streets are a non-money-making proposition. We all know how that little regime doesn't provide the city with any extra income. Maybe we could all just start riding personal Segways around town like the S.S. Parking Police are proposing to do and eliminate the fear and paranoia altogether.

■ Overheard while jogging past the seemingly doomed Aero Theater on Montana Avenue with its marquee sign pleading: "Save the Aero, see (insert movie of the week)." "Are we saving the Aero or the owner's ass?"

Not a bad point considering all the rumored parties (i.e. — Robert Redford) said to be interested in refurbishing the

storied theater in the event current management is forced to sell. The Aero, one of California's remaining one-feature community theaters, might do better in the long run if it falls in the short run.

When I finally landed a swell one-bedroom apartment in Santa Monica after a stressful two weeks of inspecting converted garages and rooms with appliances located in the closet seeking more than \$1,000 a month, I was so relieved I plunked down my money without even taking time to appreciate what would prove my new digs' greatest asset — the window in the shower.

Yes, the modest 22" by 16" opening above my soapdish and adjacent to my old-school, Austrian handcrafted back scrubber has become my window to the world. There is something to be said for the insights one gains standing buck naked with a loofah to his derriere watching society go about its business.

The issues of the day are, shall we say, stripped of their pre-packaged spins and appear as they truly are — self-evident.

But I digress. (Hmmm, now where did I put the exfoliating apricot scrub?)

■ In the timing is everything department, the Big Blue Bus (which still looks funny in print no matter how you use it) named a new, full-time director late last week. Stephanie Negriff takes the wheel at a decidedly difficult time in the transit sys-

tem's history, with a spat of recent accidents adorning this paper and other publications' front pages. The Big Blue Bus was sorely in need of some positive PR and promoting Negriff to its top post, despite the fact that she has served as interim director for close to a year, may have achieved just that. At least there is a name and a face to go with the company's quest to redefine its service and public image.

■ In the well-meaning but kind of sad department, a trio of in-line skaters completed a 3,500-mile trek across the United States, culminating at the Santa Monica Pier, to promote awareness and participation for "Libertystand." The three hope Americans will bond together to form a continuous line from Boston to Los Angeles — the route they skated — on Sept. 11. The group's efforts were well meaning and somewhat heart-warming, yet seemingly misguided. I wonder if anyone ever told them about the "Hands Across America" experiment in years past. I hope they can get their old jobs back in New Hampshire.

Now, if you will all excuse me, I need to rinse and repeat.

(Mike Tittinger is a freelance writer living in Santa Monica. He can be reached at miketittinger@aol.com.)

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



Senate sends bill for 60-day notices to renters to Davis

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — A bill requiring landlords to give 60-days notice when they want to evict long-term month-to-month tenants is on its way to Gov. Gray Davis after clearing a final legislative hurdle Wednesday.

The Senate voted 24-11 to send the bill to the governor's desk after agreeing to changes made in the Assembly earlier this year.

The bill, SB1403 by Sen. Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, applies only to month-

to-month tenants who have rented from the landlord for at least one year. Tenants with less than one year can be asked to leave within 30 days.

Most Senate Republicans opposed the measure, calling it another burden on landlords that will further constrict supply of rental housing. But Democrats argued it provides a more equal balance between landlords and renters in tight markets.

The legislation also requires that landlords give 24 hours notice to enter their rentals for inspections, except during emergencies.

Lawyer provided face for skin cancer TV commercial

By The Associated Press

SANTA MONICA — Entertainment attorney Donald E. Biederman, who put a face on the dangers of sun exposure by appearing on TV commercials showing a dark cavity where his cancerous nose had been, died. He was 67.

Biederman fought a six-year battle with skin cancer, during which doctors were forced to remove his nose and a cheek. He died Aug. 8 at Saint John's Health Center, his family said Tuesday.

He was founding director of the National Entertainment and Media Law Institute at Southwestern University School of Law in Los Angeles and he was general counsel of the giant Warner/Chappell Music publishing company.

Biederman also wrote "Law and Business of the Entertainment Industries," used in more than 80 law schools and considered the finest case book on entertainment law.

But it was his skin cancer battle and decision to appear in 1999 in an American Academy of Dermatology campaign about the dangers of sun exposure that propelled him into the public spotlight.

Biederman, who had a malignant form of squamous cell cancer and had undergone 58 surgeries in 5 1/2 years, had his nose and cheek removed in 1996. He wore a prosthetic nose that hid his missing cheek.

The commercial featured home movie clips showing Biederman's son as a toddler playing on a beach and his father

reclining shirtless on a lounge chair. Those images were juxtaposed with close-ups of Biederman as he talked about his changed attitude toward sun exposure.

"All my friends used to say, 'The first time you go to the beach, get a good burn. You'll tan faster.' A tan was considered healthy," Biederman said in the commercial. "None of us knew the potential ramifications."

The commercial ended with Biederman turning sideways and removing the prosthetic device, which exposed the dark cavity where his nose had been.

ABC-TV rejected the spot as too graphic to broadcast nationally and NBC rejected it because the American Academy of Dermatology did not meet its guidelines for pro bono public service advertising. It wasn't submitted to CBS because its guidelines were similar to NBC's.

But the commercial was sent to local broadcast stations around the country and to cable networks. Los Angeles, New York and Atlanta were among the local markets that aired the spot.

Donna Stein, spokeswoman for the American Academy of Dermatology, said Biederman's public service ad "reached millions of people and we felt he was very courageous in sharing his important story."

Biederman is survived by his wife of 39 years, Marna; son Jeff, a Nashville attorney; daughter Melissa, an assistant attorney general in Des Moines, Iowa; and a grandson. Funeral arrangements weren't disclosed.

MGM unit launching in Africa

By The Associated Press

SANTA MONICA — Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. is partnering with a pay-TV firm to launch two channels in Africa.

The deal aims to give sub-Saharan subscribers access to MGM's vast library of some 4,000 films in English, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The company's broadcast unit, MGM Networks, will provide the content using the digital satellite television network of South Africa-based Multichoice Africa.

Planned broadcasts include "Annie Hall," "Bull Durham," "Last Tango in Paris" and "The Pink Panther."

In addition, MGM Networks Latin America will provide a Portuguese lan-

guage channel to subscribers in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau.

If the channels receive regulatory approval, they could launch this month, the company said in a new release Monday.

"Africa represents a real milestone in our network expansion initiatives," said Bruce Tuchman, executive vice president of MGM Networks. "With this deal, MGM now has equity interests in channels that reach every inhabited continent across the globe," he said.

MGM has movie channels in more than 90 countries, but the company still finds itself struggling to deliver consistently profitable films and unable to pursue its larger goal of transforming itself into a major media company.

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LOCAL □ STATE

City may add gift shop to carousel on the pier

CAROUSEL, from page 1

costs \$1.50, a ride on the Carousel at Pier 39 in San Francisco costs \$2 and the Santa Cruz Beach Carousel goes for \$3.00 a ride.

A ticket on the famous Coney Island Carousel costs \$2.50.

**"The carousel has been
 a very popular
 location for children's
 birthday parties and as
 a film location."**

— ELANA BUEGOFF
 Santa Monica economic analyst

Tourists from around the country said they were amazed at the low ticket prices on Santa Monica's carousel on Wednesday.

"Just go down the pier a bit and you'll realize what a bargain this is," said Lenny Jonas, who is vacationing with his family from Denver, as he gestured toward Pacific Park.

Steve Dunn from Key West, Fla., agreed. "I was expecting to pay \$5," he said. "You can't get anything like this for 50 cents back home or anywhere else for that matter."

Others said they thought it was fair for the city council to raise the ticket price, as

long as the revenues went toward maintaining the ornate amusement ride.

"Something like this probably needs a lot of maintenance and people who enjoy using it should probably pay for that instead (of taxpayers)," said Lyria Mead, of Hollywood. "It seems worth increasing fares to keep this in good shape."

Santa Monica purchased the carousel in 1977 from a private owner and maintained all fares at 25 cents. Then in 1986, the city raised the adult fare to 50 cents, while keeping the child ticket price at 25 cents. The current fare increase marks the first adjustment in almost two decades.

The amusement ride itself lasts two minutes and reaches a top speed of 10 miles per hour, carousel employees said. The ride's music comes from a three-disc CD-player, which shuffles through various carousel tunes.

The carousel remains to be one of the pier's most popular attractions. According to city officials, more than 125,000 people rode the carousel last year, and that number is lower than past years because the carousel's building had been closed for a month due to repairs.

The attraction has become so popular, the city is currently working on adding a carousel gift shop in the near future.

"We've had so many people request carousel items," Buegoff said. "So there is definitely a demand for carousel memorabilia."

Activists say city should provide better restrooms

FEEDINGS, from page 1

forced to strike the provisions of the ordinance pertaining to outside public feedings from the overall ordinance, which still stands and directs how the city responds to homeless issues.

Many of the advocates who prevailed in the past against the city's attempts to curb public feedings vowed more challenges to any future ordinances.

The move to investigate curbing public feedings comes shortly on the heels of an uprising of downtown business owners and landlords who feel visitors do not return to shops in Santa Monica because of the hassles of dealing with panhandlers and vagrants.

Business owners also say they are tired of cleaning up after homeless who often sleep in their doorways and go to the bathroom on their properties.

Activists said homeless people are forced to sleep on private property because there's not enough room in the city's shelters and because city laws prevent them from sleeping in public parks.

They said if local business owners want homeless residents not to urinate and defecate on their properties, the city should provide adequate public restrooms. Four of the six public restrooms downtown have been closed because of safety concerns.

Asian group against secession

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The new anti-secession group Asians for a United L.A. said San Fernando Valley and Hollywood independence would likely worsen the lives of Asian-Americans, especially recent immigrants and the working poor.

During a news conference with Mayor James K. Hahn, city Public Works Commissioner Ron Low said 1,400 of the 6,200 Asian-Americans now working for the city of Los Angeles lack seniority to protect their jobs if secession is successful and job cuts are ordered.

"Secession is not a good thing for the Asian-Pacific American community," Low said. "No one can guarantee the new cities

would adopt programs that provide outreach to minority and women businesses so they can compete at the public trough."

Low and more than 40 other Asian-American community leaders appeared with Hahn at the Korean Education Complex in Koreatown.

"The reality is that if the Valley and Hollywood break off, the Asian-Pacific American community will be left behind in a city that would have diminished clout in Sacramento and Washington," Hahn said.

Secession leader Richard Close, chairman of Valley VOTE, said the group gives the false impression that the Asian-American community is united against San Fernando Valley cityhood.

STATE



CALIFORNIA BRIEFS

Taxpayers cover football tickets

By The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — City taxpayers paid \$1.6 million to buy tickets that went unsold for the Chargers' opening exhibition game last weekend under a controversial deal the city made five years ago with the NFL team.

Critics say the amount appears to be the highest ever paid under the arrangement, which requires the city to ensure the team revenue equal to the sale of 60,000 general admission seats per game through 2007.

For Saturday's game against the Cardinals, the city bought 30,306 unsold tickets. About 8,700 of them were distributed to city schools and community groups.

The city bought more tickets to a 2000 exhibition game, 30,708, but prices were lower then and the city's tab for that game came to \$1.4 million.

The average price of tickets purchased by the city for Saturday's game against the Arizona Cardinals was \$55.60. The Cardinals beat San Diego, 24-17.

Bruce Henderson, a longtime critic of the guarantee and a member of a new city task force on Chargers issues, has asked the team to suspend the ticket-guarantee deal and reimburse the city for past purchases.

The Chargers repeatedly have said they have no intention of altering the contract.

School district not responsible for boy's death

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Jurors said the Palmdale School District wasn't to blame for the death of a 13-year-old boy during a Juniper Intermediate School fistfight in 1999.

The Superior Court jury in suburban Van Nuys deliberated less than a day before reaching the verdict Tuesday in the negligence suit filed by the boy's mother.

Mary Corson sued the district, alleging that lack of adult supervision contributed to the death of her son Stephan from injuries suffered in the fight.

In an unusual split decision, jurors found that the school district had been negligent in not better supervising the students as they prepared to leave campus for the day. But the panel determined the negligence didn't contribute to the teen's death.

No money was awarded to his mother.

Corson attorney Melanie E. Lomax said she would ask Superior Court Judge Richard A. Adler for a new trial.

Witnesses testified that Stephan Corson started the fight with a 14-year-old after the other boy allegedly threw paper at him in class. Lomax said their teacher should have noticed the tension between the boys and accompanied them outside at the end of school, when the fight occurred.

Corson hit his chin on the pavement, causing a spinal cord injury, Lomax said. He died 40 minutes later.

Sex customers could lose cars

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Impounding cars of those soliciting hookers could be the newest tactic in battling prostitution.

Councilman Tom LaBonge said Tuesday he will ask the City Council to approve a proposal that would allow the city to impound vehicles from prostitutes' customers for 30 days for a first arrest, 60 days for a second arrest and permanently seize them on a third arrest.

It would not require a conviction of a crime since the LaBonge proposal calls for civil action against the owner by saying the car was a public nuisance. The proposal is modeled on laws in Oakland and Stockton.

"If this was an oil spill, we'd have the federal government, the EPA, everyone all over us for environmental pollution," LaBonge said. "Well, this is just as bad. This is community pollution of the worst sort and we are going to take back our streets."

School board ups reward for arsonist

By The Associated Press

UPLAND — The school board boosted the reward offer for information leading to the identification and conviction of an arsonist who caused at least \$600,000 damage to Valencia Elementary School.

The Aug. 3 fire gutted two classrooms, two restrooms and a smaller special services classroom. Four other classrooms have smoke and water damage.

The reward offer is now \$16,000.

The Upland Unified School District Board of Education unanimously agreed Tuesday to post \$10,000 from its general budget. WeTIP, a Rancho Cucamonga-based national crime tip agency, gave \$1,000, and the district's insurance carrier provided \$5,000.

"Somebody knows about this," Superintendent Pete Watson said. "Somebody has talked about this. It is just a matter of getting someone to say something."

Classes start Sept. 3 and district officials have worked quickly to provide portable classrooms and bathrooms for the displaced students, Watson said. The gutted classrooms will be demolished before the school year begins.

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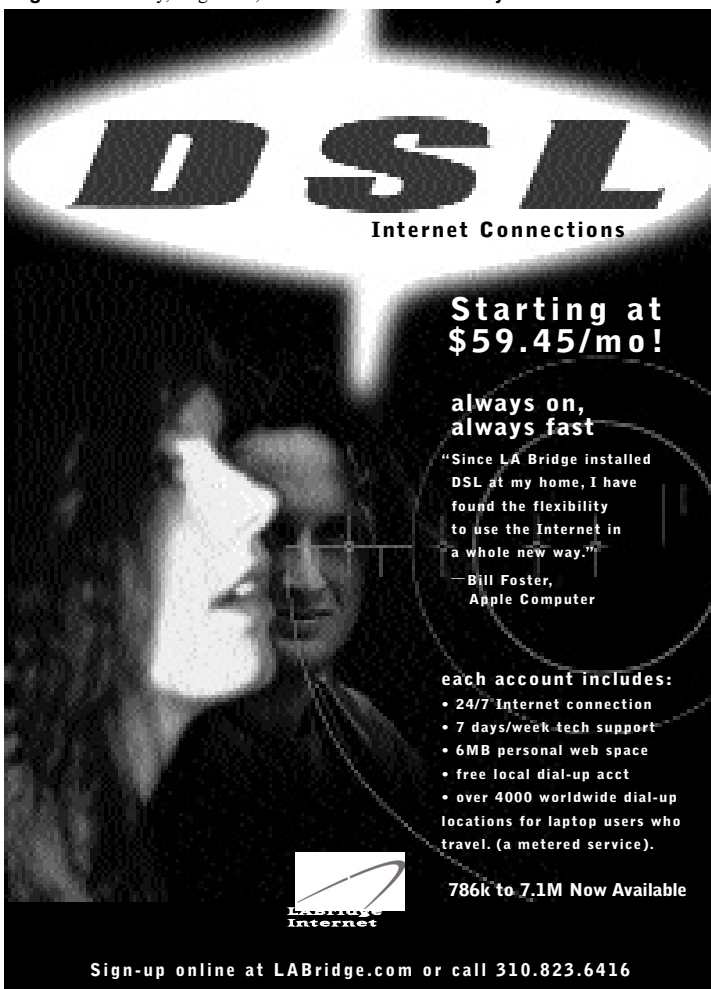
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STATE

County moves forward on working with Merrill Lynch

By The Associated Press

SANTA ANA — Orange County officials have taken the first tentative steps toward doing business with investment giant Merrill Lynch & Co. — eight years after the county ousted the firm of contributing to its bankruptcy.

The county's board of supervisors Tuesday unanimously approved a policy that requires any dealings with Merrill Lynch to be made public and to be approved in advance by supervisors.

"When I think of the bankruptcy, I think of Merrill Lynch," supervisor Jim Silva said. "I really don't want anything to do with Merrill Lynch."

Orange County declared bankruptcy in December 1994 after then treasurer Robert L. Citron invested county funds in interest rate-sensitive securities. That strategy turned sour when interest rates fell, resulting in the county losing \$1.7 billion.

Officials blamed Merrill Lynch, accusing it of failing to disclose risks associated with such investments. Merrill Lynch officials said they had warned county officials.

The county sued the investment firm, which agreed to pay more than \$450 million to settle the suit and end a criminal investigation. The county recovered more than \$860 million from a series of law-

suits against brokerage firms.

Since then, the county has followed an unofficial policy of not using the investment firm, a decision that the current county treasurer says has cost the county as much as \$4 million over the past 4 years by reducing competition for the county's business.

"I'm not here to defend Merrill Lynch," county treasurer John Moorlach told the supervisors Tuesday. "To me, it's like, OK, the war is over, let's move on."

Moorlach said through a spokesman that Merrill Lynch will never have the same kind of influence over county finances that it did in 1994.

"All John wants is the ability to shop at that store, not having Merrill Lynch serve as a personal shopper, which they did under Citron," spokesman Bret Barbre said.

Although the new policy won unanimous approval, some supervisors remain wary of using Merrill Lynch, citing a recent decision by the firm to pay \$100 million to settle charges by the New York attorney general that its analysts gave investors bad advice.

"He's advocating let bygones be bygones and let's move forward, even though they caused the most significant financial disaster in the nation here in Orange County," supervisor Todd Spitzer said.

Frog contest called inhumane

By The Associated Press

ANGELS CAMP — An animal rights group has declared the famed Calaveras County Jumping Frog Jubilee and similar contests around the country cruel and inhumane, saying frogs should not be taken from their native habitat for human entertainment.

Members of the Animal Protection Institute, an 80,000-member animal rights group based in Sacramento, are encouraging other outraged frog lovers to write letters to the directors of the annual event in California's gold country that features the acrobatics of frogs memorialized in Mark Twain's classic 1865 short story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County."

Animal rights advocate Larisa Bryski says she remembers jumping frogs herself when she made a bid for Miss Calaveras

County in 1988. Now, she'd prefer that humans stop jostling the amphibians in the hot summer sun altogether, saying constant handling of the frog's permeable skin makes it easy for disease and infection to take hold.

Longtime Calaveras County Fair manager Buck King said he's not swayed. He said the frogs are treated with respect and noted all are returned to their shady homes in ponds and streams.

"We are very conscious of how frogs are treated. If any frogs are mistreated, we deal with the person," King said. "In fact I've had to evict people from the fairgrounds permanently."

The county fair and frog jubilee are held the third week of May each year at the fairgrounds in Angels Camp. Between 2,500 and 3,000 frogs participate each year, King said.

Former beau of Anna Nicole Smith denies stalking charges

BY EUGENE TONG
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — An ex-boyfriend of former Playboy Playmate Anna Nicole Smith pleaded innocent Wednesday to charges that he called her repeatedly and assaulted her neighbor after she broke up with him.

Mark Hatten, 34, appeared in Los Angeles County Superior Court in Van Nuys on charges of battery, assault with a deadly weapon, terrorist threats and stalking.

Attorney Peter Knecht said outside court that his client was living in Arizona at the time and was in Los Angeles visiting relatives when he went to see Smith.

"He came to her house with flowers

and a friend," Knecht said.

Smith, 34, was not in court for the arraignment.

She became a reality TV star this month when "The Anna Nicole Show," which documents her daily life, premiered on E! Entertainment Television.

During a preliminary hearing last month, Smith testified that her brief relationship with Hatten ended in June 2000 after he approached her with a knife in her home. She never reported the incident to police.

Smith claimed Hatten called repeatedly and earlier this year said he was coming over with a gun. Neighbor Rene Navarro went over to Smith's house to persuade Hatten to leave but was allegedly punched and kicked by the defendant.

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Officials open up design process for WTC site

"I think in principle it's a good idea to open up and

— **ALEXANDER GARVIN**
Vice president of planning

The development corporation said it would choose up to five design teams to prepare new plans. Three propos-

The Port Authority, which was not represented at Wednesday's news conference, is also considering other options that would allow for less office space at the site.

Man wrongly convicted of murder because of misdeeds; will sue for \$300M

Garo told the Boston Herald he drew the \$300 million

The Deegan murder has already spurred \$375 million in lawsuits filed on behalf of the other men, two of whom died in prison, who were wrongly convicted.

Suit blaming entertainment companies in school shooting spree not reinstated

The lawsuit claimed the entertainment companies

Richard H.C. Clay, representing defendant Id Software, said: "The First Amendment protects freedom of expression, and that is precisely what we have here."



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briefs

WESTSIDE/CENTRAL

MTA Localizes Operations

To improve service, MTA is decentralizing management of its Metro Bus service into two local entities, each with its own general manager. San Francisco Valley, San Gabriel Valley, South Bay, Central/Ventura, and Freeway Lines sectors will be in place by the end of the year.

An 'EZpass' For All Buses

A new regional "EZpass" will go on sale this fall, good on Metro Bus and Metro Rail along with most other vehicles in the county. It simplifies travel and costs just \$54 monthly (\$79 for seniors/disabled/Medicare).

More Service For Less Money

LA will spend \$104 million less this year but deliver more Metro Bus and Rail service to its customers—all without increasing the fare.

Freeway Wbes? Here's Metro

The MTA-funded Metro Freeway Service Patrol program of assisting stranded vehicles on Southland freeways has helped 2.6 million motorists since it started in 1991. The service keeps traffic moving by providing an average of 60,000 assists per month.

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What's red and white, makes fewer stops and is 25% faster? Answer: Metro Rapid bus service, which will serve the Metro Red Line in Vermont Avenue station. The fall to all 28 new Metro Rapid lines are planned countryside for the next several years.

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NATIONAL

Texas child abducted



Donna McWilliam/Associated Press
Television reporter Nelly Carreno, left, pats Salvador Chavez on the shoulder as he and his wife, Margarita, walk into the Abilene Police station Wednesday. Their baby was abducted from the family minivan Tuesday as Margarita returned a shopping cart in the store parking lot.

Williams campaign fined for election violations

BY DERRILL HOLLY
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — City voting officials ordered Mayor Anthony A. Williams' re-election campaign on Wednesday to pay \$277,700 in fines for submitting thousands of fraudulent signatures on election petitions.

The violations ranged "from massive forgeries to excessive fraud," said Stephen G. Callas, one of three members of the District of Columbia Board of Elections and Ethics. The panel voted unanimously to levy the fine.

Last month, Williams was barred from the Sept. 10 Democratic primary ballot for failing to collect the required 2,000 valid signatures. About 10 percent of the fine will be suspended if Williams agrees to have his volunteers and campaign workers trained to avoid future violations of city election laws.

"The mayor has suffered public embarrassment," said Benjamin F. Wilson, chair-

man of the panel that could have hit the mayor with more than \$1 million in fines.

"There were 5,465 obvious forgeries," Wilson said. Names appearing on the petitions included actor Kelsey Grammar, singer Billy Joel and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan. The names of petition circulators were also forged.

According to the district's registrar of voters, the petitions included thousands of signatures she characterized as "kitchen table forgeries." Those petitions have now been turned over to the U.S. Attorney's office, which is pursuing a criminal investigation of about a half dozen petition circulators.

"I believe this fine is an excessive fine under the circumstances," said Williams, noting that he has already been removed from the ballot. The mayor said he has no plans to appeal the ruling to the D.C. Superior Court, and instead plans to move on with the write-in campaign that now provides his only chance of winning the Democratic nomination.

United Airlines' parent says bankruptcy possible by fall

BY DAVE CARPENTER
AP Business Writer

CHICAGO — United Airlines' struggling parent company said Wednesday it may file for bankruptcy this fall unless it can somehow cut costs.

"Unless we lower our costs dramatically, filing for bankruptcy protection will be the only way we can ensure the company's future and the continued operation of our airline," Jack Creighton, United's chairman and CEO, said in a statement.

Three airlines have already filed for bankruptcy protection this year, citing the sluggish economy, competition from low-cost carriers and a downturn in travel following the Sept. 11 attacks.

United, the nation's No. 2 airline, would be the biggest to seek protection from cred-

itors. The company lost a record \$2.1 billion last year and another \$851 million during the first six months of 2002.

UAL Corp. said it was setting a 30-day limit to try to reach agreements with employee groups on cost-cutting. The pilots' union agreed to a 10 percent pay cut this summer, but other groups have balked.

United is awaiting a decision on its application for a \$1.8 billion government-backed loan that it says is necessary for it to compete in a difficult market. Creighton told employees this week that the Air Transportation Stabilization Board appears poised to reject the application without more evidence of cost-cutting.

The airline said it is changing its business plan to build a stronger, more cost-competitive company, but gave no details.

Those payments total \$875 million.

INTERNATIONAL



Prague battles rising river as flood death toll rises to 98

BY KAREL JANICEK
Associated Press Writer

PRAGUE, Czech Republic — Firefighters and volunteers fought back river waters swamping the National Theater and other landmarks Wednesday as unprecedented flooding that has killed at least 98 people across Europe threatened this medieval city's historic Old Town.

The raging Vltava River hit its highest point yet in the flooding, just hours after police evacuated residents from the capital's quaint cobblestone center. Officials said the evening hours would put hours of work and thousands of sandbags to the test.

Flood waters gradually began receding late Wednesday, raising spirits among officials who worked around the clock to secure the city. No more torrential rains — just scattered showers at most — were expected in Prague over the next day or so; forecasts over the rest of central Europe varied.

An 81-year-old man drowned after refusing to evacuate his home in Pisek, 60 miles south of Prague, raising the Czech Republic's death toll to 10. Germany, also the scene of devastating flooding, reported 10 deaths, with six other people missing.

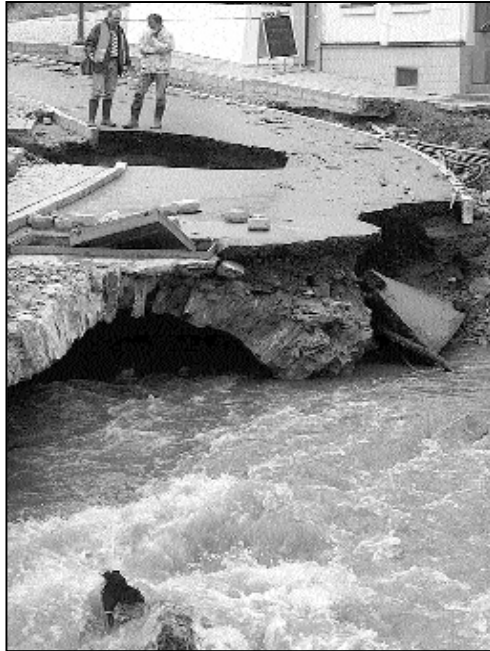
In Germany, raging waters cut off towns in Saxony state and flooded parts of Dresden, including the famed Semper-Oper opera house and the Zwinger palace, home to a renowned collection of Renaissance paintings. More than 20,000 people fled their homes.

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, visiting Grimma near the swollen Mulde river, called the flooding the worst he had seen.

"This is not a task for one state or for Saxony — this is a task for Germany," Schroeder said of the rebuilding effort.

Slovakia declared a state of emergency as the Danube River rose dangerously high in the capital, Bratislava. There were widespread power outages and people used boats to get to work.

The extreme rains in Europe are not a result of El Nino and should not be blamed on global warming, said Christophe Cassou, a climate expert at the National



Christof Stache/Associated Press
Two men stand at the edge of a street destroyed by floodwaters in the city of Glashuette, near Dresden, eastern Germany, Wednesday. After more than a week of heavy rainfall, flooding has hit many parts of Europe, killing at least 94 people.

Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo. Although scientists believe global warming will create more episodes of extreme weather, no single episode can confidently be attributed to it, he said Wednesday.

Instead, a strong high pressure area off Spain and a strong low pressure area between Iceland and Norway are setting the stage for more storms and heavy rainfall in central and eastern Europe, Cassou said.

Devastating flooding has not been limited to Europe this summer.

In Asia, flood waters poured into the capital of a remote northeastern Indian state and mudslides swept through a Nepalese village as the death toll from two months of seasonal monsoon rains rose to nearly 900 in India, Nepal and Bangladesh, officials said Wednesday.

China also has experienced summer storms and flooding that have killed more than 800 people.

Most of Europe's casualties since flooding began Aug. 2 have been in Russia, where the death toll rose by one on Wednesday to 59 — mostly Russian tourists vacationing on the Black Sea who were swept away by water last week.

That toll could rise since 30 cars and buses remain on the sea floor, unchecked yet by authorities. New storm warnings were issued.

In Austria, where at least seven people have died, the swollen Danube River flooded a popular Vienna island used for recreation and picnics, submerging small restaurants and stalls.

But the mighty river receded in some stricken villages and was rising at a slower rate in others, authorities said Wednesday. Austria's national weather service, meanwhile, said the torrential rains that unleashed the catastrophic flooding were over.

An Austrian government aid package will channel \$640 million in assistance to flooded areas.

In the neighboring Czech Republic, the Vltava hit its highest level yet — 25 1/2 feet — by midafternoon. Although forecasters were hopeful the worst downpours had passed, heavy wind gusts threatened to drive flood waters farther into downtown Prague.

Tourists and other onlookers swarmed to the river's edge, watching the menacing, brown waters roil just a few feet under the arcs of the capital's ornate bridges. Two sea lions that escaped from Prague's zoo swam in the river.

Vivendi Universal reports big first-half loss, will sell assets

BY JOHN LEICESTER
Associated Press Writer

PARIS — Vivendi Universal, the teetering French media conglomerate, reported a massive loss of \$12 billion for its first half and said it will sell \$10 billion in assets as it seeks to pare debt, including the U.S. publisher Houghton Mifflin. Adding insult to injury, a ratings agency downgraded the company's debt to junk.

Investors punished Vivendi's shares Wednesday on the Paris exchange, sending them down 25 percent to the lowest level since at least June 1994.

The sale of Houghton Mifflin, which the company only bought last year for \$1.7 billion, appeared to mark a first step toward breaking up the entertainment and media empire built up by Vivendi's former chairman, Jean-Marie Messier, in a whirlwind of costly acquisitions.

In all, Vivendi said it hopes to dispose of at least \$9.8 billion worth of assets — half of them within nine months, the rest within two years.

"We are facing a liquidity problem," said chairman Jean-Rene Fourtou, who took over July 3 after Messier's ouster. Fourtou said he would "try to avoid any fire sale, but we have negotiations that could be concluded very soon if the price was lowered."

Despite the announced sell-off, analysts remained concerned about Vivendi's debts of \$18.6 billion. If water and waste utilities unit Vivendi Environnement is included, company debts stood at \$34.3 billion, Vivendi said.

Debt-rating agency Standard & Poor's slashed Vivendi's long-term corporate credit rating to junk status, after the com-

pany reported net losses Wednesday of \$12 billion for the first six months of 2002.

Joseph D'Virgilio, telecommunications analyst for French banking giant Societe Generale, called the downgrade "a very serious development" that could "inhibit the company's ability to successfully sort out its liquidity crisis and avoid bankruptcy."

S&P warned of a further downgrade if Vivendi does not get new funding within a month.

Fourtou said Vivendi has "reached a framework for agreement" with seven banks for a new \$2.94 billion credit facility and expects it to be signed by the end

of August. The credit line will include \$980 million banks agreed to last month that has still not been used, Fourtou said.

"This will allow Vivendi to buy the time necessary to implement the best conditions for the necessary sale of businesses," he said.

Vivendi's first-half losses were widened by a \$10.8 billion charge to reflect a write-down in the value of its assets and another financial provision of \$3.3 billion.

Analysts were expecting better. They had anticipated writedowns of between \$4.9 billion and \$9.8 billion to reflect the drop in value of media assets and holdings.

Vivendi has come under increasing pressure from its board and shareholders to sell assets to reduce debts and boost its shares, which were sharply down this year even before Wednesday's beating.

It was not immediately clear whether Houghton Mifflin, which supplies textbooks and published J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" in the United States, was among assets earmarked for sale within nine months. But Fourtou said "we have numerous potential buyers."

Vivendi directors approved the sale at a board meeting Tuesday, the company said in a statement.

Line for Vatican Museums longest in decades

BY FRANCES D'EMILIO
Associated Press Writer

VATICAN CITY — It takes the patience of a saint and a good measure of faith these days to stand sweating in some of the longest lines in decades in hopes of seeing the Sistine Chapel and other masterpieces in the Vatican Museums.

In what many Romans describe as the longest waits in memory, lines of tourists have been snaking down the boulevard that follows the Vatican City's walls and all the way back to St. Peter's Square.

On Tuesday, the queue even stretched across St. Peter's Square, making the line of waiting humanity outside the museum entrance a good mile long.

"The line took two hours and 36 minutes — I timed it," said Jeff Marxen, an 18-year-old student from San Diego who braved the wait on Monday. "Our tour guide said it was the longest she'd ever seen."

Cab drivers, commuters and tourist guides agree they've never seen anything like this before, but the why of the megaqueues is a mystery.

Is it all due to the reputation of the Museums as one of the world's finest troves of art treasures? Anti-terrorist security? Or

disgruntled guards holding up the works?

The museums' director, Francesco Buranelli, in an interview on Vatican Radio on Tuesday, implied that scrupulous security checks with metal detectors and X-ray machines to screen bags and knapsacks were to blame.

Italian authorities have said that the Vatican, for its tourist-drawing power and religious significance, could be a target for terrorists in the post-Sept. 11 world.

"All the tourists are grateful for the controls," Buranelli said.

The Italian news agency ANSA said the long wait apparently was at least in part to blame on a protest by unhappy guards. British tour guide Julia Charity said security guards were apparently disgruntled after being searched when a visitor's wallet went missing — although museum officials said they hadn't heard about such an incident.

Charity said the security checks were especially slow the last few days, as guards let only one person at a time put bags through the machine and pick them up after the check.

"Yesterday, I told my group there was absolutely no way we'd get into the museum" before closing, Charity said Tuesday.

Some tourists, feet aching and heads baking in the sun, took shortcuts.



SPORTS

Unful-Philled: One last chance for Mickelson this year

BY DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

CHASKA, Minn. — Phil Mickelson can explain how to make the ball spin sideways when it lands on the green. He knows the depth chart of nearly every NFL team. He can fly a plane. He can tell you about black holes and constellations.

He has an answer for everything — except the question on everyone's mind.

Why haven't you won a major?

"I know how to fix it, and I'm trying to resolve that," Mickelson said.

There is only one solution.

His next chance to win — and last chance this year — starts Thursday in the PGA Championship at Hazeltine National Golf Club, a course Mickelson knows better than most of his contemporaries.

Mickelson has been so good for so long that he qualified for the 1991 U.S. Open at Hazeltine as a 20-year-old amateur and tied for 55th.

"When I played here as an amateur, no one expected me to play well," he said.

They do now.

Mickelson is a special talent. He has 21 victories on the PGA Tour, which puts him in elite company — just not the kind he prefers. Only Harry "Lighthorse" Cooper (31) and MacDonald Smith (24) have won more times on tour without claiming a major championship.

And while Mickelson has never held the 54-hole lead in a major, he has finished second or third in five of the last 14 majors, dating to his runner-up finish to Payne Stewart at the 1999 U.S. Open.

The burden of being the best player never to have won a major is getting about as big as the Mall of America.

"I truly feel from the bottom of my heart that he's going to win several majors," good friend Tom Lehman said. "Once he wins, he's going to win a bunch. You can write that down and mark my words on it."

That won't make the task any easier at Hazeltine.

Tiger Woods is the favorite this week and every week, the result of winning seven of the last 12 majors. Other top con-

tenders in the strongest field ever at a major championship include British Open champion Ernie Els and defending PGA champion David Toms.

All of them have what Mickelson doesn't — concrete proof they have the game and the mettle to win a major.

"Guys that have won multiple tour events but never won a major, they still have that doubt," Toms said. "I know Phil Mickelson probably has that doubt in the back of his mind. Everybody keeps asking about the majors. That probably weighs on him coming down the stretch."

Woods is more likely to remember his eight major victories than his 81 in the British Open should he find himself in contention yet again. If it looks like majors come easily to Woods, there's a reason besides the fact that he's very good.

"Because I won one early in my career (the '97 Masters by 12 strokes), it certainly relaxed me in knowing that I could handle it," Woods said. "That took a big burden off of me. Winning that one, I think, set me up for the rest. And then from there, once I put myself in contention, I could always say, 'I've done it before.'"

Mickelson says he doesn't feel any more pressure at the last major of the year than he did in April at the Masters, when he had a whole slate of majors in front of him and every reason to believe this would be the year he broke through.

"The feeling at Augusta is that you're trying to get your game sharp and hopefully contend," Mickelson said. "You know you have something to fall back on. It's almost like playing best ball. You know that if you don't make birdie, your partner still may. You may win one of the last couple."

"The PGA Championship, you don't have that feeling," he said. "The thought process going in is to give every ounce of energy to performing the best you can this week. It's like the last mile in a marathon. You really try to push yourself hard to get all you can out of your game for this one particular week."

The penalty for hitting the wall? Eight months to ponder what went wrong, and to answer more questions about why he



Doug Mills/Associated Press

Tiger Woods blasts a shot from a bunker on the fifth hole at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., on Wednesday during his final practice round for the PGA Championship, which begins Thursday.

hasn't won the big one.

"There a long time between majors now," he said.

It's not like he has blown a 2-foot putt (Scott Hoch at the Masters) or a six-stroke lead (Greg Norman at the Masters) or made a dumb decision (Jean Van de Velde).

Mickelson has been within two strokes of the lead going into the final round seven times in the majors. Seven times, someone else has played better.

Only once has he had a lead late in the final round. That was at Pinehurst, where he

bogeyed the 16th to fall into a tie, missed a short birdie putt on No. 17 to lose the lead and then saw Stewart make a memorable par putt on the 18th to beat him.

First he has to get to the top on the back nine Sunday. Then he has to finish it off. And only then will the questions stop.

For his part, Mickelson isn't about to panic. Even if he doesn't win a major this year, he says his game is progressing and the fact he's consistently in the hunt at the majors indicates that he's headed in the right direction.

Questions surface about Little League team from NY

BY DAN LEWERENZ

Associated Press Writer

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. — A team from New York captures the imagination of its community, then conquers the opposition on its way to the Little League World Series. But allegations swirl about ineligible players.

Here we go again.

With the Little League World Series set to open Friday, Little League is investigating allegations the Harlem team that won the Mid-Atlantic Regional did it with players from outside the league's boundaries.

Newsday reported Wednesday that as many as three players, including star pitcher Alibay Barkley, live outside the Harlem Little League district, according to neighbors.

Last summer's Little League World Series in South Williamsport, Pa., was dogged by scandal when Bronx, N.Y., pitcher Danny Almonte was discovered to be too old to play. Almonte's team was forced to forfeit its third-place finish after officials determined he was 14 instead of 12.

Last week, Little League received two anonymous messages claiming three of Harlem's players lived outside the team boundaries and that several players were too old. To be eligible for this year's tournament, players could not turn 13 before Aug. 1.

Those charges were investigated and disproved, Little League officials said.

But Newsday reported that three Harlem players appear to live outside the district — Barkley and shortstop-pitcher Jeremy "Jeter" Lopez in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx, and third baseman-pitcher

Andrew Diaz in Washington Heights.

Lance Van Aukun, the spokesman for Little League and a member of the committee that investigates eligibility questions, said Wednesday the new allegations involve different players, and that Little League was investigating. If the team did use ineligible players, they may have to forfeit their last game.

Barkley was the starting pitcher and hit a two-run homer Tuesday night when Harlem beat Lehigh Little League of Bethlehem, Pa., 5-4 in seven innings to reach the World Series.

"We have gone to the league and asked them for documentation to show that the players named are eligible," Van Aukun said. "It wouldn't do us any good to speculate beyond that, because we don't know what they'll come back to us with."

One of the Harlem coaches, Bill McGee, declined to discuss the allegations Wednesday.

"We're just getting settled in here. If you have any questions about baseball, we'll be happy to talk about it," he said. "But if you have any questions about anything else, you should ask the league officials."

In Hunts Point, one teenager said Barkley was definitely a local resident.

"He lives here," said Omar Camacho, 13, of the Bronx, who said Barkley was a regular at local pickup games. "I've known him for a while. He told me he lives with his mother and two sisters." Another teenager also said Lopez lived in Hunts Point.

But simply living outside the Harlem league's boundaries might not make them ineligible.

Shaquille O'Neal might have surgery on arthritic big toe

BY JOHN NADEL

AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles Lakers star Shaquille O'Neal reportedly could have surgery on his arthritic big toe in the next two weeks and might miss several games of the upcoming season.

Citing sources close to O'Neal, the Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday that Dr. Robert Mohr, chief of podiatric surgery at the UCLA Medical Center, is expected to perform the procedure.

Healing typically requires three months, the newspaper said, adding that O'Neal has been told he should be able to walk the day of the procedure, could be running in fewer than six weeks and playing by early or mid-November.

The three-time defending champion Lakers open training camp Oct. 1 and begin the regular season Oct. 29 against San Antonio.

Lakers spokesman Mike Uhlenkamp said general manager Mitch Kupchak has been in touch with O'Neal about his right toe.

"The organization will make a com-

ment when it's more appropriate, which would be when Shaq does decide to have surgery, if that's the route he chooses," Uhlenkamp said.

Michael Parris, O'Neal's co-agent and manager, refused comment, and a man answering Mohr's office phone in Santa Monica said he was on vacation.

O'Neal was on the injured list twice last season because of pain from his toe, missing 15 games. He averaged 27.2 points and 10.7 rebounds — below his career averages — and wasn't the same player he'd been previously on defense.

However, the 30-year-old O'Neal stepped up his game when it counted the most, dominating the inside in the last two games of the Western Conference finals, when the Lakers beat Sacramento, and the NBA Finals, when they swept New Jersey.

When O'Neal went on the injured list the first time, team physician Dr. Steve Lombardo said surgery was a last option.

O'Neal said he didn't want to go through another season like last one and would consider his options over the summer.

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 - Good opponent
 - Fancy
 - Monopoly need
 - Spoke
 - Request-ed
 - Juan's wife
 - Copter part
 - Beat at chess
 - Take the wrong way?
 - Actor Wallace
 - Guy org.
 - Actor Julian
 - Patience worker
 - Broadway baker
 - Blackjack need
 - One with a voice-over
 - Diplomato
 - Have a banquet
 - Charishes
 - Cuzco native
 - Show up for work
 - Lila
 - home cheese
- DOWN**
- Castor's mother
 - Flare —
 - Strike activity
 - Jackpot part
 - Horse-shoe
 - Blunders
 - Quased up
 - Compuant
 - Summer on the Seine
 - Blushing
 - June honoree
 - Traffic cap's activity
 - Andy's boy
 - Bring up
 - Western sight
 - King of comedy
 - "King of Comedy" star
 - Christian in film
 - Saloon
 - Maine park
 - Take a breather
 - As soon as
 - Paruse
 - Unica number
 - Lyric poem
 - Cut off

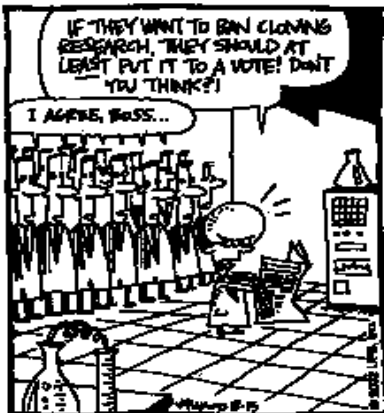


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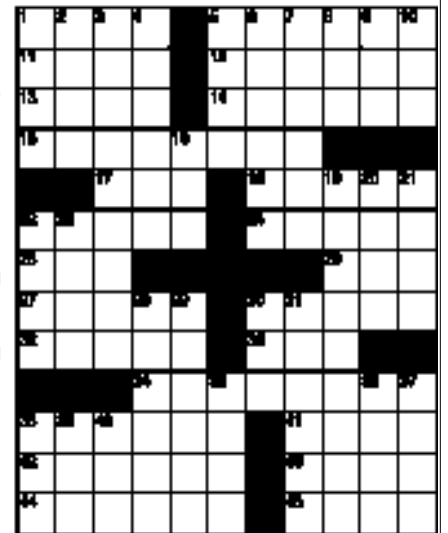
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Gang cries it has a constitutional right to carry guns

Eleven alleged members of San Francisco's Big Block street gang claimed in a court filing in June that they have a constitutional right to carry guns, pointing to a declaration last year by U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft that changed the law. Previously, the Justice Department had thought that Second Amendment rights applied only to state militias, but Ashcroft declared in May 2001 that henceforth, the Second Amendment would be regarded as giving fundamental gun-toting rights to individuals. Nonetheless, in July 2002, the federal judge trying the Big Block gang declined to dismiss the gun charges.

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MESSAGE ENJOY a really great, amazing and wonderful full body massage. Swedish, deep-tissue and Tantra. (Platonic only!) No time limit. Will come to you. 24/7 Cute, slim, fit, petite mature chocolate. 14 years experience. Dolly's pager (310)236-9627.

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STRONG & soothing deep-tissue by fit therapist. Platonic. Intro: \$35/90min. Paul: (310)741-1901.

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CLASSIFIEDS



Massage

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Massage

THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE. Swedish, Accupressure, Deep-tissue, Sports Massage, Reflexology. For apt call Tracy at (310)435-0657.

Announcements

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

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Services

HOUSE CLEANING - Available 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Windows, laundry, general house cleaning. References available. Responsible. Reasonable prices. Call Lalo (310) 313-0848.

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Services

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Business Opps

ESTABLISHED FILM Production company seeks financial partner for features and rentals. (310)822-7891

Yard Sales

GIANT! ST. Clement Church Sat 8/17 9am to 3pm; Sun 8/18 9am to 2:30pm. 3102 3rd at Marine, Santa Monica.

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Calendar

Thursday, August 15, 2002

movies

Loews Broadway Cinema
1441 Third St. at Broadway
Full Frontal (R) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00. *Stuart Little 2* (PG) 12:00, 2:10, 4:30, 6:40.
Blood Work (R) 11:40, 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 9:00, 10:20. *Martin Lawrence Live: Runteldat* (R) 11:00, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40.

Mann Criterion
1313 Third St.
Minority Report (PG-13) 11:40, 3:15, 7:10, 10:30. *Austin Powers in Goldmember* (PG-13) 11:00, 1:30, 4:15, 5:00, 7:15, 7:45, 9:45, 10:20. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (PG) 11:10, 2:10, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50. *The Country Bears* (G) 12:15, 2:30 XXX (PG-13) 12:00, 12:30, 3:30, 4:00, 7:00, 7:30, 10:15, 10:45.

AMC Theatre SM 7
1310 3rd Street
Men in Black II (PG-13) 4:20, 10:15. *The Bourne Identity* (PG-13) 12:55, 7:25. *Signs* (PG-13) 12:10, 1:00, 2:45, 4:00, 5:20, 7:00, 7:55, 9:45, 10:30. *The Master of Disguise* (PG) 12:20, 2:25, 4:45, 7:20, 9:30. *Reign of Fire* (PG-13) 4:10, 10:05. *Road to Perdition* (R) 12:45, 4:15, 7:05, 9:50. *K-11: The Widowmaker* (PG-13) 12:30, 7:15. *Spy Kids 2: The Island of Lost Dreams* (PG) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00.

Landmark Nu-Wilshire
1314 Wilshire Blvd.
Sex and Lucia (NR) 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45. *Lovely and Amazing* (R) 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30.

Laemmle Monica
1332 2nd St.
Tadpole (PG-13) 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:55. *Read My Lips* (NR) 1:30, 4:15, 9:45. *The Good Girl* (R) 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:55. *Buddha Heads* 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:15.

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
Who is Cletis Tout? (R) 5:30, 7:30, 9:30

Today

Community

The Westside Walkers, 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 Westside Walkers meet Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., at Westside Pavilion, Pico Blvd. Between Overland Ave. and Westwood Blvd. In West LA. For more information about the program, call (800)516-5323.

Senior Suppers - Discounted meals for people AGE 55 or older are served daily, from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., in the cafeteria at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, 1250 16th Street in Santa Monica. \$3.69 Info only: (310)319-4837.

Classes

Dharma at the Clubhouse. A weekly book and multi-media study group, no fee. Applying studies of Buddhism-Dharma into our daily lives. Every Thursday night at the Clubhouse at Douglas Park, 25th & Wilshire. 7:30 - 9pm. Dan (310) 451-4368 www.santamonicaclubhouse.org

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.

Theater / Arts

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.santamonica-playhouse.com.

Music / Entertainment

Komdey Krunch. UnUrban Coffeehouse. 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, (310)315-0056.

Comedy Underground - SPLAT! Stand up comedy. \$5.00, 8:30 p.m. 320 Wilshire Blvd. (310)451-1800.

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.

Friday

Community

Senior Suppers - Discounted meals for people AGE 55 or older are served daily, from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., in the cafeteria at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, 1250 16th Street in Santa Monica. \$3.69 Info only: (310)319-4837.

Classes / Lectures

McKinley Elementary School and **WISE America Reads** present a free workshop for **Volunteer Reading Tutors**. Dr. Christi Hovest, McKinley School's teacher of the year, will demonstrate techniques for tutoring students in reading. (Materials to be provided.) 1-3 p.m. Call (310) 394-9871, ext 452. Spaces limited. Reservations required.

Pulse - Through kinesthesia, sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell, pathways clear for your deeper embodiment and wider expression. Each session is supported by live music with Christo Pellani of Soundformation Music and/or by recorded music. Altars devoted to the senses, spirit and play enrich the environment and amplify your awareness. Third Friday of the month, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Continuum Studio, 1629 18th Street #7, (North of Olympic in Santa Monica) Cost \$12.00. For more information please call Kara Masters (310)455-2743.

Music/ Entertainment

NEON VENUS performs at the Summer Concert Series beginning at 12 Noon. The Summer Concert Series continues at Center Court with **NEON VENUS** and **STACI TWIGG** on the 1300 block between Santa Monica Boulevard and Arizona Avenue.

Comedy Underground - All improv night. Addle Essence \$5.00, 8:00 p.m. Off The Wall \$5.00, 9:00 p.m. Unusual Suspects \$5.00, 10:00 p.m. 320 Wilshire Blvd. (310)451-1800.

Open Mic Music. UnUrban Coffeehouse. 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, (310)315-0056.

Theatre/Arts

Beauty and the Beast - Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through September 15 6:00 p.m. Santa Monica Playhouse, 1211 4th Street.

The Aero Theatre will be screening the film classic Casablanca, next Wednesday August 21st at 6:00 pm and 9:00 pm as part of a fundraising event that will include food and wine by Wolfgang Puck and a silent auction. Tickets are \$20 and may be purchased in advance at the box office during regular business hours. For more info visit the theatre on the web at www.aertheatre.com

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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



Bank gives out extra money

By The Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Road construction is such a pain at one of the city's busiest intersections that a bank decided to give a special surprise to some of its customers.

American National Bank rigged its automatic teller machine at 90th and Dodge streets to dole out extra cash once in a while.

So many people were moaning and groaning because of the traffic and construction that the bank thought it would try to help improve the mood, bank spokeswoman Alisia Fava said.

As a special "road warrior" promotion, the bank put some \$50 bills in the ATM's \$20 stack and some \$20 bills in the \$10 stack.

Fava said ATM use has nearly doubled in the week since the promotion began.

No date has been set for ending the promotion but the intersection work is scheduled for completion this year.

Bus benches too hot

By The Associated Press

MIAMI — City officials are in the hot seat — literally. Mayor Manny Diaz and others are working to fix

new black steel benches at city bus stops, which have proven to be too hot to sit on in the summer sun.

"I've sat on a bench myself and it's uncomfortably warm even with a pair of pants on," Assistant City Manager Frank Rollason said Monday.

About 150 of the 1,500 new benches have already been installed in the city, replacing older ones made of cement and wood.

Rollason said city planners discussed the potential problem in meetings and that he did not know why it was initially ignored. No more benches will be installed until the problem is resolved, he said.

Sarmiento Advertising Group was awarded the contract in January to produce the new seats. Sarmiento CEO Alberto Waisman has said his company will pay to refit benches.

The solution could be a plastic coating that would insulate the benches, Rollason and Waisman said.

Rollason said he wanted to test a bench with the coating before approving the plan.

A winning surprise

By The Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — A Fort Lauderdale woman claimed a \$10 million Florida Lotto prize, more than two months after the winning ticket was tossed into a sewing drawer.

Diane Charboneau, 55, found several Lotto tickets in the drawer and checked the winning numbers for those dates on the Internet. She soon realized four numbers matched her ticket from the May 29 drawing.

"I thought that was nice," said Charboneau, a computer programmer. "When I checked all six numbers, I had them all. All I could say was, 'Oh my God, I have

all of them.'"

Charboneau will receive 30 annual installments of roughly \$364,000. The winning numbers for the May 29 jackpot were 1-6-20-24-37-50.

Charboneau and her companion, Robert Phillips, said they were considering retirement. Charboneau said she planned to donate some of her winnings to charity.

"I think that's something you should always do," she said.

Youths take over governor's mansion

By The Associated Press

AMITY, Ark. — A triplewide mobile home that served as the state governor's mansion for 16 months has been given to a ranch for troubled youth.

Gov. Mike Huckabee and his family lived in the mobile home while the mansion was under renovation. The \$110,000 home, which was donated to the mansion by the state Manufactured Home Association, was turned over Monday to the Arkansas Sheriffs' Youth Ranch group.

Faulkner County Sheriff Marty Montgomery said the donation will help the organization reach families with at-risk children.

"The addition of this home brings us even closer to our goal of establishing a campus within a 90-minute drive from the population centers of south Arkansas," Montgomery said.

The ranches are licensed childcare facilities that offer homes and education for troubled youth.

The Huckabees drew media attention when they moved into the mobile home in August 2000. The Huckabees quietly moved back into the mansion last year.

DID YOU KNOW?: The youngest pope was 11 years old.

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What do Shaq and Lenny Krayzelberg have in common?

as quoted in USA Today



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