

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

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Jackpot: \$12 Million

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6 16 21 22 28

DAILY 3

Daytime: 2 2 2
Evening: 5 7 1

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RACE TIME: 1:42.66

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

Citing the high quality of the workforce in Ontario, Toyota decided recently to build a second plant in the province (this time in Woodstock) even though Ontario was offering only about half the subsidy offered by Mississippi and Alabama to build the plant in one of those states. According to a July Canadian Press story, a Toyota spokesman said it had learned from Nissan and Honda, which had found the workforce in the U.S. South to be often untrained and illiterate, and that, in Alabama, trainers had to use pictorials to teach some workers how to use the equipment.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 228th day of 2005.
There are 137 days left in the year.

On Aug. 16, 1977, Elvis Presley died at Graceland Mansion in Memphis, Tenn., at age 42.

In 1861, President Lincoln prohibited the states of the Union from trading with the seceding states of the Confederacy.

In 1948, baseball legend Babe Ruth died in New York at age 53.

In 1954, Sports Illustrated was first published by Time Inc.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do."

HENRY FORD
AMERICAN AUTO MANUFACTURER (1863-1947)

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And the Bead goes on



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Carl Schimmer, AKA the 'Bead Man,' swing dances with Dawn Dupre on Monday at the senior center in Palisades Park. The dances are staged each Monday.

Westside Democrats don't find election all that special

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

MID CITY — Westside Democrats have opened a Santa Monica headquarters from which they intend to fight the governor's special election and other ballot measures, two of which they believe will undermine public education in California.

A group calling itself the Democratic Westside Coalition (DWC) has opened up an office at 1508 18th St. from where volunteers will host ballot-initiative information events, conduct phone-banking, voter registration and walk area precincts.

Three of the eight ballot measures — Propositions 74, 76 and 77 — were initiated by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and his supporters. Two of them will affect public education, according

to Marc Saltzberg, president of the West L.A. Democratic Club and a chief organizer of the local campaign.

"We have a positive message to bring to the voters," Saltzberg said. "We want to let them know they can protect their sons and daughters from the special interests assembled to support the governor and his agenda."

"Our new headquarters will allow us to spread the word more effectively and with one voice."

Proposition 74, which Schwarzenegger has dubbed the "Put Kids First Act," is a measure which its supporters say is intended to improve teacher accountability in the classroom by putting them on probation for five years before they can obtain a permanent position.

See **DEMS UNITE**, page 6

STATE

Legislators taking plenty of measure

BY STEVE LAWRENCE

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — California legislators returned Monday from a month-long recess to wrap up their 2005 session with four hectic weeks of lawmaking, facing issues that include gay marriage, solar energy and high school graduation exams.

"It's a four-week sprint," said Sen. Jackie Speier, D-Hillsborough, who could be busier than many of her colleagues.

She has introduced 55 measures this year, more than any other lawmaker, and isn't finished yet. On Monday, she planned legislation seeking to bar the governor and other top state officials from having sec-

See **LEGISLATORS**, page 7

Insurance plan gets a shot in the arm

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

SACRAMENTO — A local senator's proposal for affordable health care for all California residents has received preliminary approval from the state legislature, but officials won't know how much it will cost until next year.

State Sen. Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica) has authored a health bill that was approved by the California Senate in July and aims to provide quality, affordable medical care to be administered by the state in an effort to help stabilize rising health care costs.

The next phase of the plan is to develop a more in-depth financial analysis of what users will pay in premiums.

Sen. Kuehl said she has served for 10 years in legislative health committees and has been disappointed by the "piecemeal" approach that's been taken to address the state's struggling health care system.

"I was approached by the advocates of a single-payer system with a really good initial study in hand about the feasibility of such a plan," Sen. Kuehl said. "I agreed to be the author and begin to develop the bill for adoption."

"What we hope to accomplish is a comprehensive benefits package at an affordable premium for every person in California."

Sen. Kuehl's California Health Insurance Reliability Act (CHIRA) is based on the model analyzed in a new study authored by John Sheils and Randall A. Haught of the Lewin Group, a firm with 18 years of experience in health care cost analysis.

According to the Lewin Group, the state could achieve universal coverage while actually reducing total health spending for California

See **KUEHL'S CARE**, page 6

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Santa Monica Daily Press



JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS The stars show the kind of day you'll have:
★★★★-Dynamic H★★★★-Positive H★★-Average H★-So-so H-Difficult



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ You're in charge, whether you want to be or not. Quick action can make all the difference in what happens. You might be surprised at how much someone reveals. Obviously, this person trusts you. Investigate your options carefully. Tonight: A must appearance.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Reach out to those around you. How you see someone could change dramatically if you go with detachment. Question all information crossing your desk. You'll get a lot more accomplished if you don't listen to gossip. Curb a tendency to go overboard. Tonight: Ease up and relax.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ You need to get to the bottom of a situation. Listen to feedback. Work with someone you care about or someone you trust as an adviser. Others might want to make a difference, but you might want to help them along. Tonight: Teamwork, my Twin, and you'll get a lot closer to the essence of this bond.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Others look for you. If you are to get anything done, consider closing your door. Review what is being asked, and then you will know what to do. You are on top of a situation, though others might believe they are. Tonight: Let everything play out.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ Emphasize what can be done rather than what cannot. Your positive frame of mind could make all the difference in how a situation develops. You might carry more responsibility than you want. Tonight: Catch up on some errands.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Your ingenuity mixed with an innate talent helps make what you want a possibility. Your ability to get past an immediate problem helps others feel enthusiastic. Your imagination takes you in a new direction. Tonight: Let off steam.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Working from home might be more comfortable. Whatever you do happens because of your enthusiasm. You also might be carrying a lucky rabbit's foot! You might need to handle a personal matter. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ You have a lot on your mind and on your plate. Ask for help, and you could be pleasantly surprised by those who want to chip in. Your sixth sense about how to approach a conversation is right-on. Tonight: Catch up on calls and e-mail.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Friends easily could urge you in a direction that will cost you. You don't need to make a big deal, but you are capable of finding ways around the problem. Put on your thinking cap. Tonight: Use your high energy levels to get errands or chores done.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ The Moon in your sign highlights your energy. You have unusual charisma, whether you're tackling something serious or going to a fun get-together. Priorities count, as you cannot be everywhere and cover all bases. Tonight: Go for your desires.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Though you certainly have a strong point of view, you would be well advised not to share your opinions right now. You might want to check out some facts and figures on your own. Detach and don't get caught up in a squabble. Tonight: Do something just for yourself.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Friends and meetings make a difference in today's events. Knowing when to back off and talk to a trusted adviser counts. You will find this fact true in all facets of your life. One person really makes a difference. Tonight: Hop around.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Feel the power, girls

By Daily Press staff

Are you a girl who needs power?

On Aug. 17, from 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., the YWCA Santa Monica/Westside will offer a free one-time workshop for a group of 12- to 14-year-old girls to see if they'd like to participate in a free 10-month exploration of girls' issues, ending in what's been dubbed a "Girl House Art Project" and public exhibition.

The topics covered from September 2005 to June 2006 include: girl power, body wisdom, how girls are presented on T.V., and famous women from history. Activities will include art, interactive exercises, videos, designing the Girl House, guest speakers and two field trips.

During the free one-time Aug. 17 workshop led by Kesa Kivel, volunteer project leader, participants will hear more about the project, do an art activity and eat snacks.

The workshop and 10-month Girl House Art Project will be held at the YWCA Santa Monica/Westside, 2019 14th St. Call Barbara Olinger at the YWCA (310) 452-3881 to register. No prior art experience required.

The YWCA Santa Monica/Westside provides community service programs to women and children in more than 10 westside communities.

It's a stretch, but apparel company wants to help

By Daily Press staff

Lululemon Athletica, a yoga-inspired athletic apparel company, will host a beach yoga benefit to support "P.S. I Love You Foundation's Yoga123," an outreach program dedicated to improving the health and wellness of children's lives in inner cities.

The yoga class will be held from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 20 at Santa Monica Beach to the north of the pier.

The class will be lead by Ashley Turner of Santa Monica Power Yoga with assistance from Desiree Bartlett of Equinox Fitness Club Santa Monica; Clay Kyle of Yoga Works; Aaron Reed of Sacred Movement Center for Yoga and Healing and AnnMarie Solo of Yoga Works, Yoga Desa.

The class will be followed by a reception featuring food, prizes and live music by AnnMarie Solo at the Lululemon Athletica store located at 331 Santa Monica Blvd.

Lululemon will be accepting donations on behalf of P.S. I Love You Foundation's Yoga123 for the yoga class and will be donating a percentage of that day's sales to the program.

Yoga123 is a non-profit organization that collaborates with schools, camps, fitness centers and foundations to foster physical, mental and social development through the practice of yoga.

To RSVP call (310) 319-9900 or e-mail santamonica-community@lululemon.com. Parking for the yoga class is available at the Santa Monica Pier or in public structures on Second Street.

Shoot-out to kick off next week

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Elks will host its annual soccer shoot-out on Aug. 22 at the Santa Monica Boys and Girls Club, 1238 Lincoln Blvd. The event will start at 2 p.m. It's open to any boy or girl between the ages of 8 and 13 who lives in Santa Monica or the surrounding areas, as long as they have not participated in a similar event conducted by another Elks Lodge. There is no fee to participate.

National, state and district schedules require that local lodges conduct their matches in August, which is the busy time for local leagues.

For more information, call Frank Frazer at (310) 822-0701.



SURF REPORT

Remnants from Hurricane Fernanda are helping south-facing breaks in SoCal pull in some moderate sets, while wind swell is dominant elsewhere along the California coast. We're still on tap for the southern hemi SW into Wednesday, making it ideal for breaks with very good exposure to the south. Today, we'll be seeing some forerunners and building swell with size running chest-high in the morning, and by evening, shoulder-high.

Today the water is:

68°

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

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
MONDAY	1:07	0.2	11:37	3.0	8:10	3.5	6:13	6.0
TUESDAY	1:15	-0.5	12:50	2.8	8:42	3.8	7:10	6.6
WEDNESDAY	2:37	-1.0	1:48	2.4	9:13	4.2	8:03	7.0
THURSDAY	3:17	-1.3	2:39	1.9	9:45	4.5	8:52	7.2
FRIDAY	3:55	-1.3	3:29	1.5	10:18	4.8	9:39	7.1

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The Q Line

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The Santa Monica Police Department informed the public last week that three suspicious men had been sighted videotaping specific areas of the Santa Monica Pier, including access roads and the SMPD's substation. The men, all of Middle Eastern descent, recently were reported for similar activities in other SoCal communities.

Based on this suspected terrorist activity, officials are determining how to pay for \$2 million in security upgrades throughout Santa Monica, including the addition of a security camera system throughout the downtown area. So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Are you in favor of beefing up security in Santa Monica? If so, how should it be funded?"

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

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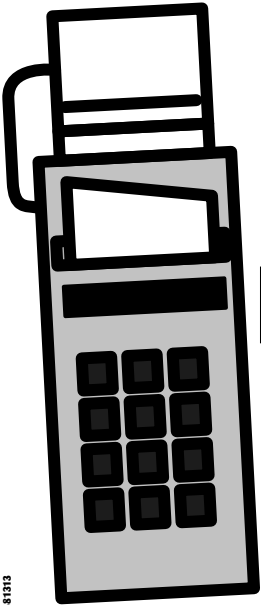
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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Much-maligned mall has Place in SM annals

Editor:

Please find a way to keep Santa Monica Place existing and open. I went on dates there. My high school graduation dinner was at the food court. My brother, who is around 30, remembered when it was first built. I remember Wizards Of the Coast, Imaginarium. I've seen it grow and change, but to see it go, it will be a great loss to me and Santa Monica. It's been a cultural building to Santa Monica's culture for a long time.

James Esquivel
Santa Monica

Dog days of summer don't include canines

Editor:

The Santa Monica Bay needs greater care and attention than other bodies of water. According to the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, water quality is negatively impacted when the amount of impervious surfaces (cement, roads, buildings, etc.) in a watershed nears 10 percent of the total land in the watershed. Maintaining water quality in the Santa Monica Bay is a challenging task because the amount of impervious surfaces in the watershed is currently at 29 percent, three times the accepted maximum. Couple this with the anticipated population growth in the Santa Monica Bay watershed (1.9 million now projected to be 2.5 million in 2020), then it becomes critical that legislation affecting the Santa Monica Bay be guided by a principal of minimizing negative environmental impacts on this natural resource.

Parsing the beaches of the bay into dog beaches under the guise of maximizing beach usage is contrary to this principal.

The negative impact on the Santa Monica Bay created by impervious surfaces occurs when the water that enters storm drains runs untreated into the bay. A chief contributor to pathogenic loads in the Santa Monica Bay due to this runoff is fecal waste from pets — waste left behind on lawns and sidewalks by pet owners. State and local regulations have been implemented to require cities, including the city of Los Angeles, to try to minimize the amount of untreated waste that flows into the bay. With cities trying to reduce pathogenic loads upstream, it makes no sense to allow a known pathogenic source, dogs, to roam free on a beach in the Santa Monica Bay.

Proponents of a dog beach do not assert that fecal waste and urine will not be generated on the beach by their pets. Of course, they will. Proponents also do not assert that all dog owners that use a dog beach will be responsible and pick up after their pets. Of course, they won't. Instead, proponents of a dog beach argue that the presence of dogs on a beach will not adversely effect water quality because volunteers have pledged to clean up after their dog and others. These pledges represent the flaw in the proposal — that a dog beach cannot be environmentally neutral without Herculean efforts of volunteers. Such an unproven volunteer effort does not provide adequate assurance to disregard the concerns of environmental groups that protect the Santa Monica Bay and that oppose a dog beach. It is a lot easier to kick sand over fecal waste and urine left by someone else's dog than to pick it up, especially when chasing after a dog.

Pets of any kind are currently prohibited on beaches in the Santa Monica Bay. With a baseline such as this, local cities can continue to work to address storm drain runoff and make the Santa Monica Bay a favored destination point for families. Establishing dog beaches runs counter to the efforts of cities and the many efforts of groups like the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, the Surfrider Foundation, Heal the Bay, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), LA County Beaches and Harbors, and LA County Lifeguards to protect and restore the Santa Monica Bay.

The LA City Council recently adopted a resolution in support of AB 359, the stalled state bill proposing an unfenced, off-leash dog beach at Dockweiler in El Segundo. Even though the City Council resolution got the location wrong (Playa del Rey rather than the proposed site in El Segundo), this vote of support should come as no surprise. The city of Los Angeles sued to prevent implementation of the regulations that would clean-up the storm drain runoff into the Santa Monica Bay.

Local and state politicians are being bombarded by dog activist groups and their paid lobbyists that threaten politicians with their political support if the politicians don't support a dog beach. Unfortunately, this tactic overshadows the fact that the vast majority of people are opposed to a dog beach. The dog beach debate is an excellent example of how politicians pander to interest groups rather than consider the impact their decision will have on communities and the environment. AB 359, for example, would place an off-leash, unfenced dog beach in a heavily used area (3.5 million people in 2004) that later this year will include an aquatic youth center and classroom for inner city school children. Parents of children that will benefit from the youth center would certainly be shocked to learn that the LA City Council believed that it was acceptable for their children to share the space with off-leash dogs.

If the recent LA City Council vote is any indication of what's to come, off-leash, unfenced dog beaches will be part of the Santa Monica Bay landscape unless those opposed speak out. I urge you to contact your local and state politicians and express your view.

Tom Babbitt
El Segundo

Bush right not to bow to whims of the media



WHAT'S THE POINT?

BY DAVID PISARRA

The war in Iraq continues to rage, despite proclamations from the administration that we have “turned a corner,” “reached a tipping point,” or achieved a “milestone.” The Bush Administration continues to put forth these bromides in the hopes that if they say it loud enough, long enough, the public will believe the false reality that the Republicans desperately need in order for the upcoming elections not to be a wholesale slaughter of their ranks. God forbid!

This president is certainly no Andrew Jackson, a president who held parties to which the public was welcome. This president has exchanged the glare of Washington and a special prosecutor, for the glare of reporters and protesters in Crawford, Tex., where he must either speed past in his tinted limousine, or fly over in his Marine issue helicopter.

In a scene reminiscent of the '60s, President Bush must now hold the line against Cindy Sheehan, a plaintive mother and her followers trying to convince him to stop an unjust war.

Her plight is heartbreaking. The thought of having to live the rest of her life without her son is certainly enough to make anyone sympathize. Her cause is just — to prevent other parents from feeling this loss. Her chances of success are nil.

President Bush cannot meet with her. And the mainstream media, the far right wackjobs and the crazies on the left, all will point out that while she waits in the hot Texas sun, he goes to Little League games, on bike rides and patters on his ranch. The attempt to mock the president by comparing her plight with his light-hearted activities is poignant, but unfair.

This might be the only time that I agree with the president whole-heartedly. He simply cannot be held hostage and meet with a grieving mother because she is able to garner national media attention.

I hate saying that, but, as Israel simply does not negotiate with terrorists, the President of the United States cannot be forced to meet with someone on their terms.

The office of the president, no matter the boob in it, must be controlled by the administration and not subject to control by a sympathetic media savvy individual.

However, I also believe the president has a duty to the people, to be open to them, and to throw open the doors of the White House, figuratively, if not literally. The president's job is to represent the will of the people and to uphold and defend the Constitution. He certainly cannot know the will of the people if he is sheltered and ensconced in a cocoon of Republican Reality Cotton Candy.

The likelihood of this president getting out to “the people” is slim to none. He is a

creature that is protected, molded and controlled by his handlers in the Secret Service and the West Wing. He has never displayed a penchant to be of “the people.” He has made great fodder of his affection for the affluent and his disdain for the poor. The rich are his base, the poor his pawns. His public proclamations are based on “we” but his actions prove an “I” mentality.

This is not a president built from the mold of the Washington, Lincoln, or Carter. He is a direct descendant of Harding, Nixon and Reagan. His common-man style belies the imperial majesty he craves. His smooth execution of coming from a Wal-Mart mentality, allows him to exercise his Neiman-Marcus lifestyle.

All that aside, the office of the president, cannot bow down to the emotional pleas of a grieving parent. I say this not because I want there to be some majestic reverence for the office or the inhabitant, but rather, out of sheer practicality.

With more than 1,800 service members dead, if the office were subject to the emotional blackmail of each of the families who survive, the president would get less done than he already does. The office should be open to hearing from the public, and from the families of the fallen, but there is the realistic matter of getting on with the business of the day. There is simply too much to do as president to meet with every grieving family member.

If I were president, a fate I would welcome but which is not very likely to happen, I would order that one day a month the public has the right to come to speak with me. I would create real town hall meetings, not these produced, and handled events that are just glorified photo-ops for the current occupant of 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

It is at these meetings that “the people” would have the opportunity to inform me of their concerns and gripes.

The office of the president has always been a gilded cage. Some presidents have left office on the verge of bankruptcy, others have gone in broke and come out wealthy. Some spouses loved the White House, some detested it so much they barely lived there. President Truman called the presidency the “Crown Jewel of the Federal penal system.”

In today's modern world, the presidency is wherever the president is. Technology allows the occupant to be in constant touch with the world. Which does not mean that he can, or should, meet with everyone who wants to see him. But that is not really the point. The president is the leader of the country, and he serves a symbolic purpose. Symbolically he should be available to the people, and this president is failing on that front, and he does that whether he is at his ranch in Crawford, or at his post in the White House.

Cindy Sheehan just shines a bright light on that fact. And maybe that is the best message we can take from her actions.

(David Pizarra can be reached at dpizarra@pizarra.com or (310) 664-9969.)

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 editor@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.

COMMENTARY



Road to ruin just part of our daily commute



ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL

There recently was a diagram in the LA Times plotting the number of homicides reported in LA. While Santa Monica had little a stain on its record, what they failed to mention was an issue of less severity, but great annoyance — the increasing rate of homicidal driving.

Of course, I'm talking about the 10-405-90 freeways with their speed changes from 80 to 0 mph, and the heinous merges where a driver is absolutely insistent on not letting you in. You want to give that person the finger, but are quick to remind yourself you'd get a trigger finger of lead in return.

Once you safely maneuvered your way off the horrors of the LA freeway, you're not completely out of the clear — no, not at all. After the exit, there's a whole other jungle that awaits you: LA surface streets.

You may think I'm exaggerating, but let's see how many of these scenarios/incidences sound familiar to you.

There are issues of simple annoyance, like the infamous idiot popping out of the alley (always on major streets) at an unyielding force, only to hold up traffic the rest of the way to your destination.

Then there are incidences of graver danger. Sure, being cut off by a car can be scary and irritating, and then the lovely city buses bring it to a whole new level. They aren't afraid to pull back into your lane, even if your car is where their end bumper will quickly be in three seconds.

I see their bumper sticker that reads, "How am I driving?" I don't know, if you actually went the speed you were supposed to, I could write down the advertised phone number and tell you.

But don't think I'm pointing fingers at just the buses. The people who beep at you for not letting them roll through a stop sign when you've patiently waited your turn deserve some attention too.

There also are the drivers who think if they stick their car completely into oncoming traffic, that they should be given the right-of-way to turn. Or at least a pat on the back for being incredibly brave, also known as complete idiots.

Yesterday in Westwood, I witnessed a car make an illegal U-turn past three lanes of traffic from the far right lane during a red light. That, actually, was pretty amazing.

But what petrifies me is the Bermuda turn circle at 26th and Washington. The drivers there act like a school of sharks, never letting those on Washington a chance to turn. Whatever happened to a little give-and-take? And when did yield turn into a gladiator battle of the SUVs against my little Jetta?

After all, the grays added to your bleach blond hair, though, you're not even safe when you reach your final destination. Non-moving cars can be a bit of a problem too, especially when a Hummer thinks it can double for a compact in a crowded parking structure.

I know I love being parked in by a delivery van as much as the next person. But not as much as I enjoy waiting five minutes for the trash parade to go by, throwing paper towel confetti as part of the ongoing celebration.

Driving is so hairy in LA that you end up giving people the "thank-you" hand whenever someone actually doesn't cut

you off and put your life in danger.

But don't worry, I'll let you in on a little secret. I went to a secret meeting of My Turn LA, and found out the three basic tenets they adhere to.

1. It doesn't matter if there is enough room for a driver to turn, what matters is if you want to turn.

2. Green means go and red means make sure others know that you still are going.

3. Driving rules are made for other drivers to help get them out of your way so you can get to where you need to go so very, very fast.

Once you memorize those tenets, you will know what to expect from the bad drivers, and in turn, make driving safer for yourself. LA may not be a safe place to drive, but it's a safer place when you know the alternate rules other drivers may abide by.

(Heidi can be reached at anydayin-la@gmail.com.)

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Westside Democrats wary of giving Governor his Props

“This process would help eliminate teachers who are performing poorly in the classroom.”

DARREL NG
Campaign spokesperson

The group will kick off its campaign with a public celebration to be held on Sunday, Aug. 21, from 1 to 4 p.m. Local city councilmembers from Santa Monica and Los Angeles, state representatives and senators have been invited to attend.



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A simple line drawing of a stack of papers or a letter, with the top sheet slightly offset to show the edges of the pages below it. The drawing is done in a minimalist, sketchy style with black outlines.

STATE



Lawmakers return to a full plate of bills

LEGISLATORS, from page 1

ond jobs, a reaction to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's financial arrangement with two fitness magazines.

More than 800 bills, including about 30 by Speier, could be acted on before lawmakers adjourn for the year, probably on Sept. 9.

Looming in the background, and perhaps dominating legislators' water-cooler conversations and political maneuvering, will be the Nov. 8 special election called by the Republican governor.

Schwarzenegger hopes voters will impose tougher controls on state spending, take away the Legislature's power to draw legislative and congressional districts and require new teachers to spend more time on probation.

Also awaiting voters' decisions are initiatives that would require public employee unions to get annual written permission from their members to use dues for campaign donations, require parental notification or a waiver from a judge for a girl to get an abortion, provide discounts on prescriptions for low- and moderate-income, uninsured Californians and re-regulate the state's electricity industry.

Schwarzenegger and the Legislature's Democratic leaders have been talking about the possibility of reaching compromises on the governor's three issues. Any such compromise package could also go on the November ballot or a ballot next year if the governor agrees to cancel the special election.

But Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles, doubts an agreement can be reached.

"There's a hope that we can get somewhere with a compromise, but we are really running out of time," he said. "I can't say that anyone is walking away from the table at this point, but we're still a ways apart. I just don't see a deal coming together at this point."

The key sticking point, Nunez said, is the spending limit proposal, which Democrats contend would result in "drastic cuts" in school funding.

The secretary of state's office said lawmakers only have until Thursday to add proposals to the Nov. 8 ballot.

Here are some of the other issues on the Legislature's agenda:

GAY MARRIAGE — The Assembly narrowly rejected a bill in June that would have legalized gay marriages in California, but supporters kept the issue alive by amending it into a bill pending in the Senate. That bill is scheduled to be considered Monday by the Senate Appropriations Committee, along with

more than 300 other measures.

GRADUATION EXAMS — A bill by Assemblywoman Karen Bass, D-Los Angeles, would allow high schools, with approval of the state school superintendent, to use grades, assignments or other assessments to determine if students who fail the state graduation exam qualify for a diploma. The graduating class of 2006 will be the first required to pass the exam to graduate. Bass' bill is before the Senate Appropriations Committee on Monday.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS — Sen. Gil Cedillo, D-Los Angeles, is making his fifth attempt in seven years to allow illegal immigrants to get California driver's licenses. The licenses would have to be of a different color or design than driver's licenses held by other motorists and they could be used only for driving, not as widely recognized identification documents. Cedillo said that should satisfy security concerns raised by Schwarzenegger. The bill is awaiting an Assembly Appropriations Committee hearing.

MARKED BULLETS — Sen. Joe Dunn, D-Garden Grove, and Assemblyman Paul Koretz, D-West Hollywood, have bills that would require identifying markings on bullets to help police solve crimes. Koretz's legislation is scheduled to be considered Monday by the Senate Appropriations Committee; Dunn's is awaiting an Assembly Appropriations Committee hearing.

PRISONS — Assemblyman Ray Haynes, R-Murrieta, has a bill that would make it easier for news reporters to arrange interviews with prison inmates. A bill by Koretz would allow distribution of condoms to prisoners to try to slow the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Both measures are before the Senate Appropriations Committee on Monday.

SMOKING — Koretz also has a bill that would require sales of so-called fire-safe cigarettes, which are designed to go out when they're not being puffed. A bill by Sen. Deborah Ortiz, D-Sacramento, would require health insurance plans to offer coverage for stop-smoking programs. Both are awaiting hearings in the opposite house.

SOLAR ENERGY — Schwarzenegger is backing a bill by Sen. Kevin Murray, D-Culver City, that attempts to create one million more solar-powered homes and businesses by offering subsidies to building owners. It's awaiting a hearing by the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

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STATE

Reliant settles suits with state's utilities for \$445 million

By The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Reliant Energy Inc. on Monday agreed to pay \$445 million to settle lawsuits filed by investor-owned utilities that claimed the company attempted to pump up trade volumes and revenues in the midst of an energy crisis in Western states.

The settlements with San Diego Gas & Electric, Edison International, Pacific Gas & Electric Co., and other entities calls for Reliant to pay \$150 million in cash. Reliant will also waive claims to its receivables for power deliveries from Jan. 1, 2000, to June 21, 2001.

Reliant, which provides electricity to retail and wholesale customers, said the settlements are still subject to approval by a federal court in Texas and regulators. The agreement comes just weeks after Reliant agreed to settle all shareholder class-action lawsuits for about \$68 million.

"This settlement is great news for California," Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said. "The people of California deserve affordable and reliable energy supplies. I will continue to fight for justice from companies that took advantage of residents and businesses during the energy crisis."

The agreement also ends investigations conducted by attorneys general in California, Washington and Oregon. All civil litigation filed by the California attorney general's office also were resolved.

Southern California Edison said in a statement it will likely receive more than \$130 million under the latest settlement. San Diego Gas & Electric said it expects to receive about \$42.1 million, while Pacific Gas & Electric expects about \$230 million.

Reliant said all private electricity-related class action lawsuits filed on behalf of ratepayers in California, Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah were also resolved under the agreement.

Sensors, cameras to record tailpipe emissions in California

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Sensors and video cameras on Southern California freeways could begin recording pollutants spewing from tailpipes by early next year as part of a program to reduce smog levels in the nation's smoggiest region.

The program, perhaps the largest of its kind, would measure vehicles entering freeways in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside.

The sensors measure pollutants as vehicles accelerate and the cameras snap an image of the license plates.

There's even an incentive to getting caught.

Owners of smoky clunkers would receive letters informing them that the government would help pay to fix or scrap the vehicles. Between 10,000 to 20,000 of the dirtiest vehicles would be spotted, according to the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

"You can't meet our air quality goals without addressing this problem," said Victor Weisser, chairman of California's Inspection and Maintenance Review Committee, which oversees a separate program that

requires vehicles to be smog-checked.

"We have made great strides with cleaner gasoline and new engines, but you can't make bigger reductions until you get some of these cars off the road," he added. "And unless we do something, these cars from the 1980s are going to be on the road a long time."

The state's smog-check program tests about 10 million vehicles every year, keeping some of the dirtiest off the road. Still, officials say the program has a loophole — vehicles built before 1976 and those newer than six years old are exempt from the checks.

Air regulators say using sensors and cameras would encourage more people to send their vehicles to the junk yard — by far cheaper at cleaning the region's air than imposing additional controls on power plants and refineries.

Air regulators, who fear violators would avoid the sensors, wouldn't disclose how many sensors will be used or where they will be placed.

State regulators approved using sensors in October 2003 and called for the program to be in place by the 2010 federal deadline.



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STATE BRIEFS

Metriculation math not adding up for colleges

By The Associated Press

VENTURA — The estimated 7.2 percent drop in enrollment at Ventura County’s three community colleges is still another blow to the financially troubled community college district.

The district needed a 2 percent boost in full-time students this year to avoid a \$1.1 million cut in state funding, the main source of district revenue. The exact number of full-time students won’t be known until a state-required formal count in mid-September.

Classes at Ventura, Oxnard and Moorpark colleges started Monday, but students have until Aug. 28 to enroll.

The district could lose \$6 million to \$7 million in state funding if the 7.2 percent drop continues through June 30, the end of the current fiscal year, said Sue Johnson, vice chancellor in charge of finances.

Chancellor James Meznek said the colleges will work to lure more students by pointing out a community college education is a bargain compared to four-year universities. The Ventura colleges charged \$26 per unit.

Enrollment at the three colleges dropped 5.6 percent in 2003-2004 and 4.6 percent in 2004-2005.

Residents leave no stone unturned in protest

By The Associated Press

CLAREMONT — Residents plan to fight a proposed gravel mine in their neighborhood.

When Mike Kunce built his \$2 million dream house next to a field, he was told by city officials that proposed uses for the land included a park, golf course or wildlife preserve. No one told him two mining companies held leases on the property.

Now, two years later, Vulcan Materials Co. and Holliday Rock Co. plan to mine about 50 million tons of material over two decades.

Kunce and dozens of other Claremont residents formed Claremonters Against Strip Mining in an attempt to block the companies from extracting sand, gravel and crushed stone within view of their back yards.

“It’s not gonna happen,” said Kunce, 56, who used his life savings to build his 8,000-square-foot home. “If it does, there will be a ‘For Sale’ sign in front of my house. I’m not going to live here.”

At issue is the future of 433 acres owned by the nonprofit Pomona Valley Protective Association, which was formed in 1909 to ensure that Claremont, Pomona, La Verne and Upland retain their natural water resources.

Storm water seeps into the area’s underground basins and association officials claim the six pits left after mining operations would help water collection.

The mining companies need the city Planning Commission to amend the land use and development code to include mining as a permitted use. But the commission and City Council rejected the projects for environmental and quality of life reasons.

“It would be horrendous both in noise and dust, to say nothing of the aesthetics of it,” Mayor Sandra Baldonado said. “We are strongly opposing it.”

Vulcan filed a lawsuit against the city in June to overturn its decision. Holliday Rock officials say they’re waiting to see the outcome of the suit before deciding what to do.

Jurors feeling a renewed sense of duty

By The Associated Press

SAN BERNARDINO — The threat of a \$1,500 fine has dramatically cut the number of people who skip out on jury duty.

Courts in San Bernardino County began warning potential jurors in January that if they ignored a summons they would be facing a judge and a possible \$1,500 fine.

Within six months, the number of summons that went unanswered dropped to 10 percent compared to the 22 percent ignored the previous year.

“It’s working,” Presiding Judge Peter Norell said. “And I think it’s important that it does. Our jury system is what makes the judicial process work.”

With a few exceptions, state law requires any 18-and-older U.S. citizen living in California to respond when called for jury service. When some 200,000 people failed to show up for jury duty in San Bernardino County last year, the court decided to get serious.

“We have so many people who do show up,” Norell said, “is it fair to them to ignore the people who don’t show up?”

In the first six months of this year, the county ordered 52,000 jury no-shows to appear at the county’s nine trial courts.

Superior Court Judge Brian McCarville said he sees 10 to 30 people at each non-compliance hearing and most are apologetic. Some explain they moved or they don’t speak English.

“I have to give most of the people a grain of salt with what they tell me,” McCarville said. So far, he said, he’s yet to come across anyone who flatly refused to serve as a juror.

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DEAR DORIE

Stop swooping in to the rescue

Dear Dorie,
I have a beautiful little girl and I consider myself a good parent. As she gets older, I've noticed that I'm getting more nervous about safety and germs. My friends seem much more relaxed about it and I find myself taking things away from her, or holding her, when other parents with children her age are letting their kids go free. I just can't handle anything hurting my baby.

— Nervous Mommy

Dear Mommy,

One of my favorite therapists and parent educators breaks parenting types into four categories: Dictator (my way or the highway); Marshmallow (anything you'd like to do is fine by me); Consultant (let's discuss this rationally); and Helicopter (I'm going to stay right on top of you and swoop in for the rescue if you wobble). All four types have their place and purpose in good parenting.

My hunch is that you're the perfect example of a helicopter and, possibly, staying with that parenting type a little more often than you should. Your motivation to protect your daughter is sincere and consistent, that's a great thing. However, ask yourself the following question whenever you feel you're freaking out about germs or safety: "What kind of adult am I creating?" For example, if being a clean freak is going to create a fearful behavior in your daughter that is carried into adulthood, you may want to adjust that.

Ultimately, what your friends do is not important, it's just a different approach. You must be true to your personality as a mother (germs may never be easy for you and that's OK). I do highly recommend, however, that you identify what contribution you're making to the healthy development of your daughter. Good luck.

— Dorie

(Submit your questions to "Dear Dorie" at meek@smmusd.org, or call (310) 452-6132).

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How Much Is Enough?

By David J. Bredehoft Ph.D.

Overinvolved parents are headed to college this fall in record numbers touts a July 29 Wall Street Journal article, and colleges and universities are responding in a variety of innovative ways.

The University of Vermont hired "parent bouncers," students trained to spot overindulgent, overinvolved parents and divert them at critical times. Other schools have hired whole new staffs trained to respond to increasing numbers of parent e-mails and telephone calls.

PARENTAL HOVERING DOESN'T STOP WITH FRESHMEN STUDENTS

Recently I presented our overindulgence research at a national conference. Following my presentation, a professor from a prestigious eastern university came up to me and reported that parental overinvolvement at her institution has reached new heights. When recruiters now come to campus for the purpose of interviewing graduating seniors, parents routinely demand to sit in with their child during the job interview. As a college professor, I also am seeing a dramatic increase in the number of overinvolved parents at the college level. One has to ask the question "Is "overinvolvement" a good or bad thing?"

IS INVOLVEMENT GOOD OR IS OVERINVOLVEMENT BAD?

Parents should be involved in their college-aged children's lives, but being overinvolved is clearly not a healthy thing. Remember, we are talking about 18-25 year-old young adults, not children that are 4, 8 or 10. I believe that this type of overindulgence is bad because our research clearly shows that college students whose parents were over-loving and gave them too much attention:

- Think of themselves as failures.
- Feel others think less of them if they make mistakes.

- Can't be happy unless all people admire them.
- See asking for help as a sign of weakness.
- Believe their value as a person depends greatly on what others think of them.
- Give up on their own interests in order to please other people.
- Need the approval of other people in order to be happy.
- Cannot get down to work when they should.
- Quit if they can't do a job the first time.
- Rarely achieve important goals.
- Do not stick with unpleasant things.
- Feel insecure about their abilities.
- Believe that they are not capable of dealing with most problems that come up in their life.

The above attitudes and characteristics are not associated with successful adults, but they are with college-age children whose parents hover and who are overinvolved in their lives.

I am convinced that parents who are overinvolved in their children's lives really want their children to be successful adults. Ironically, they actually do the opposite — create children who grow up lacking important life skills.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO INSTEAD?

Parents can teach children to:

- Differentiate between needs and wants.
- Ask for what they need (not want).
- Solve their own problems.
- Share personal and communal living space.
- Show self-reliance in the face of adversity.
- Keep healthy study, eating and sleep habits.

To participate in a new study on overindulgence and relationships log onto www.overindulgence.info.

(David J. Bredehoft Ph.D., Jean Illsley Clarke Ph.D., and Connie Dawson Ph.D., are co-authors of "How Much Is Enough? Everything You Need to Know to Steer Clear of Overindulgence and Raise Likeable, Responsible and Respectful Children – From Toddlers to Teens." Bredehoft is chair of the social and behavioral sciences department at Concordia University–St. Paul and can be reached at bredehoft@csp.edu. To read more about overindulgence go to www.overindulgence.info.)



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Don't miss your chance to join a parent/child group at the nationally renowned Early Childhood Parenting Center. Enroll now for fall classes – parent/infant and parent/toddler. Classes meet weekly and are led by trained child development specialists. Located at the Quaker House in Santa Monica. Call 281-9770 for more info.

ONGOING THROUGH SEPT. 5 at CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER

Open daily 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Discover the secrets of science at the West Coast's largest hands-on science center. The newest attraction, Robots + Us allows kids to build their own robots, use their bodies to control robotic flowers, and visit Low-Life Labs to see what robot designers are learning from cockroaches and other simple life forms. Kids younger than six will enjoy the Discovery Rooms in Creative World, World of Life, and the adjacent free-admission museum, the Air and Space Gallery. Best times to visit are weekends or after 1:30 p.m. on weekdays.
Exposition Park, 700 State Dr., LA, 323-SCI-ENCE, www.californiasciencecenter.org.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18

TWILIGHT DANCE SERIES – 7:30 p.m.
Enjoy the 21st season of this great musical event on the pier presented by LACarGuy.com. This week celebrate the 70th anniversary of swing with Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band featuring Eddie Daniels. Parents with small children – I recommend bringing a picnic to the beach just south of the pier where the kids can run around and you can still enjoy the music. This is truly one of Santa Monica's best events. For more info visit www.twilightdance.org.

SAT. & SUN., AUG. 20 & 21

GARDEN CONCERT for KIDS at the GETTY – 4:00 & 5:00 p.m.
Original children's songs from award-winning musician Justin Roberts. FREE! \$7 parking, 1200 Getty Center Dr., 440-7300.

SAT., AUG. 20

BIG! WORLD! FUN! FAMILY SERIES at the FORD – 10:00 a.m.
Today's performance is from Asha's Baba presenting African music, stories and songs. Ages 4 -11, \$5. John Anson Ford Theatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood, 323-461-3673, www.fordamphitheatre.org

SUN., AUGUST 21

MUSIC in the MORNING: CHILDREN'S CONCERTS at GREYSTONE
10:00 a.m. Introduce your kids to the joys of jazz with today's performer Jazz-a-Ma-Tazz, with Hayes Greenfield in his first California visit. Ages 3 and up, \$8, reservations required, 550-4753. 905 Loma Vista Dr., Beverly Hills.

TAIKO WORKSHOPS for KIDS – 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Learn the principals of taiko drumming, ages 6 – 12, \$65, reservations required, 213-625-0414. Japanese American National Museum, 369 E. First St., LA.

SUMMER SUNSET SERIES – 3:00 p.m.

Enjoy spirited Irish music and dancing by Maire Clerkin. FREE! UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, Sunset and Westwood Blvd., LA, 825-8655.

***SPECIAL NOTE** – many of the library story-times are on break until September. Please check the list below carefully and check back for exact starting dates.

TUESDAY



MOMS Club of Santa Monica Playgroup – 11:00 a.m., for children born 1/04 – 9/04. Call or email Alison at 393-4481/riversalison@hotmail.com for more info. All moms welcome!

Movies for Moms! 11:00 a.m., Loews Cineplex Broadway Theatre, 1441 3rd St. Promenade – for Moms and babies newborn – 1 year old. Today's movie, Aug. 16, is The Skeleton Key starring Kate Hudson, Gena Rowlands and John Hurt; Horror/Suspense, Rated "PG-13." Doors open early for socializing and getting comfortable. Visit www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms for details.

Storytelling

Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.

Toddler and Preschool Storytime are on break until September.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

Cuentos Para Pequenos and Lap Time are on break until September.

Twilight Story Time –7pm – an ongoing program for 3-5 year olds.

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Family Story Time – 7:00 p.m., all ages.

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.

Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 2 to 3 year olds. Current session thru Aug. 30.

Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis
For ages infant to 3. 11:00 a.m. 116 North Robertson, Plaza A, LA. 310-358-2500, www.storyopolis.com

Barnes and Noble at the Grove
Storytime for ages 2 – 6. 10:00 a.m. 189 Grove Drive, LA, 323-525-0270

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – walkers to 3 years; (Mon – Fri); Infant & Me Class – 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. and 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., 0 – 12 months; 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.

YMCA – Attachment Parenting Classes - 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., 1332 Sixth St., 393-2721 (ask for Shelana Philip-Guide or Audrey Meyer). This new class for mothers/dads and babies up to 12 months is presented by Karol Darsa, PsyD, a licensed psychologist with extensive experience working with children and families. Fees: Members – 1 class - \$40, 5 class pass - \$180; Non-members - \$50, 5 class pass - \$200. BREAKTHROUGH PARENTING CLASSES – 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.

An advanced 10-week parent education course. Continuous enrollment. For info call Jayne A. Major, Ph.D., Breakthrough Parenting Services, Inc., 310-823-7846, jm@BPinAction.org.

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA

10:00 – 11:00 a.m and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members \$90 for 10 classes. (also Thursday nights 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.

Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Itsy Bitsy Yoga – Baby IBY (6 weeks to pre-crawling) – 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. With Khefri Riley at Ocean Oasis, 1333 Ocean Ave. Register at www.khefri.net or call 323-549-5383.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981 - no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

MOMS Club of Santa Monica Playgroups – 4:30 p.m., separate groups for children born in 2000 and 2001. Call or email Alison at 393-4481/riversalison@hotmail.com for more info. All moms welcome!

Storytelling

The Talking Stick Coffee Lounge – 1630 Ocean Park Blvd., 450-6052

10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4 at this neighborhood coffee shop.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

Toddler and Preschool Story Time are on break until September.

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Lap Time – 10:15 & 11:15 a.m., ages 0-2. Current session thru Aug. 24.

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. –392-3804.

Preschool Twilight Story Time – 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Parents/children ages 3-5.

Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 2 pm – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144

Border's, Westwood – 11am – 310-475-3444.

Classes

Rhythm Child Parent & Me Rhythms, Santa Monica Studios, 3025 Olympic Blvd., 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. Children explore rhythms through drum play. Ages 6 mos. – 3.5 years; \$100 for 8 weeks. Call 204-5466 or visit www.rhythm-child.net for more info and session dates.

YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – walkers to 3 years; (Mon – Fri); 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, \$15

Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Step Aerobics, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay \$90 for 10 classes.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981, no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Other

Puppetolio – 1:00 p.m., 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

THURSDAY

MOMS Club of Santa Monica Playgroup – 3:30 p.m., for children born 3/03 – 12/03. Call or email Alison at 393-4481/riversalison@hotmail.com for more info. All moms welcome!

Storytelling

Babystyle, 1324 Montana Avenue, 434-9590 10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4.

Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.

Toddler and Preschool Storytime are on break until September.

Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.

La Hora Del Cuento – 7:00 p.m. Spanish stories, songs and rhymes for all ages.

Youth Chess Club – 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. All levels welcome.

Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.

Toddler Story Time – 10:15 a.m., for 2 year olds, current session thru Aug. 25.

Preschool Story Time – 11:15 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds.

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.

Lap Time is on break until September.

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – walkers to 3 years; (Mon – Fri); 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices. BREAKTHROUGH PARENTING CLASSES – 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.

An advanced 10-week parent education course. Continuous enrollment. For info call Jayne A. Major, Ph.D., Breakthrough Parenting Services, Inc., 310-823-7846, jm@BPinAction.org.

Yoga & Exercise

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA

7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members \$90 for 10 classes. (also Tuesdays at 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.

Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981 - no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 4-8 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

MOMS Club of Santa Monica – New Mother Group – for new moms with babies born from 10/04 to present. Meet for conversation, support and playtime. All new Moms welcome! Call or e-mail Alison at 393-4481, riversalison@hotmail.com for more info.

Parent's Night Out at Child's Play, 2299 Westwood Blvd., 6:00 – 11:00 p.m.

Kids get a night of supervised fun with pizza, games and more while parents go out. Ages 3-10, \$9 per hour, \$7 siblings, 3 hour minimum. Reservations required, 470-4997. ww.child-splayonline.net

La Leche League of LA/Mar Vista – meets the 2nd Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Call 310-390-2529 for info.

Planetarium Show at SMC's John Drescher Planetarium, 7:00 p.m. - Night Sky Show, 8:00 p.m. – featured program. \$5 adults, \$4 children. Pico and 17th St., 434-3000.

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – walkers to 3 years; (Mon – Fri); 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise

Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Indoor Cycling, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay \$90 for 10 classes.

Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45 p.m., \$15.

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Other

Baby Attuned - Fridays, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., A new program promoting sensitive parenting and developmental awareness. Eileen Escarce, PhD, MSN. (PSY 18819). Introductory fee: \$15 per screening with feedback. 1137 2nd Ave, Suite 213. By appointment only 310-367-1155.

SATURDAY

Storytelling

Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – Kid's Story Time – 10am, 310-260-9110

Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 10:30am – ages 2-5, 310-475-4144.

Children's Book World, 10580 1/2 Pico Blvd, LA - 10:30 a.m., 310-559-B00K.

Village Books, 1049 SwarthmoreAve, Pacific Palisades – 10:30 a.m., 454-4063.

826LA, 685 Venice Blvd, 2nd Floor, Venice – 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., ages 3-6, RSVP to info @825LA.com or 310-314-8418. (826LA is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting students with their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write).

Emerging Artists Family Workshop - 10:00 a.m. – noon. Program varies, ages 6 and up, \$12. Santa Monica Museum of Art, 2419 Michigan Ave, 586-6488, ext. 32.

Barnyard Madness at the Santa Monica Playhouse

Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m, thru Sept. 25; \$12 adults, \$10.50 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 2 for reservations, www.santamonicaplayhouse.com, 1211 4th St.

Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

Magicopolis – 2 and 8 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$20 for evening, \$15 for matinee. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

Precious Prints – Ceramic Heirlooms for a

Lifetime

Second Saturday every month at The Pump Station, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Contact Kristan Ritchie at 310-802-8013 or visit www.preciousprintsstudios.com for more info.

Lakeshore Learning Stores "Free Crafts for Kids" – Saturdays, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 8888 Venice Blvd., 559-9630.

SUNDAY

Main Street Farmer's Market – 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., corner of Main St. and Ocean Park Blvd. Pony rides, live music, lots of vendors and great family socializing.

Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

Magiopolis – 2 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$15. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

Barnyard Madness at the Santa Monica Playhouse

Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m, thru Sept. 25; \$12 adults, \$10.50 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 2 for reservations, www.santamonicaplayhouse.com, 1211 4th St.

Family Funday at the Will Geer Theatrical Botanicum – 11:00 a.m Live music and theatre for all ages. \$8, 1419 N. Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, 455-3723, www.theatricum.com.

Breastfeeding

Working Mother's Support Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd. - Call 998-1981 for more info.

MONDAY

MOMS Club of Santa Monica Playgroup – 9:30 a.m., for children born 1/02 – 2/03, Call or email Alison at 393-4481/riversalison@hotmail.com for more info. All moms welcome!

Storytelling

Main Library – Lap Time at Joslyn Park is on break until September

Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main Street, 310-392-3804.

"Spanish for Little Ones" is on break until September.

Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – Toddler Story Time – 10am – 310-260-9110

Classes

YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – walkers to 3 years; (Mon – Fri); 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.

Breastfeeding Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981 - no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, \$15

Itsy Bitsy Yoga – TOT IBY (crawling – 2/3 years) – 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. With Khefri Riley at TURNOUT Performing Arts Center, 12113 Santa Monica Bl., St. 201. Register at www.khefri.net or call 323-549-5383.

Yoga Garden, - Restorative yoga for pre/postnatal – 6:30 p.m., 310-450-0133. www.yoga-gardenstudios.com

Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

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DAs combat 'dark side of economic growth'

BY JON SANCHE
Associated Press Writer

GREELEY, Colo. — When officials at the Erie Chamber of Commerce began to notice problems in the chamber's bank accounts, they called for an audit that showed \$33,000 was missing.

An investigation led to the chamber's former executive director, who faces trial on embezzlement charges later this year — a stunning crime for the fast-growing northern Colorado community of 10,000.

"It's a small town and everyone knows everyone. We were dumbfounded," chamber President Rick Hulstrom said. "This is just the way things happen now."

The growth in white-collar crime has forced Weld County's new district attorney to take an unusual step. Ken Buck, a former prosecutor who specialized in economic crimes at the U.S. attorney's office in Denver, is raising money from businesses hurt by white-collar crooks to pay an investigator or prosecutor dedicated to stopping the crime.

"There are new businesses and new people that don't operate on the old handshake-is-a-bond mentality, so there is a lot of fraud going on in Weld County," Buck said.

A handful of district attorneys around the country have taken similar steps to combat "the dark side of economic growth" that comes with rapid population growth, said Josh Marquis, the district attorney in Clatsop County, Ore., and a vice president of the National District Attorneys Association.

"You have things happening quickly, you have people with money and those are targets of opportunity," Marquis said. "So people who are running scams will go there. It also overwhelms the existing public safety (officers), who generally are used to dealing with crime in the old sense of the word."

Once known strictly for feedlots and wheat fields, Weld County is now home to eight of the 10 fastest-

growing communities in Colorado. New housing developments serve commuters to the college town of Greeley and the sprawling Denver area, 50 miles to the southwest.

Since 1990, the county's population has grown by about 78,000 to nearly 210,000 people, with about 40 percent of that growth coming in the past five years, according to state figures.

While petroleum and manufacturing provide numerous jobs, agriculture remains king, with 2,200 farms and 31 percent of employment related to agriculture, according to the Greeley-Weld Chamber of Commerce. The county's largest single employer is meatpacker Swift & Co.

The growth has resulted in a higher rate of economic crime, but it also brought a sharp rise in violent and gang-related crimes, which require heavy investments of time and money by prosecutors, Buck said.

"(White-collar crime) oftentimes gets short shrift because people want murderers, rapists off the street, drug dealers off the corner and district attorneys and other prosecutorial agencies don't quite feel the pressure in the white-collar area they may in the area of street crime," Colorado Attorney General John Suthers said.

Like Suthers, Buck attributes the rise in check fraud and identity theft to people trying to raise money to feed a methamphetamine habit. Still, there have been cases of more traditional white-collar crime.

Buck's spokeswoman, Thea Mustari, said there were no reliable statistics on the number of white-collar crime cases in Weld County. However, Buck's office — with 30 attorneys — is prosecuting 19 first-degree murder cases, including six gang-related homicides, she said.

About 15 banks so far say they will help fund white-collar crime investigations, said Patty Gates, executive vice president of Bank of Choice.

"I think every banker in town will tell you that at some point or another they've all suffered some losses due to white-collar crime," Gates said. "I haven't had situations in the past not handled appropriately, but there are budgetary limitations that force (the district attorney) to prioritize where he puts his resources."

"I'm not sure that was as critical in the past as it's becoming now."

Gates is helping organize the fund-raising effort,

Getting their ducks in a row

By The Associated Press

TURNING TO VICTIMS: The Weld County (Colo.) district attorney, faced with a tight budget and a fast-growing problem with white-collar crime, is asking banks, retailers and other potential victims to raise money to help him investigate and prosecute such crimes.

DARK SIDE OF GROWTH: Home to eight of Colorado's 10 fastest-growing communities, Weld County's population growth has resulted not only in more white-collar crime, but also more violent crime, which DA Ken Buck says must be a priority in assigning prosecutors.

AVOIDING ETHICS CONCERNS: Banks and retailers are putting money into a fund to be managed by county commissioners in a move to avoid potential conflicts of interest with the DA's office.

which she views as an investment. She hopes up to 30 banks — along with an undetermined number of retailers — will commit to at least five years of funding to help Buck hire an investigator or prosecutor to focus on economic crimes.

It's not unusual for prosecutors to look to outside sources for funding. Many tap federal grants or charitable foundations to supplement their budgets, which for district attorneys in Colorado come almost entirely from counties.

Buck said what makes his effort unusual is that he has turned directly to victims and potential victims.

Buck has asked banks and retailers to put any donations into a fund to be managed by Weld County's commissioners. He said he will take pains to make sure he does not know which businesses contributed or how much.

"I'm concerned about the appearance of impropriety, but I'm more concerned about the appearance of mediocrity," he said. "If I don't deal with an issue, I think the public will be rightly disappointed in my performance."

Violence renews the call for migration accord

BY MORGAN LEE
Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY — A surge in violence along the U.S. border makes the need for a migration accord with the United States more urgent, a spokesman for Mexican President Vicente Fox said Monday.

Violence has claimed many lives along the border this year, including 110 in Nuevo Laredo, a city of 350,000 people across the border from Laredo, Texas. Much of the violence stems from a war between two powerful drug cartels for control of smuggling routes, officials say.

"The situation of security should bring advances more quickly in a migration accord; an accord that allows an orderly flow, a flow with respect for human rights that assures the security of the United States as much as Mexico," presidential spokesman Ruben Aguilar told a news conference.

Fox continues to urge President Bush to follow

through on promises to create a migration agreement that would allow more people to work legally north of the border. Instead, Bush recently approved new measures that make it harder for undocumented migrants to get a driver's license and clear the way for an extension of a security wall along the California-Mexico border.

Public safety issues near the border should put a possible migration accord "on the table again," Aguilar said. Aguilar insisted that Mexican authorities are working on the federal, state and municipal level to eradicate organized crime linked to the increased violence.

Federal police and troops have been sent to several cities along the Mexican border and other areas besieged by violence linked to drug trafficking.

Mexico's national security is not at risk, Aguilar said Monday.

"The public security of some cities and some regions of the country are at stake, but national security is not at stake," Aguilar said.

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NATIONAL



Small publishers contend Amazon has opened big doors

BY ELIZABETH M. GILLESPIE
AP Business Writer

SEATTLE — Cellular biologist Bruce Lipton holds no fond memories of his early struggles to get his book published.

One by one, the big houses in New York looked at “Biology of Belief: Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter and Miracles,” but eventually said no, suggesting his theory that signals outside cells control genes was too radical for mainstream readers.

“I wasted a whole year with them,” Lipton fumed.

Then he signed on with an independent press that relies heavily on Amazon.com Inc. Since then, he and his publisher say, more than 42,000 copies have sold in six months.

“To go in and end up using Amazon as a way of getting out there and jumping ahead of a lot of the big corporations ... that was really fun,” said Lipton, a former University of Wisconsin medical school professor who lives in Santa Cruz, Calif., about 100 miles south of his publisher, Santa Rosa-based Elite Books.

With its limitless shelf space, Seattle-based Amazon has helped countless other authors and small publishers earn the same bragging rights in the past decade, giving readers throughout the world instant access to books they might never have found.

“Book publishing at one time was clubby, and that really has changed,” Al Greco, senior researcher at the Institute for Publishing Research in Bergenfield, N.J., said.

Using data Amazon has collected about what its customers buy, considered buying, browsed but never bought, recommended to others or even wished someone would buy for them, the bookseller is able to recommend more purchases and direct searches toward products it thinks a customer is most likely to want.

In the process, it has essentially made the buying public part of a marketing machine that’s driven up demand for books that once might have been much harder to find.

Ask small publishers what they like most about Amazon, and they’ll say it’s the global reach. Another huge plus, they say, is that Amazon pays its bills — and on time.

“I spent seven months trying to collect from a major bookstore chain. Amazon drops the money in my checking account every single month without fail,” said Cathy Stucker, who runs her own publishing company out of her home in Sugar Land, Texas, and has sold hundreds of copies of her main title, “The Mystery Shopper’s Manual” on Amazon.

It’s common for publishers to spend months waiting to get paid, then receive a shipment of unsold books returned — often with an order for a new batch of books. That makes cash flow a big problem for the little guys.

“Basically, they get your inventory on consignment,” said David Cole, founder of Bay Tree Publishing in Berkeley, Calif.

By comparison, Amazon typically orders books in fairly small numbers and rarely returns them.

Greg Greely, vice president of the company’s worldwide media division, says Amazon sends back less than 10 percent of the books it orders, while some reports suggest that brick-and-mortar stores return up to half of their shipments.

In 1998, when Amazon created its Advantage program for small publishers, it touted the service as a way

to help level the playing field in an industry that has long favored the big dogs. Today, many small publishers say it’s worked.

“All publishers are basically equal, because just about all publishers’ titles are on Amazon and can be delivered to your door in a couple days,” said Kent Sturgis, president of the Independent Book Publishers Association.

Amazon keeps track of sales and inventory for its Advantage publishers, and automatically reorders books when stocks are running low. Members pay a \$29.95 fee, and Amazon takes a 55 percent cut of sales — about what most wholesalers charge.

Amazon would not disclose how many members belong to its Advantage program, other than to say “tens of thousands.” It also wouldn’t discuss details of a separate co-op fee system that has generated grumbling from some small publishers. Amazon started out selling nothing but books, but now sells power tools, beauty supplies and virtually everything else. It doesn’t disclose how many books it sells each year. Nor do its major competitors.

Because those numbers remain tightly held secrets, no one is sure how many books get sold online each year, though experts say it’s a growing slice of the publishing pie.

Internet book sales make up the bulk of so-called “direct-to-consumer” sales, which also include sales from catalogs and toll-free numbers. While direct-to-consumer sales have been rising in recent years, sales at Barnes & Noble, Inc., and Borders Group, the nation’s two largest book retail chains, have remained relatively stagnant.

Researcher Greco’s best estimate is that online sales account for 7 percent to 10 percent of total U.S. book sales annually — up from virtually nil 10 years ago.

“Without Amazon,” he said, “I think it’s safe to say there would’ve been a larger erosion in sales.”

Some experts say that Amazon hurts independent bookstores, which can’t match its vast inventory. Others contend that Amazon doesn’t bear all the blame because its rise coincided with the growth of giant bookstores and mass merchandisers such as Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., Target Corp., and wholesale price clubs.

Powell’s Books, a chain of local bookstores in Portland, Ore., has seen its sales increase steadily in the last several years. The company points to both its own Web sales, which started in 1994 — a year before Amazon went live on the Internet — and Amazon’s success making millions of people feel comfortable shopping online.

“Once they were converted and the idea was no longer scary to them, we could market to them and position ourselves as an alternative,” Dave Weich, Powell’s director of marketing and development, said.

Books, music and videos, which Amazon lumps into a single category, bring in most of the company’s money. But as part of global revenue, the media division is shrinking slightly. Last year, media products accounted for 74 percent of \$6.9 billion in revenue — down from 79 percent of 2002’s total sales of \$3.9 billion.

Barnes & Noble’s online division did \$420 million in sales last year — about 9 percent of the company’s total sales, and up from \$151 million the year before.

Many publishers say Amazon’s benefits outweigh its pitfalls, but one gripe is widespread: Amazon has driven up sales of used books — great for thrifty readers, but bad, they say, for authors who depend on royalties.

“That’s done more to hurt publishing, big and small,

than anything, and readers don’t think about it,” said Fran Baker, a romance writer who runs her own publishing company, Delphi Books, in Lee’s Summit, Mo., outside Kansas City.

Amazon, though, has seen used books spur sales of new books. “We’ve found customers that do buy used books are more likely to come back and buy (new books) from that publisher or that author,” Greely said. “It’s a way of introducing customers to new genres, new areas of interest.”

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INTERNATIONAL

Politicians scramble to approve constitution

BY ANTONIO CASTANEDA

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The Iraqi parliament delayed a session Monday on whether to approve a new constitution hours before a deadline as faction leaders failed in last-

minute talks to agree on a federated state and other divisive issues.

The two-hour delay came after some Iraqi politicians suggested that parliament should extend the deadline for approving the charter while others said it could be approved over Sunni objections as last-minute talks failed to produce agreement on a federated state and other divisive issues.

The 275-member National Assembly had been scheduled to convene at 6 p.m. (10 a.m. EDT) to consider the draft but moments ahead of the time, the meeting room in the heavily guarded Green Zone was absent of legislators.

Shiite member Mohammed Baqir al-Bahadli said members had been advised that the new starting time was 8 p.m.

The insurgency pressed ahead, with at least 13 people killed in scattered attacks, including a barber who police said was shot to death as he walked to his parlor in southwest Baghdad.

Barbers in the country have been targeted by fundamentalists who accuse them of violating a strict interpretation of Islamic teachings that say men should keep their beards long.

Kurdish parliament member Mahmoud Othman said meetings were still under way on the outstanding issues in the constitution and so far "no final agreements have been reached."

Tariq al-Hashimi, the general secretary of Iraq's biggest Sunni political group, the Iraqi Islamic party, told Al-Jazeera television that the minority's demands were not the only obstacles blocking progress.

Instead, he said Shiites and Kurds also had "points of disagreement" and it might be better to delay a decision. He didn't elaborate.

A Kurdish member of the drafting committee, Munthir al-Fadl, said that a constitution that doesn't fulfill Kurdish demands of "self-determination" and the authority of provincial governors, "will not succeed and will not even reach the gates of the National Assembly."

Al-Hashimi said his party did not believe in the "sanctity" of the interim constitution which mandated Monday as the deadline for the constitution to be approved by parliament.

An extension of Monday's deadline would require approval of two-thirds of parliament and the president and his two deputies. U.S. officials have pressured Iraqis to stick to Monday's deadline.

The Iraqis have been under strong pressure from the United States to complete the charter on time and keep on track a political process the Americans hope will lure Sunnis away from the insurgency so U.S. and other foreign troops can begin to go home next year.

Iraqi leaders had insisted the draft constitution would be presented to parliament on Monday.

"It will be today. It will be a historic day in the history of Iraq," Iraqi National Security Adviser Mouwaffak al-Rubaie told CNN just over an hour before the delay was announced.

Government spokesman Laith Kubba also said the document would be presented on time.

"Every group knows what they will lose if they don't reach an agreement," Kubba told state-run Iraqiya television.

Some Shiite and Kurdish leaders had signaled they were prepared to submit the draft to parliament Monday evening.

That risked a backlash among Sunni Arabs, who form the core of the insurgency, which could undermine the American goal of using the constitution to lure away Sunnis from the insurgency.

With stakes so high, public positions among the factions were changing by the hour.

A lawmaker from the biggest Shiite party, Jalaladin al-Shagrir, said political leaders were leaning toward extending the deadline for up to a month.

Another option expressed was to ignore Sunni objections, submit the document to parliament as planned and try to win over the Sunni public before an Oct. 15 referendum on the charter.

"I personally support postponing" parliamentary approval until Sept. 15, Sunni Arab legislator Haseeb Aref said. "I don't expect them to hand the draft today because there is no unanimity."

Sunni Arabs have asked that the issue of federalism be put off until next year. Shiites and Kurds, the two other major groups in the country, are pushing for autonomous regions in the southern and northern parts of Iraq, but Sunnis fear the proposal could split Iraq.

Sunnis also oppose other proposals endorsed by the Shiites and Kurds, including proposals for a special status for the Shiite clerical leadership and a formula for distributing oil wealth and dual citizenship.

Shiites and Kurds dominate the 275-member National Assembly and could ram through the charter over Sunni Arab objects. Other options include amending the interim constitution to extend the deadline or dissolving parliament.

Sunnis — who boycotted the Jan. 30 vote for an interim parliament — could defeat the constitution in the national referendum. If two-thirds of the voters in three provinces vote against the constitution, it would be defeated. Sunni Arabs form the majority in at least four provinces.

Sunni clerics have urged followers to vote against any constitution that could lead to the breakup of the country. American officials applied pressure to resolve differences on that and other issues before Monday's deadline.

"A lot of American blood and American treasure has been spent here," U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad said Sunday in a televised interview, adding he had made that point "abundantly clear" to the Iraqis.

In other violence Monday:

■ Insurgents fired a rocket into the city of Habaniyah, 50 miles west of Baghdad, killing six Iraqis and wounding three on Monday, the U.S. military said.

■ A municipal council member and his driver were shot to death in Khalis, police said.

■ Gunmen killed three Iraqi soldiers and wounded three others at a checkpoint in Buhriz, police said.

■ An insurgent ambush in western Baghdad killed one Iraqi soldier and injured another, police said.

Top 10 challenges faced by For Sale by Owner

...Continued from yesterday

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5. If you have to call the buyer back yourself, you may be weakening your bargaining position and may give the buyer the impression that you are desperate to sell.

6. Buyers normally will not discuss the disadvantages or shortcomings the feel are present in your property. By not knowing their objections, it's very difficult to overcome them and move the process forward.

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INTERNATIONAL



Defiant settlers link to block Gaza pullout

BY AMY TEIBEL
Associated Press Writer

NEVE DEKALIM, Gaza Strip — Defiant and tearful Jewish settlers locked the gates to their communities, formed human chains and burned tires to block troops from delivering eviction notices Monday, as Israel began its historic pullout from the Gaza Strip after 38 years of occupation.

Police and soldiers waited patiently in the sweltering sun and avoided confrontation at the behest of their commanders. In one scene, a sobbing settler pleaded with a brigadier general not to evict him before the two men embraced.

"It's a painful and difficult day, but it's a historic day," Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said.

Over the next three weeks, Israel plans to remove all 21 Jewish settlements from Gaza and four from the West Bank. The withdrawal marks the first time Israel will dismantle settlements in areas captured in the 1967 Mideast War and claimed by the Palestinians for their future state.

While Prime Minister Ariel Sharon says the pullout will improve Israel's security, Jewish settlers fiercely oppose the plan and have promised stiff, but non-violent resistance.

Israeli troops fired in the air Monday to keep back hundreds of Palestinians, including a few dozen masked gunmen, who were marching toward southern Gaza's Gush Katif bloc of settlements in celebration of the impending withdrawal. The crowd burned a cardboard model of an Israeli settlement, complete with an army watchtower.

In Gaza City, the Islamic militant group Hamas hung banners proclaiming the pullout is a result of attacks by militants on Israelis. "The blood of martyrs has led to liberation," one banner said.

Also Monday, Palestinian officials said Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas has scheduled long-delayed legislative elections for Jan. 21. Saeb Erekat, a government spokesman, said Abbas would issue a formal decree on Tuesday or Wednesday.

The elections had initially been set for July 17 but were delayed. Abbas cited technical reasons, but Hamas has accused him of seeking additional time to shore up support for his embattled Fatah party.

Thousands of Israeli troops marched into Gaza's settlements, delivering eviction notices in six settlements, but encountering protests in others. The notices gave settlers until midnight Tuesday to leave. If they ignore the deadline, they will be removed by force and could lose up to a third of government compensation.

Resistance was stiff in Gush Katif. Hundreds of settlers blocked the gates of Neve Dekalim, Gaza's largest settlement, to prevent the forces from entering.

Dozens of observant Jewish men, wearing white prayer shawls, held morning prayers at the gate, appealing for divine intervention to block the withdrawal. A crowd of youths wearing orange, the color of defiance, sat on the streets and screamed at the soldiers. "You're a partner to a crime," screamed one protester.

Troops moved into the community through a second entrance, only to be blocked by crowds who burned tires, formed human chains and scuffled with troops. When some soldiers managed to

enter, settlers took the eviction notices and burned them. One policeman was covered in green paint thrown by protesters.

Despite the standoff, there were signs that residents would leave before the deadline. After one standoff, protesters in Neve Dekalim allowed a large convoy of moving trucks to enter the main gate, and army officials said at least 200 settler families had asked for assistance in moving their belongings.

"This morning, the people stood up to the police and it was a victory. Now the (shipping) containers are coming in. It is heartbreaking and negative," said Yosef Meron, 68, of Neve Dekalim.

Military commanders listened to the settlers' appeals, but said they would not be deterred.

Maj. Gen. Dan Harel, Israel's commander over the region, said the operation was going as anticipated. "Our estimation is that by tomorrow night most of the residents will agree to leave," he said.

Harel attempted to talk to residents of Neve Dekalim, but was hastily escorted away by police after he was confronted by angry settlers.

Although many of Gaza's 8,500 Israeli residents have already left, the army estimates that thousands remain, including some 5,000 hardliners who have infiltrated Gaza to resist the pullout. Much of Monday's resistance appeared to come from the outsiders.

At the tiny, isolated Morag settlement, hundreds of people blocked troops at the gate. One man, identified by Israeli media as Liron Zeidan, burst into tears as he pleaded with officers not to remove him.

"I am not your enemy. I served as an officer under you," the man told Brig. Gen. Erez Zuckerman, the commander of the army unit waiting at the gate.

Zuckerman listened and wiped sweat off his brow, then hugged the young man. "We love you, you are part of us," he told the settlers.

In nearby Netzer Hazani, Alan Sherr, a Philadelphia native who moved to Gaza in 1979, hung an American flag upside-down outside his home. Sherr, wearing a Philadelphia Eagles cap, said he was protesting President Bush's support for the withdrawal.

"I'm feeling every negative emotion in the English dictionary," he said. "I have no more happiness and no more pride. They have taken it all away."

Resistance was much more subdued in the settlements of Nissanit, Elei Sinai and Dugit, secular communities in northern Gaza that were virtually emptied out.

In Nissanit, four soldiers came to the home of Yitzhak and Avigail Dadon, a couple in their 70s who said they would leave before the forcible removal begins. Yitzhak Dadon said that earlier in the morning, he lowered an Israeli flag that had been fluttering from his roof. Avigail Dadon cried, and a female soldier stood up to hug her.

Two residents entered an abandoned home, took out a hammer and smashed the remaining mirrors, doors and windows. Some homes were covered in graffiti, including one that read "Sharon is a Nazi."

Soldiers also helped settlers pack. In one Nissanit home, troops removed a large sundeck next to a backyard swimming pool, pulling out planks and stacking them up in a pile.

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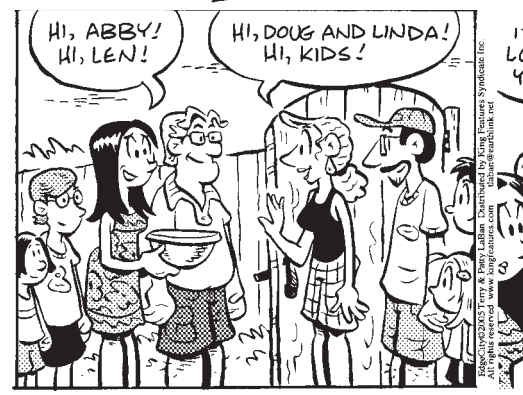


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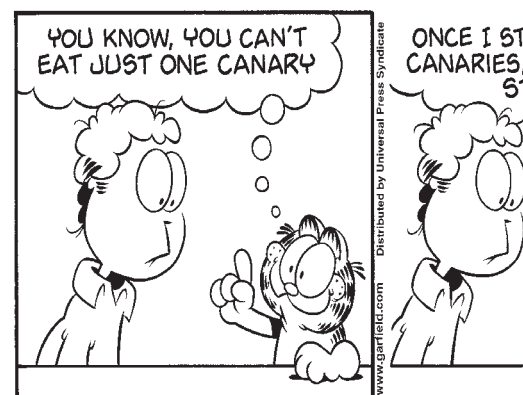
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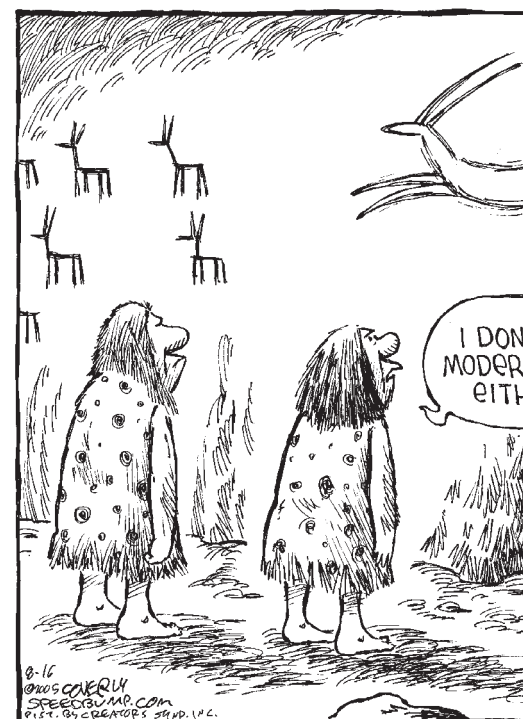
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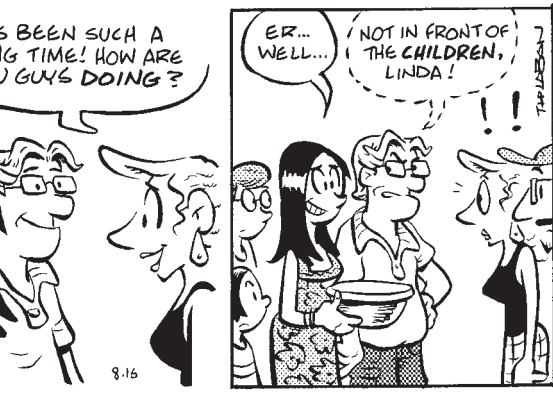


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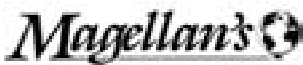
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