

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

UCLA professor emerita Ruth Roemer, J.D., addressed the city's Commission on Older Americans Wednesday.

Activist says Medicare is 'under attack'

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

Nationally-known public health activist Ruth Roemer, a professor emerita at UCLA's School of Public Health, addressed a mixed-aged crowd of residents Wednesday at the regular meeting of the city's Commission on Older Americans, where proposed Medicare and Social Security reforms topped the discussion.

Roemer and several residents at the meeting said they were concerned with the delays in adding a prescription drug plan to Medicare and the proposals for privatizing Social Security.

"Medicare is under attack by the Bush Administration," the professor said. "Medicare hasn't failed the federal government, the federal government has failed Medicare."

The speech covered the changing nature of prescription medicines and how they are now being advertised straight to the public instead of exclusively to doctors. Roemer said the change has had both good and bad implications for seniors.

"Patients are increasingly making informed decisions about their medications along with their doctors, showing they are very knowledgeable about what's out there," Roemer said. "But drug costs have also risen significantly."

In 2001, pharmaceutical companies spent 16 percent of their total budget on advertising their products directly to consumers, but during that same year prescription costs increased by 17 percent, Roemer said.

"So it would at least seem like there is a correlation between the increased spending and rising drug costs," she said.

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City council sends message with airport appointment

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

On the surface, last week's city council appointment of Ofer Grossman to the Santa Monica Airport Commission seemed straight forward.

But Grossman — a novice to airport issues — was chosen to replace Todd Cleary, the influential and experienced sitting chairman.

While the appointment ends Cleary's six-year career guiding the city's aviation policies — both as a member of an airport task force and the commission — it sends a strong message from city council members that they want airport commissioners to take residents' concerns more seriously.

Although some residents and elected officials believed Cleary worked tirelessly on airport issues, they felt the commission as a whole did not emphasize concerns of residents living around the airport.

They said they hoped the new appointment would send a clear signal to other airport commissioners to be more resident-friendly.

"(Cleary) generally voted with the majority, and I think we need a new direction," said Councilman Ken Genser, the city council's liaison to the Airport Commission. "It's not about Todd, he has been a diligent, hard working public servant. I just think we need a bit of a different emphasis on the commission."

Cleary said he is hurt by the accusations, and claimed no council members had ever complained about his actions on the Airport Commission until he wasn't re-appointed.

"I don't think it's really fair that the city council would listen to a small group of citizens who are concerned about a specific issue and then use that to unseat a sitting chair," Cleary said. "It would have been one thing if I had been doing a bad job, but we had taken a contentious city commission and turned it into a viable commission."

"I really feel stabbed in the back here," he said. "I did so much work for them, and nobody had the

courtesy to tell me they were having any problems with me."

Cathy Larson, co-chair of the airport committee of the Friends of Sunset Park, a neighborhood association whose residents live closest to the airport, said residents felt they were not being represented by Cleary or almost any member of the commission.

"I really feel stabbed in the back here. I did so much work for them, and nobody had the courtesy to tell me they were having any problems with me."

— TODD CLEARY

Former Airport Commission Chairman

According to fliers distributed by neighborhood organizations, residents were upset airport commissioners didn't recommend a stricter noise ordinance for airplanes, that they approved facilities that supported jet operations, that they didn't try to mitigate jet noise while the planes were still on the ground and that commissioners were insensitive to resident concerns.

"People were frustrated because they felt their complaints were falling on deaf ears," Larson said. "Residents would go up and complain and nothing would ever be done."

But Cleary said he only supported improvements that would make jet operations at the airport safer, and that he is completely behind the city's noise ordinance.

"They are saying don't support anything having to do with the jets," he said. "Well, I believe we need to support some things that will ensure the safety of the

See APPOINTMENT, page 5

Calif. senator says desert water project could be 'terrible mistake'

BY MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press Writer

California Sen. Dianne Feinstein is urging the Metropolitan Water District to pull the plug on a plan involving a Santa Monica company to pump water from the Mojave Desert to quench the thirst of urban Southern California.

Feinstein wrote a letter Wednesday to MWD chairman Phillip Pace, saying it "would be a terrible mistake" to go ahead with the deal with Santa Monica-based Cadiz Inc. to draw water from an aquifer on desert land owned by the firm.

Cadiz also wants to store water from the Colorado River beneath the desert.

Feinstein's letter appeared to be an attempt to buttress support on the MWD board for an eventual vote to cancel a tentative contract with Cadiz.

The water district, which provides water for 17 million people in Southern California, probably will take no action on the project until the federal government issues its final assessment of an environmental impact report, MWD spokesman Bob Muir said.

See PROJECT, page 6

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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

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

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ You could be irritated. If you step back and look for a solution, you'll find a resolution. Children and loved ones act up and could be unusually fiery. Communicate your bottom line so others can hear. You aren't changing anyone right now. Tonight: Vanish. You need a break.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Others push to have decisions go their way. A domestic matter could be unusually irritating. Take action rather than losing your temper. If you need to, focus on your work until you have calmed down. Unexpected news throws you off. Tonight: Swap war stories with your friends.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Detach. If you start fuming, you could become accident-prone. Don't take a situation so personally. You have your hands full, juggling calls, getting your work done and staying on top of a problem. Take a walk if you think you're on overload. Clear your mind. Tonight: Work late.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Your finances might have you reeling. Think twice before you start handling a problem. You might want to find an expert. Just don't do anything to contribute to the issue at hand. When you find experts and detach, you will feel a lot better. Tonight: Escape, watching a favorite TV show or movie.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Others twist and turn. You might become frustrated, as getting a straight answer could become close to impossible. Slow down and do some important thinking, reaffirming your focus. Later on, a partner reveals more of what is on her or his mind. Tonight: Help another open up.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ As you'll find out, swallowing your anger gets you nowhere. Instead, relax and do some thinking before you leap into action. Learn to discharge your anger in a more appropriate way rather than hurting yourself or blowing up. Let an associate make the first move. Tonight: Listen well.

♎ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Visualize what you want. Go for what you want, but don't be surprised when others react. Sometimes you have a controversial way of handling matters or expressing your thoughts. Know when to sprinkle in diplomacy. Tonight: Treat someone to dinner.

♏ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★ Step back. Do little. Stay on top of your work, despite others and their disruptions. You might not be comfortable with what is going on. Take a walk rather than losing your temper. Stall any decisions until later in the day. You get the results you want then. Tonight: Whatever makes the Fish happy.

♐ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Reach out for a child or loved one you care a lot about. A friend could be on the warpath. Help this person calm down. Together you pave the way to success. Juggle demands, knowing that you might have to work quite late. Tonight: Clear your desk.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ You might feel as if you are in a pressure cooker. Deal with what is going on in a clear and direct manner. A boss pushes you hard. Meet his or her demands. Use your creativity with other matters. Surprisingly, associates understand. Tonight: Let off steam.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You might want to put earplugs in, as everyone seems to be on edge. Don't frustrate those around you. Approach others with an upbeat and positive manner. You can make or break someone's day. Bring extra work home, if possible. Tonight: Screen calls.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Deal with your problems, screening yourself from others. An associate might have a totally different idea of what might be acceptable. Review personal matters quietly. Stall in the face of pressure right now. Tonight: Get on the phone.

CORRECTION — In the Aug. 21 edition, the Daily Press mischaracterized the development on Main Street proposed by Howard Jacobs. The 133-unit housing and retail development is comprised of rental apartments.

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LOCAL



Promenade smarts



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press
Frank Nicotero, host of the television show "Street Smarts," interviews a contestant plucked from the Third Street Promenade Wednesday. The comedy game show asks contestants to predict if people interviewed on the street answered questions correctly.

Northridge man arrested by SMPD for sexual assault

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica Police arrested a Northridge man on Monday after he allegedly raped his ex-girlfriend at a local hotel, police said.

At about 1 p.m., the victim came into the SMPD station and reported that she had been raped by her ex-boyfriend, identified as Edwin Luis Martin, a 28-year-old Hispanic man. Police obtained a warrant for his arrest and booked him into the Santa Monica jail on Tuesday.

Martin has been charged with attempted murder, false imprisonment and sexual assault. His bail was set at \$550,000.

Buca di Beppo hosts charity event for Boys and Girls Club

By Daily Press staff

Buca di Beppo restaurant will host the Second Annual Spaghetti Showdown Saturday, August 24, with all the proceeds going to the Boys and Girls Club of Santa Monica. Starting at 2 p.m., contestants will gorge on all the spaghetti they can eat, and hands may not be used. The \$30 fee will go directly to charity, and the winner will earn a \$200 cocktail party. Local businesses and other organizations are encouraged to participate, and check in will start at 12:30 p.m. Buca di Beppo is located at 1442 Second Street between Santa Monica Boulevard and Broadway. For more information, call Everette Perry at 310-399-9719. Contestants are suggested to wear old clothes and a bib.



Looks like the minor pulses of south swell we saw Wednesday will carry over and be good for small, inconsistent surf again today. Expect predominantly waist-high waves and below, best exposures in the north.

Forecasts show new southwest swell arriving Friday, building early so exposed spots should start to see sets by afternoon.

Expect surf to hit shoulder-high throughout Orange County's better exposed breaks, chest-high in the Santa Monica Bay and Malibu.



Low-	4:17 a.m.	-0.43'
High-	10:33 a.m.	4.31'
Low-	3:47 p.m.	1.90'
High-	9:43 p.m.	5.90'

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

The Q-Line

City officials are considering installing cameras at various intersections throughout the city to bust motorists running red lights.

Surveillance cameras are also going to be installed on the beach so emergency personnel can monitor activity on the packed shoreline.

Some have even suggested that surveillance cameras be placed on the Third Street Promenade to reduce crime.

Many argue that these cameras are an

invasion of privacy. This week Q-Line wants to know:

"Are these surveillance cameras necessary? Do you think your privacy is compromised when 'Big Brother' is watching?"

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

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OPINION

LETTERS

Sex offender population list not complete

Editor:

I want to know why in Monday's article, "City's Sex Offender Population at 50," that the 50 count doesn't represent the additional figure of non-registered sex offenders that is masked in the homeless and housed population? I want to know why the city council and mayor refuse to address and apologize for the school flyer that encourages our kids to walk up to complete strangers and engage in friendly conversations. With all of the kidnappings/murders of kids, it would seem to me that our mayor and the city council would take a stand with that damn school flyer.

Pro Se
Santa Monica

Councilman misquoted

Editor:

In SMDP's Aug. 21 article "Furniture approved for public safety building," I am quoted as stating "There have been a lot of problems and a lot of issues ... but they have all been taken care of." However, when interviewed, I very deliberately said something quite different: "Like any complex project, there have been a lot of problems and a lot of issues ..."

The omitted phrase dramatically changes the context of my interview regarding the public safety facility.

The complete sentence conveys my satisfaction with our city staff's ability to successfully problem-solve the various issues that affect all large scale projects. The truncated quote inaccurately tells your readers that I think there have been lots of prob-

lems associated with this building.

In fact, the public safety facility is due to open, on schedule, in approximately seven months. The ribbon-cutting will culminate a remarkably successful collaboration between numerous city departments and private contractors.

Richard Bloom
Councilmember, City of Santa Monica

Council needs to focus on city issues

Editor:

In your recent article about the city council asking the governor to reexamine California's death penalty. I say lethal injection for whom? Looks like the Santa Monica City Council has injected its own self this time with way too much self-aggrandizement and has turned its back on the pressing needs of this city.

In its wisdom to take on the state and federal laws that you and I voted for either through our initiatives or through our representatives, the city council has slapped the face of us of those who believe that they were elected to solve the problems of Santa Monica, not San Quentin.

Notwithstanding the fact that California has one of the most stringent death penalty procedures and applications in the nation (11 executions since 1977), this is yet another example of how our city representatives have other "outside" agendas and motives. Perhaps a few more murders in our city or a few more shootings, and they will, instead of taking up issues outside their purview with such vigor, start to respond to the real questions of city needs. Nah!

L.A. Schmidt
Santa Monica

Pushing envelope may not be politically correct, but effective



TITTINGER'S TAKE

By Michael J. Tittinger

Lesbians.
Flautence.
Penis size.

There, I said them. Now I feel better. Now we can move on.

A friend of mine had a good deal of advice for my column and me the other night — Stop Writing It! Or, at the very least, change the tone altogether. It seems "Tittinger's Take" has been taking the wrong tact all along. A more mature sense of style is necessary, Jo ana reiterated, in order to gain the trust of my audience. Gain their trust and then they will listen ... and follow. She likened me to the man yelling at the Big Blue Bus driver to let him off between the designated stops, hootin' and hollerin' and causing a stir. The squeaky wheel may get the oil, she reasoned, but the squeaks need not be tantrumish. People will listen to maturity and associate that with wisdom and reverence, not to the man yelling obscenities at that Big Blue Bus operator in his Big Blue uniform.

Agreed.

However, none of the other Big Blue Bus passengers are going to rally behind the docile passenger who "just takes it," I countered. They may side with the easygoing man quick with a wink, smile and quip to make them all smile at the absurdity of the

driver's refusal to depart from the regimented routine. Laughter is a great equalizer. Laughter instills an immediate sense of community. Laughter bonds us.

It was then that Howard Stern entered the argument. (Coincidentally, this was close to the same time civility exited the argument.) The ignominious radio personality. Has long been my fallback argument for someone so derided yet so important as a guardian of our First Amendment rights to Free Speech. His immature and tantrumish ways have also gained him millions of fans and a wealth of influence, should he ever use it to affect change. Yes, he is crude. Yes, he is immature. Yes, he demeans women and minorities and societal leaders (in addition to himself and his co-workers and the pope and just about everyone else). No one is immune from occasional jabs. Nor should they be in a society that strives to treat everyone with equal respect.

Now I know that letters will be forwarded to yours truly in regard to Stern's offensive style, his immaturity, his foul mouth, his complete lack of savoir faire. In most nations, he'd be imprisoned. In the United States, he is targeted by some and championed by others, and that is what makes this nation what it is, what it represents. Yes, he uses language some consider offensive, but doesn't comedic usage help take the sting out of the very words he uses? Yes, he glorifies the female body, but doesn't that prompt us to discuss that very perception of women in today's society? Doesn't the absurdity of the entire superficial banter only serve to illustrate that we are all the

same deep down? And yes, he picks on just about everyone, including himself, his wife and his mother. No one is immune. Doesn't pointing out dissimilarities, albeit through humor, really just make us realize how similar we all really are? How silly these biases and prejudices are in the end!

Self-deprecation keeps us humble, instills us with a sense of poverty of spirit and allows us to come to terms with ourselves as unique and idiosyncratic spirits.

In the end, it's Stern's willingness to voice his opinions on every topic imaginable that wins my radio-tuning vote. He's not stifling conversations that are too sensitive for some; not shying away from teasing us all for our own buried beliefs.

Keeping mum solves nothing. Silence may be golden, but it doesn't affect change. Public discussion and debate, and yes, even the occasional off-color remark and moment of brevity, sweeps the mystery of hurtful words and perceptions aside and ushers in a forum for change. It actually comforts me a bit that Stern is on the radio every morning doing more to protect my right to free speech by pushing the envelope than all of the politicians in Sacramento combined. Few entertainers have ever had a more documented cache of "closet listeners." They are the people who tune in regularly but are reluctant to admit to others that they listen to the show. In essence, they are following their hearts by tuning in, and adhering to society's politically correct police by denying their media whereabouts. They should listen to their hearts and express themselves. We all should.

Be proud we live in a city like Santa Monica, a municipality that welcomes people and innovative ideas with open arms. Our fair-haired city is a bustling metropolis, a beachside resort and a titillating tourist attraction all in one. Yet, its best feature is its size (roughly 83,000) and its ability to adapt and change. Few cities this size not only welcome the public's input, but actually seek it out, through public meetings, community newspapers, public forums and interactive Web sites. If there is an issue on the community's collective mindset, it seldom gets swept under the bureaucratic red carpet. Whether you're the voice of change or majority, those in high places will likely hear your voice. You don't even have to leave the house to take part. There are live telecasts of city council and Planning Commission meetings both on television (CityTV Channel 16) and on the Internet (Santa Monica's official Web page at <http://pen.ci.santa-monica.ca.us/cm/>).

If there is one thing Santa Monica can celebrate, it's the city's unique open-door policies when it comes to governing, a feature officials tout and constituents demand. So take advantage of it. Be heard, Santa Monica. Get up on your soapbox and put the discussion out on the table where we can all take a bite! Because the squeaky wheel does indeed get the oil.

I think Howard would enjoy it here in Santa Monica, though it could probably use a few more lesbians in his estimation.

(Mike Tittinger is a freelance writer living in Santa Monica).

Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 530 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 200, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

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LOCAL



Appointment process sees new political wrangling

APPOINTMENT, from page 1

airport and the planes taking off from there.”

“Putting our heads in the sand and pretending the airport is going away ... is irresponsible,” Cleary added. “We need to actively manage it and continue to plan for its operation in the future.”

And for the first time the appointment process for anything less than the planning commission took on a political connotation.

The Friends of Sunset Park and the Ocean Park Community Organization endorsed Grossman, a member of Friends of Sunset Park. Members of the two neighborhood associations actively campaigned and lobbied city council members to appoint Grossman.

Larson vowed the groups would continue the practice until they felt represented on the Airport Commission.

“Being passive doesn’t do anything,” she said. “We’re moving toward a more proactive commission that makes a conscience effort to look into opportunities to mitigate the affects of the airport on the community.”

“We are looking for candidates that will be conscience of that impact and who will be proactive, and who will endorse measures that would mitigate as much as possible under federal regulations,” she added.

But the campaign to appoint Grossman upset some council members who feared politicizing the appointment process could essentially turn it into a popularity contest.

“I would suggest that input is always welcome, but it should be helpful input and not I want so-and-so,” Genser said. “It should be based on the quality of the comments and the quantity of them.”

Councilman Robert Holbrook said he thought campaigning for appointments was a bad idea.

“They can do it, but I think that it’s a mistake,” he said. “I think they have pushed that button too hard and for too long.”

Holbrook also noted that Cleary had a nearly perfect attendance record on the Airport Commission and had taken on a lot of responsibility, but in the end he didn’t fight Grossman’s nomination because it was a losing battle.

“I kind of counted noses and thought what’s the point of fighting it,” he said. “I noted that Todd had only missed one meeting in a year and a half. He had a good attendance record, and I really appreciate that.”

Cleary said if neighborhood organizations begin to affect the appointment process then commissioners may feel less inclined to vote their conscience and instead vote the way residents want them to.

“As a former commissioner and board member, I have the responsibility to listen to what everyone has to say,” Cleary said. “But if I think they are wrong, I’m not going to vote that way just because there is a lot of pressure being applied.”

But Larson defends campaigning for appointees because unlike the pilots association, jet operators and the federal government, residents do not have advocates looking out for their best interests.

“The federal government already has their advocate in the FAA, and the aviation interests have their own lobby groups in existence that have ties to the FAA and who can put pressure on them,” she said. “Well, residents don’t have that, and we are looking for commissioners who will represent the views of the community.”

However, Holbrook pointed out that there isn’t much the Airport Commission, or the city for that matter, has the power to control.

“I wouldn’t want to be Mr. Grossman because he is going to find out that many of the problems at the airport are beyond the city’s control,” he said. “And his neighbors are going to expect him to deliver some changes that we haven’t been able to. And then what’s going to happen?”

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Social Security will remain solvent for baby boomers

ACTIVIST, from page 1

Roemer reviewed federal proposals for adding a prescription drug plan to Medicare and said she believed it would be only a matter of time before Republicans and Democrats agree on a plan.

“I think the handwriting is on the wall and ... there are signs that something may pass soon,” Roemer said. “I think while all these Congress people are home during the summer they will get pressured to pass something.”

But Roemer also noted that the pharmaceutical industry employs more lobbyists in Washington than there are members of Congress.

“The question is whether it will be a good system or if we will have to fight for more,” she said.

Last month a plan to add a prescription drug plan to Medicare was knocked down because Republicans and Democrats could not agree on who would administer such a plan. Democrats advocated for Medicare to control the plan, and Republicans wanted it in the hands of private insurance companies.

But Roemer said Medicare has been able to keep its administrative costs between 3-5 percent annually, while pri-

vate insurance companies have administrative costs between 12-15 percent.

“That should be proof enough that Medicare can handle administering a national system like this proposal and within budget,” Roemer said.

Roemer also said talk of Social Security becoming insolvent in 15 years is a myth. She said as the baby boomer generation, or those born between 1948 and 1965, begin to retire they will draw heavily on the federal retirement system.

Studies suggest that an increasing retirement age, along with higher salaries by younger workers and interest from Social Security’s bonds, will pay for 70 percent of the deficit created by the baby boomers retiring, Roemer said.

She also noted that Social Security can be “saved” by increasing payroll taxes collected for SSI by 1.2 percent from the current rate of 6.2 percent to roughly 7.3 percent.

And a lot of the remaining deficit can be saved by keeping the federal government from using Social Security for covering budget gaps.

“It’s not been a trust fund for retirement,” she said. “It’s really been a cookie jar for the government to reach into when they need money.”

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STATE

Guilty



Dan Trevan/Associated Press

David Westerfield, right, sits with members of his defense team, as the verdict is read in his murder trial Wednesday in a courtroom in San Diego. Westerfield, a divorced self-employed engineer, was convicted of kidnapping and murdering 7-year-old Danielle van Dam, whose disappearance was the first in a series of high-profile child abductions that have horrified the country this year.

UC lecturers vote for strike

BY JESSICA BRICE
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Lecturers and clerical workers for the University of California have voted to strike, union leaders announced Wednesday. The strike is expected to start next week on the UC Berkeley campus and at the Office of the President in Oakland.

Lecturers have claimed for years that they are being exploited by university administrators. They make up 11 percent of the faculty, but teach 46 percent of the classes, according to the University of California Council of the American Federation of Teachers.

UC spokesman Paul Schwartz, however, called the strike "illegal." He said the union has not yet exhausted all of its bargaining options, such as using state-appointed mediators.

Lecturers have worked without a contract for more than two years, while clerical workers have been bargaining for a year.

The strike could disrupt fall classes, which start Monday at UC Berkeley. Clerical workers are expected to strike on Monday, and the lecturers will join the strike by Wednesday.

Union President Kevin Roddy, a UC Davis lecturer, said only progress toward a contract will stop a strike. "The administration will have to show us that they willing to engage in serious bargaining."

The union's roughly 4,500 lecturers voted using mail ballots, with 88 percent of the votes favoring the strike.

At the heart of the dispute is the union's complaint that lecturers have little job security and are paid considerably less than tenure-track faculty. The average lecturer makes around \$35,000 a year, while tenure-track professors can earn up to \$80,000.

The University of California also makes lecturers reapply for their jobs every year, or in some case every semester, for the first six years of employment. Roddy said the practice "plays havoc with their lives."

Ecosystem may be threatened

PROJECT, from page 1

Feinstein, a Democrat, has questioned the project for more than a year, concerned that it would damage the desert ecosystem that relies on the same aquifer.

"The likelihood that this could result in the destruction of the California desert as we know it — similar to what happened in Owens Valley — is why I strongly oppose this project," she wrote.

Cadiz has repeatedly said it has taken steps to ensure the project won't damage the desert ecosystem and has included an extensive monitoring system to track the impact.

Wendy Mitchell, a spokeswoman for Cadiz, said the company welcomed Feinstein's effort to speed a final decision on the project, which has been on the table for at least four years. The company wants to go forward with a project that's been approved by all appropriate federal agencies after adequate public review, Mitchell said.

Feinstein has also been working to deny federal money to the Cadiz project if

it wins approval from the Bureau of Land Management. She inserted a funding prohibition in the Senate version of the annual spending bill for the Interior Department, which includes BLM.

The full Senate is expected to vote on the bill next month. It won unanimous support in the Appropriations Committee, on which Feinstein serves.

An aide said the letter to the MWD was being prepared before Feinstein learned of a proposal for a new Colorado River water board. The senator was trying to determine whether the board, proposed by two state lawmakers, could override a possible MWD decision to cancel the contract.

"We'd be concerned by any effort to circumvent MWD," Feinstein spokesman Howard Gantman said.

A key facet of the Cadiz plan is to store Colorado River in wet years and pump the water to Southern California when needed. The deal was conceived as a way to offset a threatened reduction in the amount of water the state can draw from the river.

STATE



In a word, Scrabble competition is cutthroat

BY BEN FOX
Associated Press Writer

SAN DIEGO — Nigel Richardson used obscure words such as *genros*, *awee*, and *butut* to beat his opponent in a tense game of Scrabble.

But don't ask him for the definitions.

A 35-year-old champion of the board game in his native New Zealand, Richardson doesn't really care what the words mean. "Meaning is a luxury," he said.

But that's OK. His opponent, a college student from Bangkok, doesn't even speak English.

The two were among 700 die-hard fans of the crossword game who gathered this week in a ballroom in downtown San Diego for the National Scrabble Championship.

Competitors from eight countries and 40 U.S. states play 31 games over five days. The player with the best record when the tourney ends Thursday receives \$25,000.

"This isn't your grandmother's Scrabble. This is cutthroat," said John D. Williams, executive director of the 10,000-member National Scrabble Association, based in Greenport, N.Y., which sponsors the competition every other year.

The game, invented in the 1930s by an out-of-work architect named Alfred M. Butts, involves selecting letters from a bag and forming words on a board, tallying the score based on the value of each letter and earning bonus points from certain spots on the board.

Most players in a casual game — disdainfully called a "kitchen table game" by tournament contestants — would be thrilled to hit 200 points. In the championships, scores above 400 aren't unusual.

Barbara Besadny, 70, scored 112 points in just one turn with "deglazes."

"They always joke about the blue-haired ladies, but they shouldn't because a lot of those ladies are good," said Besadny, a retiree from Madison, Wis.

Nearly all contestants have one thing in common: Casual games are no longer an option.

"I get talked into a playing a kitchen table game about every two years, and I always end up swearing I'll never do it again," says Robert Felt, 49, of Atlanta, a former champion. "It's like I'm Andre Agassi and my neighbor wants to play a friendly game of tennis. It's just not fun."

At home or in competition, all words must be in English. But that doesn't rule out entries such as *xi*, a Greek letter; *puja*, a Hindu prayer ritual; or *qoph*, a letter in the Hebrew alphabet.

In cases where one player challenges another, the final arbiter is the Scrabble dictionary, which has long lists of words but only a few definitions.

The book includes Richards' winning entries: *Genros* is a group of elder statesmen in Japan. *Butut* is a monetary unit in Gambia. *Awee* is an adverb meaning awhile.

Richards, who works as an engineer in Malaysia, shrugs off the definitions.

"How am I going to use a word like 'awee' in a sentence? If I do, the person I'm talking to won't know it so what's the point?" he said.

"They always joke about the blue-haired ladies, but they shouldn't because a lot of those ladies are good."

— BARBARA BESADNY
70-year-old contestant

The point was to beat his opponent, Panupol Sujjayakorn of Thailand, which he did by a score of 458 to 328.

Despite the loss, and his inability to speak English, the 17-year-old student from Bangkok is one of about two dozen players considered to have a serious shot at winning the tournament.

In fact, there is a contingent of more than a dozen Thai players who have memorized thousands of letter combinations as part of a fanatic devotion to the very American game, according to Stefan Fatsis, the author of "Word Freak," a book about competitive Scrabble.

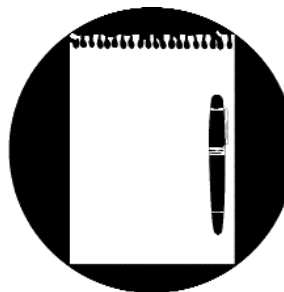
"It's like computer code for them. It has nothing to do with learning English. It's completely stripped of meaning," said Fatsis, a reporter for The Wall Street Journal who is also competing in the national championship.

During the tournament, the ballroom is silent except for the whispers of judges and the clink of letters being fished from a bag between turns. Players rarely speak and use chess clocks to ration the 25 minutes each contestant is allowed per match.

Contestants in six divisions play tournament games from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., checking their rankings on bulletin boards between rounds. Many stay up until midnight, playing Scrabble for fun in their hotel rooms.

"It's a fun game but some people take it pretty seriously," said Besadny.

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Tulelake City Hall reopens after shut down for insurance

By The Associated Press

TULELAKE — Tulelake City Hall reopened Wednesday after members of the Public Entity Risk Management Authority voted to add Tulelake to their insurance coverage plan during a special emergency meeting.

Tulelake had been without liability insurance since Aug. 8, forcing the city to decrease certain services, including police patrols and garbage pickups.

State officials have refused to allow policy changes that would have excluded acts of terrorism, causing insurance companies in California to eliminate liability coverages. Self-insured pooling groups were not affected.

"The door to City Hall is now unlocked," said City Clerk Joe Cordonier. "The garbage truck is warming up and we'll be back to normal operations shortly."



STATE

10 area residents arrested for importing Ya Ba pills

BY JENNIFER COLEMAN
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Ten Sacramento-area residents were indicted on federal charges of importing a candy-like form of methamphetamine called Ya Ba.

Federal authorities said the

arrests on Monday are the first significant bust involving the pills, which are imported from Thailand and Laos and are gaining favor among young adults and teens.

U.S. Customs Service agents said the flavored, chewable pills have gained popularity on the West

Coast, especially in Southeast Asian communities, but haven't yet hit the mainstream drug scene. Ya Ba is increasingly found at rave parties, said Daniel R. Lane, resident agent with the U.S. Customs Service in Sacramento.

The 10 suspects smuggled hundreds of thousands of tiny, brightly colored pills, he said Wednesday.

"Depending on the state of the supply, the pills cost between \$10 and \$20 apiece," Lane said.

The U.S. Customs Service has intercepted 45 shipments this year and about 150 since summer of 2000, he said. A typical shipment

contains between 1,500 and 2,000 pills, but agents have uncovered shipments as large as 13,000.

"The pills are composed of methamphetamine, caffeine, a binding agent to hold them together, and a scent, flavor and coloring," Lane said.

Most smell strongly of vanilla, but Lane said he has seen one batch that was bright purple and smelled like grape candy.

The pills can be eaten, but are more often smoked, said Anne Pings, the assistant U.S. attorney prosecuting the cases. Ya Ba, which is also known as "Nazi speed," can produce a high that

lasts 10 hours.

Customs agents seized shipments of Ya Ba at an Oakland port and at international mail processing facilities in Oakland, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Honolulu during a two-year investigation.

The maximum penalty under federal law for conspiracy to import depends on how many tablets were imported, officials said. If convicted, some of the defendants could face 10 year minimum federal sentences with a maximum sentence of life in prison.

Motorists on alert



Damian Dovarganes/Associated Press

Motorists on the 105 freeway in Los Angeles are alerted to a vehicle police are looking for as part of a statewide "Amber Alert" Tuesday. Nichole Timmons, 10, was found safe about 300 miles away in Nevada with family friend, Glenn Park, after the man's truck was stopped on U.S. 95. Timmons' was just the latest success story for the Amber Alert, the emergency response system whose use has been spreading following several high-profile abductions.

Assembly makes another attempt to raise smoking age to 21 in CA

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — For the second time this year, the Assembly advanced legislation Wednesday that would make California the only state to ban smoking by anyone under age 21.

The backup bill is needed because similar legislation previously approved by the Assembly appears stalled in the Senate, said Assemblyman Rod Pacheco, R-Riverside.

He amended a Senate bill with the ban previously sought by Assemblyman Paul Koretz, D-West Hollywood. The measure was sent back to committees for review after the amendments were

added on a 42-10 roll call.

Assemblyman Dario Frommer, D-Los Angeles, called it "a smoke screen" and "a cynical ploy" to divert attention from Assembly Republicans' opposition to a proposed \$2.13 tax increase on a pack of cigarettes as part of Democrats' plan to bridge the state's \$23.6 billion budget gap.

But the move drew support from Koretz and other Democrats, who said the combination of a tax increase and age limit increase would help reduce smoking particularly by young people.

And it drew opposition from Republicans who argued the state shouldn't impose such a ban on legal adults, including those who serve in the military.



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NATIONAL



FDA approves trial of drug to treat West Nile virus

BY ULA ILNYTZKY
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — The Food and Drug Administration has approved the first national trial of a drug to treat the West Nile virus, which has spread across half the country and killed at least 31 people since it was first detected in the United States three years ago.

The testing of alpha-interferon will begin immediately at New York Hospital Queens, in the borough where the mosquito-borne virus was first found in the country.

James Rahal, the study's chief investigator, said the trial will enroll 40 people 50 and older who have been hospitalized with the virus. Patients across the country can enroll, but the trial most likely will focus on Louisiana and Mississippi, where at least 10 West Nile deaths have been confirmed this year.

Rahal said the length of the trial will depend on the results.

Alpha-interferon is already sold by Schering-Plough as Intron A for treatment of hepatitis C.

Laboratory tests have shown interferon to be effective in lessening the symptoms and length of hepatitis in infected patients. It has also proven effective against St. Louis encephalitis, a virus similar to West Nile.

Rahal said Wednesday that he treated 15 Louisiana

patients with the drug in a study to make sure it was safe for people with West Nile.

He said the results were promising enough to get the FDA to approve the new trial. "Encouraging," he said. "Not convincing, but encouraging."

"Once damage has occurred in the brain, it's not likely to be reversible, at least not by a drug."

— JAMES RAHAL
Chief investigator

The West Nile virus is passed on to humans by mosquitoes that have bitten infected birds. Government researchers say less than 1 percent of people who are bitten will become severely ill.

Those who do suffer flu-like symptoms and, in the worst cases, encephalitis, a potentially fatal inflammation of the brain.

The study will target patients whose virus is still in the blood, where it circulates before entering the brain, Rahal said. Therefore, patients must begin treatment within the first four days of being admitted.

"Once damage has occurred in the brain, it's not likely to be reversible, at least not by a drug," Rahal said. "What we want to do is increase the body's defense against the virus, and decrease the amount of virus that ultimately enters the brain or the nervous system."

The protocol calls for two weeks of interferon, whose side effects include a decrease in the white blood count and inflammation of the liver — both reversible once the drug is stopped. Rahal said long-term use could cause depression, confusion and fatigue.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health is also funding research on three West Nile virus vaccines and said this week that one may be ready for human trials next year.

West Nile virus has been found in other countries for decades. From 1999 through 2001, government researchers confirmed 161 U.S. cases, including 18 deaths.

As of Wednesday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 269 suspected cases this year. The CDC also said the virus has so far been blamed for 13 deaths in five states: Illinois (1), Kentucky (1), Louisiana (8), Mississippi (2) and Texas (1).

AOL in pact to buy AT&T stake in Time Warner Entertainment

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — AOL Time Warner Inc. is buying out AT&T Corp.'s stake in their cable television, moviemaking and programming partnership for an estimated \$8.5 billion to \$9 billion. It said it may sell a stake in its cable TV operations in an initial public offering as early as next year.

The deal announced Wednesday involves the decade-old Time Warner Entertainment partnership, which includes most of AOL Time Warner's cable TV systems and its Warner Bros. film studio, its Home Box Office pay-TV service and other programming businesses.

The two sides have been in discussions for some time on unwinding the partnership known as TWE. AOL Time Warner owns 72.4 percent of the partnership, and AT&T owns the rest.

The deal gives AT&T cash and readily saleable assets, while AOL Time Warner avoids having to buy its partner out for cash at a time when it is struggling under a heavy debt.

Under the terms of the deal, AT&T gets \$2.1 billion in cash and AOL Time Warner stock valued at \$1.5 billion, as well as a 21 percent stake in the Time Warner Cable Inc. business in exchange for its stake in TWE.

While AOL Time Warner didn't affix a value to the cable stake, The Wall Street Journal said it would boost the total value that AT&T is getting in the deal to between \$8.5 billion to \$9 billion.

For its part, AOL Time Warner gets full ownership of Warner Bros. and HBO and stakes in the TV channels Comedy Central, Court TV and The WB Network.

In addition, AT&T and Comcast have agreed to make America Online's high-speed version of its Internet serv-

ice available on Comcast's cable systems. That type of arrangement could give AOL access to more customers.

The stake in the cable business should benefit Comcast Corp., which is buying AT&T's cable TV businesses and would inherit AT&T's stake in TWE. The former Time Warner created the TWE partnership in 1992.

"The fact is that AOL or Time Warner has had managerial control of all of the assets within TWE since 1999."

— KATHERINE STYPONIAS
Prudential Securities analyst

The cash, AOL stock and Time Warner Cable shares will go to Comcast if that company completes its AT&T cable operation before year's end, which is expected.

AT&T and Comcast will get an immediate influx of cash and will be able to sell its stakes in both AOL Time Warner and the new cable business in the future to generate more money.

AOL Time Warner chief executive Dick Parsons said the deal was "the best possible outcome for our investors" and will simplify its overall structure.

"AOL Time Warner will recapture total ownership and control of its content businesses, enabling us to manage this portfolio of assets for maximum value. And all of the company's state-of-the-art cable assets will be combined for the first time into a well-capitalized, pure-play cable company," he said.

AOL plans to conduct an initial public offering of part of its stake in the Time Warner cable business soon after the restructuring in completed in early 2003.

That would enable it to pay down the debt incurred in making the \$2.1 billion cash payment to AT&T, AOL said.

"The fact is that AOL or Time Warner has had managerial control of all of the assets within TWE since 1999," said Katherine Styponias, an analyst at Prudential Securities. "So it's not as if being completely owned by AOL is going to mean things are going to change radically. Nevertheless, it's one less thing to worry about when trying to put a value on the company."

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NATIONAL

FBI issues nationwide alert for newly discovered associate of 9-11 hijackers

BY JOHN SOLOMON
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The FBI is urging law enforcement agencies worldwide to be on the lookout for a Saudi man identified nearly a year after the Sept. 11 attacks as a suspected associate of the hijackers.

The bulletin issued Tuesday night sought the immediate arrest of Saud A.S. al-Rasheed, 21, of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The FBI said the sudden bulletin was based on information developed over the past few days, and it warned police that al-Rasheed should be considered armed and dangerous.

"On Aug. 15, 2002, material previously recovered during the war on terrorism were found to be related to several of the Sept. 11 hijackers," the FBI said.

The materials included an image of a Saudi Arabian passport belonging to al-Rasheed which had been issued in Riyadh in May 2000. "Al-Rasheed's current whereabouts are unknown," the FBI bulletin said.

"Al-Rasheed is suspected to be associated with the September 11, 2001 hijackers," the bulletin said.

Two senior law enforcement officials, who spoke only on condition of anonymity, said Tuesday night that al-Rasheed's picture was found among pictures of several hijackers in materials obtained overseas some time ago and recently reviewed at the FBI. The materials were included on a computer CD-ROM, the officials said.

The officials said they did not know how long the government possessed the information before making the discovery but said the bulletin was issued out of an

abundance of caution.

Several government officials said the FBI didn't believe al-Rasheed was in the United States at the present time. Law enforcement agencies overseas were advised to contact the local U.S. embassy if they had information regarding his whereabouts.

A senior administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that from the information the FBI reviewed last week, "they were able to take this piece of information and it showed clear signals or lines that he was connected to 9/11."

A picture of al-Rasheed was posted on the FBI Web site Tuesday night at <http://www.fbi.gov>.

The bureau has on occasion issued alerts over the past year, but most have involved new terrorist threats and not suspected associates of the hijackers whose activities have been exhaustively investigated since the Sept. 11 hijackings.

For instance, in February the FBI issued a warning during the start of the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City asking law enforcement and the American public to be on the lookout for a Yemeni man and several associates who might be plotting a terrorist attack within days.

The FBI scrambled to put that warning out after information emerged that one or more people were involved. Officials said the intelligence, while deemed credible, was not specific about possible targets.

That alert identified one possible attacker as Fawaz Yahya al-Rabעי, a Yemeni citizen born in Saudi Arabia in 1979. It listed about a dozen associates of al-Rabעי, most from Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Intelligence agency planned exercise on 9-11 of plane crash

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — In what the government describes as a bizarre coincidence, one U.S. intelligence agency was planning an exercise last Sept. 11 in which an errant aircraft crashed into one of its buildings. But the cause wasn't terrorism — it was to be a simulated accident.

Officials at the Chantilly, Va.-based National Reconnaissance Office had scheduled an exercise that morning in which a small corporate jet crashed into one of the four towers at the agency's headquarters building after experiencing a mechanical failure.

The agency is about four miles from the runways of Washington Dulles International Airport.

Agency chiefs came up with the scenario to test employees' ability to respond to a disaster, said spokesman Art Haubold. To simulate the damage from the plane, some stairwells and exits were to be closed off, forcing employees to find other ways to evacuate the building.

"It was just an incredible coincidence that this happened to involve an aircraft crashing into our facility," Haubold said. "As soon as the real world events began, we canceled the exercise."

Terrorism was to play no role in the

exercise, which had been planned for several months, he said.

Adding to the coincidence, American Airlines Flight 77 — the Boeing 767 that was hijacked and crashed into the Pentagon — took off from Dulles at 8:10 a.m. on Sept. 11, 50 minutes before the exercise was to begin. It struck the Pentagon around 9:40 a.m., killing 64 aboard the plane and 125 on the ground.

The National Reconnaissance Office operates many of the nation's spy satellites. It draws its personnel from the military and the CIA.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, most of the 3,000 people who work at agency headquarters were sent home, save for some essential personnel, Haubold said.

An announcement for an upcoming homeland security conference in Chicago first noted the exercise.

In a promotion for speaker John Fulton, a CIA officer assigned as chief of NRO's strategic gaming division, the announcement says, "On the morning of September 11th 2001, Mr. Fulton and his team ... were running a pre-planned simulation to explore the emergency response issues that would be created if a plane were to strike a building. Little did they know that the scenario would come true in a dramatic way that day."

INTERNATIONAL



Civilians and soldiers



Nasser Nasser/Associated Press

A Palestinian woman, holding her daughters, passes by Israeli soldiers guarding the street near an area where shooting occurred, in the West Bank town of Ramallah on Tuesday. Israeli forces entered a house in the center of Ramallah and shot the brother of Ahmed Saadat, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Musharraf grants himself broad powers ahead of October national elections

BY MUNIR AHMAD

Associated Press Writer

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Despite widespread criticism, President Gen. Pervez Musharraf unilaterally amended the Pakistani constitution Wednesday, granting himself sweeping powers — including the right to dissolve parliament — and extending his term in office.

"Pakistan is passing through a very crucial transitional period," Musharraf told reporters in announcing his decision to implement the amendments, which were first unveiled in June. "We are taking Pakistan from democratic dictatorship to elected democracy. I want to introduce a sustainable democratic order."

Critics, however, claimed the 29 amendments were a blow to the very democracy that Musharraf promised to restore by holding elections Oct. 10 for the national parliament and provincial legislatures.

"We don't believe that an individual or group has the right to amend the constitution," said Raza Rabbai of the opposition Pakistan People's Party, led by former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. "This is the sole prerogative of the parliament."

Other amendments formalized an additional five years in office for Musharraf that he won in a controversial referendum in April. He also gave the military a formal role in governing the nation for the first time by setting up a National Security Council that would oversee elected rulers — and include military officials.

"Musharraf has grabbed all the power and the next prime minister will be helpless," said Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, head of the opposition Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy.

Musharraf seized power on Oct. 12, 1999 in a bloodless coup that toppled Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The

Supreme Court ruled that the coup was legal but insisted that civilian government be restored within three years. Musharraf called elections for Oct. 10 — two days short of the deadline.

However, Musharraf, like many of his colleagues in the senior ranks of the armed forces, has accused previous elected administrations of failing to govern properly. He has promised to build a "guided democracy" in which elected leaders would be held accountable through a series of "checks and balances" contained in the amendments.

One of them grants the president the authority to dissolve parliament, a power which the late President Mohammed Zia ul-Haq decreed but which was abolished by Sharif.

Another amendment set up the National Security Council, chaired by the president, to oversee the performance of parliament, the prime minister and his government. The council will also include the leader of the opposition in parliament, the military chief of staff and heads of the army, air force and navy.

That gives the armed forces a formal role for the first time in the ruling of a country that has been under military rule for about half its 55 years of independence.

Musharraf insisted, however, that he would transfer governing powers to the new prime minister who will be chosen by parliament and denied that the military would have a role in governance.

"The National Security Council has absolutely nothing to do with running the country," Musharraf said. He said its role would be limited to consultation on strategic issues and matters of national importance.

During his press conference, Musharraf said the next parliament would have the authority to abolish the amendments if opponents can muster the votes.

Iraqi authorities claim five hostage takers were either American or Israeli agents

BY DAVID RISING

Associated Press Writer

BERLIN — Recounting the five hours he was held hostage by gunmen, Iraq's acting ambassador said Wednesday that he is convinced his captors were either Israeli or American agents whose goal was to raise German support for a U.S. attack on Baghdad.

Given the way the five men handily disabled embassy security systems and rewired a gate to enter the grounds, Shamil Mohammed said they could not have been ordinary Iraqi dissidents as they claimed.

"It was a good and well planned action and these people were not politically motivated, they are mercenaries, they are gangsters," Mohammed told The Associated Press. "I think you can ask the people in Washington or London or Tel Aviv about it — it was either CIA or Mossad."

A previously unknown Iraqi dissident group calling itself the Democratic Iraqi Opposition of Germany said its members were behind the embassy seizure Tuesday and called for the overthrow of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. German commandos stormed the building, detaining the five men and freeing the hostages.

Other Iraqi opposition groups said the group was new and that they had no connection to it. During the hostage-taking, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said the administration had no knowledge of — or contacts with — the group and called such attempts to overthrow Saddam "unacceptable."

Mohammed was in his first-floor office Tuesday when he heard gunshots from outside and saw men run past his wife and two young sons, who had been playing on the neatly manicured embassy grounds. He and his designated successor, Mu'ead Hussain, rushed to the front door but were unable to stop the assailants from forcing their way in with axes and handguns.

"They entered the building, we tried to stop them but they threatened us with their pistols, then sprayed gas in our faces — it was very painful, and for two hours we couldn't see anything," Mohammed said.

Mohammed said the men used tape to bind him, Hussain, and an Iraqi man and his German wife who had been at the embassy. The latter two were freed after the officials told their captors they had nothing to do with the embassy, but Mohammed and Hussain were kept gunpoint.

"They said always, 'If you move, we will shoot you,' but we couldn't move because we were taped," Mohammed said.

Mohammed said the men did not voice any demands.

He insisted, however, that they were necessary for stability and accountability in government.

"I have made these amendments in the larger interest of the country," Musharraf said. "I want to see sustainable democracy in Pakistan."

Critics, however, have accused Musharraf of skillfully using his position as the linchpin of the U.S. war against terrorism in neighboring Afghanistan to shore up his position at home.

After the 1999 coup, Musharraf was

"They refused to discuss the matter. They said, 'We are implementing orders from outside', and all the time they were receiving calls on their cell phones," he said.

Berlin judicial spokeswoman Ariane Faust said the five men, aged 32 to 43, had all applied for asylum in Germany and were believed to be Iraqis who were living outside of Berlin. The men have refused to talk to officials.

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has opposed any military action against Iraq, and Mohammed said officials in Baghdad are convinced the incident was an attempt to turn German opinion toward supporting a U.S. attack.

"They entered the building, we tried to stop them but they threatened us with their pistols ..."

— SHAMIL MOHAMMED
Hostage

Mohammed rejected the White House's denial of any contacts with the group. "They would like to invade Iraq — what do you think they would do, come with flowers?" he said. "That is just propaganda and we are sure they are behind this action."

After receiving the go-ahead from Iraqi authorities, German police stormed the building and rescued Mohammed and Hussain without a shot being fired.

"They gave up — in a few seconds it was all over," Mohammed said.

Two pencil-sized holes were visible in the embassy's main door, and police had marked the stairs with yellow where an ammunition cartridge had fallen. The inner door had another hole through it, and the frame was splintered where it had been kicked in.

A police car sat in front of the building, a villa in an affluent Berlin neighborhood which was opened as Iraq's embassy a month ago after it moved from Bonn. Mohammed said he had now requested police remain outside the compound permanently.

Mohammed said his country would like to have the five men extradited for trial in Baghdad, but he expected that they would remain in Germany.

"This is Iraqi soil, and we will try" for extradition, he said, standing on the embassy grounds. "But we are confident the Germans will do their job properly."

shunned by the United States and its Western allies. All that changed when Musharraf abandoned support for the Afghan Taliban and joined the U.S.-led war against terrorism, allowing the Americans to use bases in this country and helping track down Taliban and al-Qaida fugitives who fled here last year.

Pakistani critics and political commentators believe Musharraf can take steps — like the constitutional amendments — to build up his power with little fear of criticism from Washington or other Western capitals.



SPORTS

Serena Williams gets easy U.S. Open draw

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK — Top-seeded Serena Williams was given what looks like an easy path in Wednesday's draw for the U.S. Open, boosting her chances for a third straight Grand Slam title.

Her older sister, two-time defending champion and second-seeded Venus Williams, has Jennifer Capriati, Monica Seles and Martina Hingis on her side of the draw.

The Williams sisters can't meet until the final, a stage on which they have played at three of the past four majors: last year's U.S. Open, and the 2002 French Open and Wimbledon.

The year's final Grand Slam tournament starts Monday.

Four-time U.S. Open champion Pete Sampras' first two matches don't appear to be difficult, beginning with his opener against 75th-ranked Albert Portas of Spain.

Sampras, whose No. 17 seeding is his lowest here in more than a decade, will be strongly tested in the later rounds, however. He drew 15th-seeded Guillermo Canas in the third round, No. 3 Tommy Haas in the fourth, and either No. 5 Tim Henman or big-serving Andy Roddick, the No. 11 seed, in the quarterfinals.

Sampras lost his opening match at a hardcourt tuneup

event in Commack, N.Y., on Tuesday to Paul-Henri Mathieu, extending his drought without a title to 33 events.

The man who beat Sampras in last year's U.S. Open final, top-seeded Lleyton Hewitt, might have his toughest matches early. Hewitt, the Wimbledon champion, could be in for a second-round meeting with Greg Rusedski, who owns the fastest serve in ATP Tour history (149 mph). Rusedski reached the 1997 Open final and beat Hewitt on a hard court in Indianapolis this month.

Hewitt could face No. 25 James Blake — whose first career tournament victory came last week in Washington, D.C. — in the third round, the same point at which they met during the 2001 Open. Blake pushed Hewitt to five sets in that match, which was marred by Hewitt's outburst at a linesman that some interpreted as racially tinged.

Andre Agassi, seeded sixth, doesn't figure to be tested until a possible fourth-round match against No. 9 Carlos Moya, the 1998 French Open champion.

The potential men's quarterfinal pairings: Hewitt vs. No. 8 Albert Costa, this year's French Open champion; No. 2 Marat Safin, the 2000 U.S. Open winner, vs. No. 7 Juan Carlos Ferrero; Haas vs. Henman; and No. 4 Yevgeny Kafelnikov vs. Agassi.

Serena Williams pulled out of a tournament last week because

Practice makes perfect?



Ralph Radford/Associated Press

Tiger Woods practices at the driving range at the Sahalee Country Club in Sammamish, Wash., on Wednesday. Despite Beem's victory at Hazeltine, most of the focus at Sahalee figures to be on the man he beat — Tiger Woods. The world's No. 1 player gets another shot at a rare feat — winning the same tournament four years in a row.

of left knee tendinitis and probably will benefit from avoiding top players until the later rounds.

Her first-round match is against wild-card entry Corina Morariu, an accomplished doubles player who recently returned to action after fighting leukemia since May 2001.

"That'll be a celebration, just for her to be on the court," U.S.

Fed Cup captain Billie Jean King said. "Maybe it's fitting she'll play the No. 1 seed, so the whole world will know what she's overcome."

The earliest Williams could face a top-20 player is in the fourth round, against 15th-seeded Anastasia Myskina.

The women's round-of-eight matchups could be: Serena Williams vs. No. 8 Justine Henin;

Venus Williams vs. Monica Seles; No. 3 Capriati vs. No. 7 Kim Clijsters; and No. 4 Lindsay Davenport vs. No. 5 Jelena Dokic.

Capriati, who won the Australian Open, could meet No. 10 Amelie Mauresmo in the quarters. Mauresmo beat her in the final in Montreal last week and also in straight sets in the Wimbledon quarterfinals.

Randall Cunningham set to retire with Philadelphia Eagles

BY ROB MAADDI
AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Randall Cunningham had a stronger arm than most other quarterbacks, ran faster than many running backs and kicked better than some punters.

But after 16 seasons of creating nightmares for defensive coordinators, the 39-year-old Cunningham will retire Friday night as a member of the Philadelphia Eagles.

He returns to Veterans Stadium, where he spent the first 11 years of his career and established himself as the best scrambling quarterback in NFL history.

"At the time he was playing, there weren't any quarterbacks that were running for so many yards. There weren't any quarterbacks who could do anything he was capable of doing," said current Eagles quarterback Donovan McNabb, who is often compared to Cunningham.

Though he never played in a Super Bowl, Cunningham posted numbers worthy of Hall of Fame consideration. He is the all-time leader in rushing yards among quarterbacks with 4,928, had 29,979 yards passing and 242 touchdowns, including 35 rushing.

A second-round draft pick in 1985, Cunningham played in Philadelphia from 1985-95. He holds four team records, including most 300-yard passing games (13), most yards passing in a game (447 yards) and longest punt (91 yards).

Cunningham led the Eagles to the NFC East title in 1988 after a six-year absence

from the postseason, and playoff appearances in 1989, 1990 and 1992. He was a backup to Rodney Peete in 1995, when the Eagles also made the playoffs.

"It's going to be a very exciting and emotional moment for me," he said. "It's going to be a 'wow' moment for me because I don't know what to expect, but I just want to go back there and end it on a great note."

Cunningham first retired after the Eagles decided not to re-sign him following the 1995 season. He went home to Las Vegas, opened a marble business and

served as a studio analyst for TNT.

But after sitting out 1996, Cunningham returned as a backup with Minnesota in 1997, and had his best season a year later. After Brad Johnson went down early in 1998, Cunningham stepped in, threw for 3,704 yards, 34 TDs and just 10 interceptions, helping the Vikings score an NFL-record 556 points and earn a berth in the NFC championship game.

He stayed three years in Minnesota, spent 2000 as a backup to Troy Aikman in Dallas and played for the Baltimore Ravens last season.

"Really, he kind of changed that position and added flair to it," Eagles coach Andy Reid said.

Cunningham credits much of his success to Buddy Ryan, who coached the Eagles from 1986-90. Ryan, a former defensive coordinator, didn't focus much on offensive game plans. Instead, he instructed Cunningham to just go out and make five big plays a game.

"Buddy allowed me a chance to do the things I did best," Cunningham said. "He simplified things and allowed me to do what it took to be the best I could be."

Chargers say farewell to cool La Jolla camp

BY BERNIE WILSON
AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO — With a low-key, hour-long walkthrough watched by just a few dozen fans Wednesday morning, the Chargers ended their 27-year training camp run at the bucolic University of California, San Diego, which is cooled by ocean breezes.

The Chargers are leaving tony La Jolla for the Los Angeles suburb of Carson, where they'll train for the next five summers in the shadow of an oil refinery.

Pro Bowl defensive end and resident comedian Marcellus Wiley, a native of the Los Angeles area, put his own spin on the company line that training away from the distractions of home will allow the Chargers — who've won just six of their last 32 games — to bond together better.

"After 35 years of committed excellence and service to Camp La Jolla, we must depart on sad terms," Wiley said, missing by a few years the length of time the Chargers have trained here. "However, we will be playing our games here. Five years of L.A. is not that bad. I'm from L.A."

"I expect guys to be excited. Being away from home, guys have to stick together," Wiley said, lowering his voice for effect. "None of that Hollywood, Sunset Boulevard stuff will break us apart as a Charger group. We're going to stay strong. Expect this year to be a very successful year, and L.A., prepare for us."

In May, the Chargers agreed to move camp to a \$120 million complex being built by billionaire Philip Anschutz on the campus of California State University, Dominguez Hills.

At the time, Anschutz was considering building a stadium for an NFL team in downtown Los Angeles, fueling speculation that the Chargers could move north. Anschutz abandoned those plans in mid-June.

There's still the issue of moving camp from a pristine spot, where it's almost always overcast and cool, into L.A.'s infamous smog.

"You know what, you've got to breathe whether there's smog or not," Wiley said. "So I don't care about it. I'll leave that up to the Surgeon General and all those kinds of people who care about smog."

The Chargers (1-1) play at St. Louis on Thursday night, their first exhibition since Drew Brees was named starting quarterback.

COMICS



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Natural Selection® By Russ Wallace



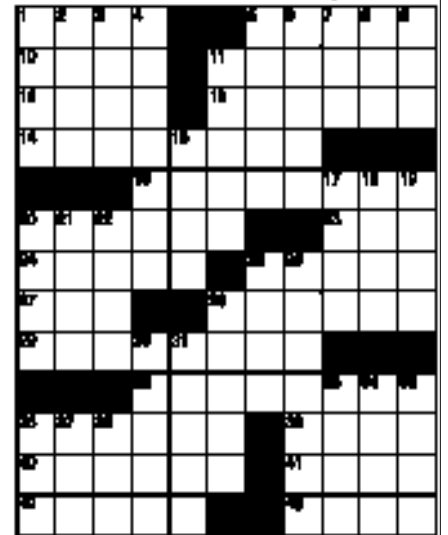
CROSSWORD By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- Actor Baldwin
 - Prepare for impact
 - Males over
 - Casual day
 - Den
 - Conundrum
 - Dentist's order
 - Dead-beat's hope
 - Ranch
 - Kidnapper — Perce's Indians
 - Synophant
 - Not now
 - 2001 biopic
 - Aster
 - temple
 - Genuine
 - Place to take a walk on, in song
 - Bogart's "Key Largo" co-star
 - Sweat
 - Cherish
 - Strong wind
 - Man of synonyms
 - Small bills
- DOWN**
- Bound
 - Falco of "The Sopranos"
 - Rustically whole-some
 - Velled one
 - Blue patron
 - Annex
 - "East of Eden" brother
 - Needle hole
 - Lila
 - temple
 - Fay of "King Kong"
 - Ford of
 - Accomplishment
 - Pound of
 - poems
 - Not obvious



Yesterday's answer

- Rough guess
- Equine game
- April forecast
- "Shame" star
- Way back when
- Tablets
- Not obvious
- Steak-house choice
- Notorious czar
- Portion out
- Sheep
- Saloon
- Commo-son
- Gear part



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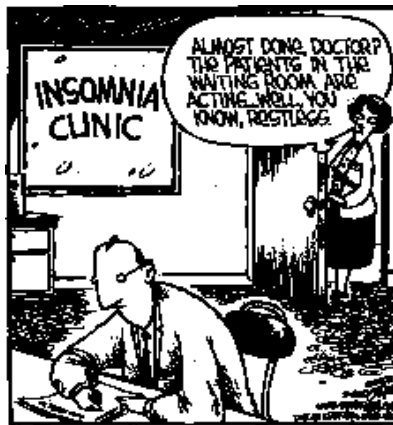
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Surgeon threatened with racism by nurses

- An orthopedic surgeon at Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospital in London was threatened with disciplinary action for racism after he became enraged that none of the recent-immigrant nurses could understand his during-surgery instructions (July).
- A Brooklyn, N.Y., school official convicted of embezzling millions of dollars in federal education funds is one of seven recently convicted teachers or administrators who are still in their jobs because union-friendly arbitrators refuse to allow them to be fired, according to a New York Daily News report (June).

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Services

REMEDIES BY ROTH Carpentry, Handyman Services. Reasonable rates. Contact Michael: (310)829-1316 MSG. (323)610-1217 Cell.

QUICK AND Dirty (if the newsprint rubs off on your hands). Market your small business in our services section for a buck a day. Call (310)458-7737.

Yard Sales

1106 YALE St., SM. 9am - 2pm Quality goods!

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Wealth & Success

Wealth & Success Seminar upcoming Sept. 13-15. Hilton Hotel, LAX. Discover and permanently release the causes of inconsistent performance in your career, relationships, health, and finances using the hybrid science of neuro linguistic programming. 100% satisfaction guaranteed! Call now for your free audio tape and to reserve your seat. (888)877-8550

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WE ARE MOVING! The Santa Monica Daily Press is on the move. The classifieds deadline for Saturday's edition will be 11 a.m. on Friday, August 23. If you have any questions, please contact Angela at 310.458.7737 ext. 101

Calendar

Thursday, August 22, 2002

movies

Loews Broadway Cinema
1441 Third St. at Broadway
Full Frontal (R) 11:00, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40
Blue Crush (PG-13) 11:40, 1:00, 2:20, 3:40, 5:00, 6:20, 7:40, 9:00, 10:20, 11:40
Blood Work (R) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00.

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

AMC Theatre SM 7
1310 3rd Street
The Bourne Identity (PG-13) 11:35, 2:20, 7:25
Signs (PG-13) 11:45, 1:00, 2:15, 4:15, 5:10, 7:00, 8:00
The Master of Disguise (PG) 11:50, 2:00, 4:00, 7:25, 9:50
Reign of Fire (PG-13) 5:05, 10:05
Road to Perdition (R) 11:30, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30
K-11: The Widowmaker (PG-13) 7:15, 10:15
Spy Kids 2: The Island of Lost Dreams (PG) 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:15, 9:55.

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

Laemmle Monica
1332 2nd St.
Tadpole (PG-13) 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:55
The Good Girl (R) 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:55
Possession (PG-13) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:45, 10:15
24 Hour Party People (R) 1:30, 4:15, 7:10, 10:05.

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
Read My Lips (NR) 5:00, 7:30, 10:00.

Today

Community

The Westside Walkers, a FREE program sponsored by UCLA Healthcare's 50-Plus Program! Walking programs for adults 50 or older looking for safe, low-impact exercise in a comfortable environment. The Westside Walkers meet Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 8 a.m. To 10 a.m., at Westside Pavilion, Pico Blvd. Between Overland Ave. and Westwood Blvd. In West LA. For more information about the program, call (800)516-5323.

Classes

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

Theater / Arts

Santa Monica Playhouse is proud to pres-

ent Picon Pie! The World Premiere of a joyous and poignant musical play about the life and loves of legendary Molly Picon. Admission is \$23.50. Show starts at 8:00 p.m. 1211 4th Street, Santa Monica. For more information please call (310)394-9779 or visit www.santamonicaplayhouse.com.

Music / Entertainment

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

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

O'Briens Irish Pub, 2941 Main St., Santa Monica, pours A Pint of Funny, every Thurs., 8 p.m. FREE! (310)396-4725.

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

Friday

Community

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

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

Classes/ Lectures

Michael York at Barnes & Noble, 1201 3rd Street, 7:30 p.m. Actor Michael York discusses his book, "Dispatches from Armageddon: Making the Movie 'Megiddo' ... a Devilish Diary. (310)260-9110

Music/Arts & Entertainment

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

Tonight the Comedy Underground presents an all improv nite, with three hilarious shows!
Addie Essence....\$5.00....8 PM.
OFF THE WALL....\$5.00....9PM.
Unusual Suspects....\$5.00....10 PM.

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

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

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

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

KEEP YOUR DATE STRAIGHT

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



BACK PAGE

White House gets facelift while president is away

BY JENNIFER LOVEN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The White House is a mess.

With President Bush away for a month, a noisy horde of sweaty construction workers and heavy machinery has descended to give the executive mansion a facelift — about 270 projects ranging from replacing the odd door knob to ripping up and repaving an entire driveway.

The result is a far cry from the ship-shape home that only a few weeks before staged one of the most formal and pomp-laden of presidential events — a black-tie state dinner.

The flurry of activity is in part an effort to spruce up the West Wing ahead of events this fall celebrating its construction 100 years ago to house Teddy Roosevelt's growing staff in the "Temporary Executive Offices." Among those projects are re-sanding the wood floors in the Oval Office, new upholstery for couches in the main lobby and refinishing some exterior doors.

But daily life also places extraordinary wear and tear on the nation's most famous house as it is pressed into nearly constant quadruple duty as a residence, office building, entertaining venue and tourist attraction. With Bush hardly ever gone for more than a day or two, the to-do list of needed repairs piles up.

"The White House is a historical home — it's the people's home — and it requires a tremendous amount of upkeep to keep it in tiptop condition," said White House spokeswoman Anne Womack.

On a recent day, aides allowed to give West Wing tours to friends and family had little to show off with the president's office entirely bare of its peaches-and-cream-

hued contents. All that could be seen was a lone worker sliding a buffing machine across the blond-and-dark wood parquet floors.

"Please pardon our appearance," apologized a sign in the hallway, "while we prepare for the commemoration of the West Wing's 100th Anniversary."

"The White House is a historical home — it's the people's home — and it requires a tremendous amount of upkeep to keep it in tiptop condition."

— ANNE WOMACK
White House spokeswoman

Outside, huge trucks filled the driveway leading to the West Wing, lifting materials to workers putting a new roof and drainage system over the area that houses the White House press corps, the briefing room and the Colonnade Bush traverses each day from his home to the Oval Office.

Parts of the main residence and the West Wing were dotted with scaffolding as a lengthy project to repair and paint various crumbling patches continues.

Next door, the racket was deafening as machinery ripped up the drive that runs between the West Wing and

the Eisenhower Executive Office Building — mostly used as a coveted parking space for the highest-level aides — and cement trucks rattled through to replace it.

Amid all the clamor, workers could be seen trying to escape the stifling heat in the shade of the North Lawn — normally such a no-no that a fence was built years ago to discourage reporters from lounging on the grass even in an area invisible from the street.

Other major projects include replacing the \$30,000 jogging track on the South Lawn that was custom-built in 1993 for former President Clinton, like his successor an avid runner. Bush, who normally takes to a treadmill or the Army's nearby Fort McNair for his four-times-a-week runs, is using the spongy, nearly quarter-mile-long track more often now that E Street, which runs on the south side of the executive grounds, has been closed, Womack said.

West Executive Drive, meanwhile, has not been repaved since the 1950s, she said.

The newly polished West Wing will be especially on display in November, when a special tour will be given during events planned by the White House Historical Association to commemorate the centennial, Womack said.

As for those Oval Office floors, they were just redone during Bush's vacation last August. Even though a rug mostly fills the room, one White House regular recalled that the president noticed with his first step inside last year that the job wasn't up to snuff — the wood had been incorrectly stained against the grain.

The redo he promptly ordered, along with the rest of the makeover, will be ready for Bush's inspection when he returns from his Texas ranch around Labor Day.

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