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AUGUST 24-25, 2013
Volume 12 Issue 246

Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

READERS SOUND OFF ON POT SHOPS
SEE PAGE 5

THE BUSINESS ISSUE

Does Santa Monica need another coffee shop?

Downtown Santa Monica Inc. debates business mix for Parking Structure 6

BY AMEERA BUTT
Daily Press Staff Writer

SECOND STREET Fine chocolates and the latest yoga gear are just some of the products Santa Monicans could buy as they make their way out of a new parking structure currently under construction on Second Street.

Members of the board for Downtown Santa Monica Inc., the body charged with managing and marketing Downtown for City Hall, got a first look Thursday at four proposed business that could be located on the ground floor of Parking Structure 6 when it is completed this winter.

They are: Electric Yoga, which specializes in yoga gear; Espresso Cielo, a coffee shop; KC Chocolatier, which sells sweets; and Orangetheory Fitness, a gym that uses an intense cardio and strength-training workout.

Parking Structure 6 has been closed since February 2012. The cost to construct the

SEE BUSINESS PAGE 10



FANCY FRISBEE

Paul Alvarez Jr. *editor@smdp.com*

Tom Leitner (R) and others gather on the beach in Santa Monica to show off their acrobatic frisbee skills Friday. Some of the best freestyle frisbee players from all over the world have been touring California, stopping at various cities such as San Francisco, San Luis Obispo and soon San Diego.

Samohi grad sticks neck out with new musical instrument

BY AMEERA BUTT
Daily Press Staff Writer

BERGAMOT STATION What is a kitar?

It's a new instrument dreamt up by Santa Monica High School grad Noah Watenmaker that resembles a guitar but with five strings, built-in sound effects and the ability to switch out necks instantly.

He came up with the concept after be began building standard, six-string guitars in 2007 and it has taken a few years to strip the instrument "down to the basics," he said.

Under the umbrella of their company, We Anything Build, or WAB, he and partner Thao Pham launched a Kickstarter campaign earlier this month to raise money to finish developing the neck hardware for the kitar. Kickstarter is one of the world's largest online fundraising platforms.

They built a prototype that uses five strings, but customers can request a kitar with up to 12 strings, any length of neck and body style, Watenmaker said.

"[We wanted to] keep it simple with the tuning system we use to cover the same range notes as a guitar, but we only need five strings," he said.

Both said they hope there can be an open source platform for the kitar where anyone can create the instrument, and want people to join in on the creation process after the Kickstarter ends.

The premise is for people to take on the kitar themselves or learn to build it, Watenmaker said.

Pham compared the body of the kitar to pants and the strings as the shirt.

SEE KITAR PAGE 10

Radioactive groundwater at Fukushima nears Pacific

BY MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press

TOKYO Deep beneath Fukushima's crippled nuclear power station, a massive underground reservoir of contaminated water that began spilling from the plant's reactors after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami has been creeping slowly toward the Pacific.

Now, 2 1/2 years later, experts fear it is about to reach the ocean and greatly worsen what is fast becoming a new crisis at Fukushima: the inability to contain vast quantities of radioactive water.

The looming crisis is potentially far greater than the discovery earlier this week

SEE NUCLEAR PAGE 11

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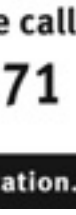
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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Saturday, Aug. 24, 2013

Sandy bootcamp

1198 Palisades Beach Rd., 7 a.m.

UEvolution's Bootcamp leader and kinesiologist Meghan Song and fitness director Ray Wong offer a free and dynamic preview of the upcoming UEvolution six-week bootcamp on physical transformation and mind-body aspects of behavior modification. A second session will be held at 8:30 a.m. For more information and to register for the event, visit www.uevolution.net.

Making the most of your paper

1450 Ocean Ave., 2 p.m.

Learn how to make pretty paper art and origami boxes. Admission costs $10. Call (310) 458-2239 or e-mail communityclasses@smgov.net to RSVP.

Supernatural teenage romance

Main Library

601 Santa Monica Blvd.,

3 p.m. — 5 p.m.

The Main Library will be presenting a screening of "Beautiful Creatures," based on the best-selling young adult book series by Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl. In the film, the budding romance between teens Ethan and Lena is tested when Lena discovers she is descended from a line of powerful witches. For more information, call (310) 458-8600.

Class art show

The Schomburg Gallery

2525 Michigan Ave., 4 p.m. — 7 p.m.

Join the Kline Academy of Fine Art's opening reception of an exhibition of emerging artists featuring work from two art classes; one focused on abstract art and the other contemporary. For more information, call (310) 927-2436.

Blowing out blues

Harvelle's

1432 S. Fourth St., 9:30 p.m. — 1 a.m.

The Blowin' Smoke and the Fabulous Smokettes return to the iconic Harvelle's performing with recent inductee to the Blues Hall of Fame for his tenor sax talents, Joe Sublett. Guests must be 21 and over. Admission is $10. For more information, call (310) 395-1676.

Sunday, Aug. 25, 2013

Summer of soul

Main Street

11 a.m. — 7 p.m.

Businesses along Main Street will be hosting sidewalk sales Saturday and Sunday as part of the 12th annual Summer SOULstice. Check out several area bands Sunday as they play live on various stages spread throughout the popular shopping district. There will be plenty of food and people watching at this free community event. For more information visit mainstreetsm.com. The two-day event is produced by the Main Street Business Association.

Community picnic

Douglas Park

2439 Wilshire Blvd., 1 p.m. — 3 p.m.

Residents can enjoy an afternoon of free desserts and fun games to play, including an egg race, beanbag toss and limbo contest for kids. The bring-your-own-lunch picnic is a collaborative effort of Santa Monica Mid-City Neighbors, Wilshire-Montana Neighborhood Coalition and Northeast Neighbors. To RSVP, e-mail SantaMonicaMidCityNeighbors@gmail.com.

A taste of New Orleans

Stewart Street Park

1836 Stewart St., 5 p.m. — 7 p.m.

City Hall's Cultural Affairs Division will present the final installment of this year's Jazz on the Lawn series, featuring The Overstreets New Orleans Jazz Band, a 10-piece traditional jazz band with echoes of Preservation Hall and The Andrew Sisters. Organic ice pops will be available for purchase from Popshop. The concert is free. For more information visit www.smgov.net/jazz. Free parking and bike valet.

To create your own listing, log on to smdp.com/submitevent

For help, contact Daniel Archuleta at **310-458-7737** or submit to editor@smdp.com

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to **smdp.com/communitylistings**



CORRECTION

In the Culture Watch column entitled "Summer winding down," which appeared in the Aug. 22 edition of the Daily Press, it should have made reference to Will Geer's Theatricum Botanicum. And Stewart Street park is located just south of Olympic Boulevard. We apparently lost our way.

In the article on special education students in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, which appeared in the Aug. 21 edition of the Daily Press, it should have stated that the district has been mainstreaming special ed students into general education classrooms for decades. Perhaps we should go back to school.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

WEST L.A.

Wilshire on-ramp, 405 north closed

The eastbound Wilshire Boulevard on-ramp to the northbound San Diego (405) Freeway closed Friday night for 90 days, the final extended ramp closure required for the reconstruction of the heavily used interchange.

According to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which is overseeing the 405 Freeway construction project through the Sepulveda Pass, the existing ramp will be demolished and replaced with one that will have three times more capacity. The new ramp will be 3,129 feet long, compared to the existing 824-foot ramp in hopes of reducing a backlog that traditionally develops at the interchange.

Motorists are advised to plan ahead and seek out alternate routes, including the northbound on-ramp at Santa Monica Boulevard. That ramp has been recently widened to handle additional capacity.

Traffic control officers will be deployed at the Wilshire interchange during peak hours to direct motorists, said Dave Sotero of Metro.

In addition to the Wilshire closure, Metro officials said on Saturday, Aug. 24 they will have to close all northbound lanes and several southbound lanes of the 405 to continue work on the Mulholland Bridge replacement project. The 405 will be closed from 11 p.m. to 9 a.m. Sunday from the Getty Center exit to Greenleaf/Ventura Boulevard. The U.S. Route 101 connector ramp to the northbound 405 will be closed as well.

Officials said emergency vehicle access will be maintained and pedestrians will be rerouted to a safe area outside of the construction zone.

Sepulveda Boulevard will be used as the detour route and no closures will take place on the street.

For additional project information or to obtain detour maps, visit www.metro.net/405. Follow the project on social media at www.facebook.com/405project and http://twitter.com/I_405.

– KEVIN HERRERA

Malibu launches PCH safety website

The city of Malibu has launched an interactive website for residents to offer input on traffic safety along Pacific Coast Highway and recommend solutions to persistent problems. The website, www.malibu.metroquest.com/, is part of the city's ongoing PCH Safety Study.

The study aims to improve safety along Malibu's main thoroughfare by identifying the worst problems and sites.

It is hoped that input from residents, according to a City Hall press release, will "help prioritize recommended corridor-wide improvements, as well as location-specific solutions." The website will be available online through Tuesday, Sept. 17.

Feedback received through the website and from the meetings will be used to finalize an "Alternatives Analysis," the press release stated, and develop a list of recommended safety improvements.

An independent report paid for by City Hall and released this week highlighted 80 "potential safety issues" along PCH. It proposed some arguably drastic safety remedies, including a bike lane stretching the length of PCH in Malibu as well as instituting paid parking along the highway through city limits.

– KNOWLES ADKISSON, THE MALIBU TIMES



Rendering courtesy Metro.net

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS: **When all is said and done, this is what the Wilshire Boulevard/405 connector will look like.**

Jump in mortgage rates hurts U.S. sales of new housing

BY CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) Americans cut back sharply in July on their purchases of new homes, a sign that higher mortgage rates may slow the housing recovery.

U.S. sales of newly built homes dropped 13.4 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 394,000, the Commerce Department said Friday. That's the lowest in nine months. And sales fell from a rate of 455,000 in June, which was revised down from a previously reported 497,000.

The housing rebound that began last year has helped drive economic growth and create more construction jobs. But mortgage rates have climbed a full percentage point since May. The increase has begun to steal some momentum from the market.

Sales of new homes are still up 7 percent in the 12 months ending in July. Yet the annual pace remains well below the 700,000 that is consistent with a healthy market.

July's drop "may mark an uh-oh kind of moment for the housing recovery," said Mark Vitner, an economist at Wells Fargo Securities.

Homebuilder stocks declined sharply Friday, even as overall market indexes rose. Shares of Toll Brothers Inc., D.R. Horton Inc. and Lennar Corp. — three of the nation's largest builders — all fell more than 3 percent in afternoon trading.

And major homebuilders' shares have been dropping steadily since late May. The slide began after Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke first signaled that the Fed might reduce its bond purchases later this year. The bond purchases have helped keep mortgage rates and other borrowing costs low.

The average rate on a 30-year mortgage reached 4.58 percent this week, according to Freddie Mac. That's up from 3.35 percent in early May and the highest in two years.

The impact on would-be buyers' finances is significant.

Take someone who locked in the early May rate on a $200,000 mortgage. They would have a monthly payment of around $875. But the same mortgage at last week's average rate would cost $1,025 a month.

The difference adds up to $150 more each month — or $54,000 over the lifetime of a 30-year loan. The monthly figures don't include taxes, insurance or initial down payments.

Potential buyers appear to have noticed that financing a home purchase has become more expensive. The number of Americans applying for mortgages to buy homes has plummeted 16 percent since the end of April. And builders began work on the fewest single-family homes in eight months in July.

Still, mortgage rates remain low by historical standards. The same $200,000 loan would cost a buyer $1,330 a month at a 7 percent rate, the average since 1985.

SEE **HOUSING** PAGE 11

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

BBB changes make no sense

Editor:

I'll never cease to be amazed at the absurd decisions that the Big Blue Bus management team continues to make. The latest, as found on their website, says that a "proposal that will help keep the base fare at $1 and reduce fraud is to discontinue sales of local transfers." It's bad enough that BBB started charging for local transfers, but discontinuing them is truly idiotic.

First, it means that somebody who makes a trip requiring a transfer will need to pay twice, whereas somebody making a much longer trip on a single bus will pay only once. For example, consider person A who boards Line 3 at Lincoln and Manchester boulevards, and travels the 60-plus stops from there to UCLA (more than 12 miles); and person B, who boards Line 3 at Lincoln and Rose Avenue, rides three stops to Ocean Park Boulevard, then rides Line 8 three stops to 14th Street. Person A travels more than 10 times the distance that person B does; but person B pays twice as much! This is fair?

Secondly, what sort of "fraud" plagues BBB because of local transfers? I can just envision it: Joe phones Bob and says "Hey, Bob, I'm about to ride from Lincoln and Pico boulevards to Fourth Street and Santa Monica, and I know you need to get from Fourth and Santa Monica to Santa Monica and Bundy. So how about if I pay 50 cents for a transfer that I don't actually need, then we can rendezvous and I'll sell it to you for 75 cents, and that way we'll each save 25 cents?"

Do people at BBB headquarters really believe that this sort of thing goes on? If so, I'm astounded. But if they mean something else by "fraud," which is enabled by selling transfers, perhaps t1hey could explain what they mean.

Here's a suggestion: To help keep the fare at a dollar, how about requiring that UCLA students (who get a reduced fare) and SMC students (who ride for free!) pay full fare? The amount that SMC pays the city in return for unlimited free rides for its students is only a tiny fraction of what BBB would collect if those students paid what the rest of us pay. What's the sense of that?

Audrey Shauer
Santa Monica



Curious City

Charles Andrews

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Girls just wanna have sung

"WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER VACATION." Do teachers still assign that? I would think so, at least in the lower grades, because it gives kids an easy first essay and gives teachers useful intel on their new gang of monsters.

But after you graduate from high school, summers take on a different meaning. Gone is the carefree fun, because you know when fall comes, everything changes. Everyone scatters. Either you stay close to home for work or school and watch most of your friends take off, or you're the one who leaves everyone behind.

Finally the college school year ends and many come back home for the summer; old friends run into each other at the beach, at parties, at the mall or playing ball. Good times, good memories, mostly — and then the cycle repeats. Is that all there is, my friend?

But what if you reached out one summer to the buds you shared the best times with in high school, and got, say, 19 or 20 of them together once a week, every week to do what you all love? What if at the end, instead of just sunburn, hangovers and the empty feeling of another too-short summer, you had something to show for it, something you could always be proud of? What if you wound up with a work of art?

But creating art doesn't have to be all serious, so in that spirit they named themselves Huls' Angels, these alumnae of the celebrated Santa Monica High School Choral Music Program. Jeffe Huls is the talented, driven, inspiring choir director they all studied and performed under, from the class of 2007 to this year's class of '13. Many jumped into his program in their freshman year and remained all four years, as it became one of the most enjoyable and satisfying things in their young lives.

What hath Huls wrought? A group of young women so enamored of the choral experience, and so well taught and equipped by him in every way that they could come together years later, this past Aug. 16 at New Roads School, and present a glorious a cappela concert. It was a unique, challenging program, for which they chose the composers, songs and arrangements, assigned parts, even transcribing and translating, entirely on their own. I attended every Samohi choir performance for four years, and this could stand with any of them.

Was it hard work? You bet. Did it take serious discipline and commitment? Absolutely. But was it great fun and lots of laughs, something they all knew had been missing in their lives, that bolstered their self-confidence that they could still kick choral butt, a performance that thrilled and uplifted a packed house and perhaps exceeded even their own expectations? Was it a great thing to do with your summer? Oh yeah.

It wasn't even their whole summer. Remember, once a week. But a lot got done every week; rehearsals lasted four hours or more. Six other days and nights for beach and parties, but the woman who started it all said she couldn't wait for Saturday to roll around.

"I had the idea to do this a year ago," said Ariana Stultz (Madrigals, '11). "I got hold of Julia Seeholzer (Chamber, '08), who was a senior when I joined choir as a freshman. I was always in awe of her talent and drive. She loved the idea and we made plans and worked on it for a year before sending out invitations to singers."

Stultz gives full credit to Seeholzer for her tremendous amount of focused work over a year plus a summer, as well as being the conductor. When Stultz made a brief acknowledgment toward the end of the performance that "without Julia's leadership and so much hard work this absolutely would never have happened," every head in the choir nodded in agreement. Seeholzer even secured their performance space, a very suitable high-ceilinged room at New Roads school, gratis. But Stultz is a firecracker of enthusiasm who was surely responsible for the large number of singers who answered the call, and stuck with it.

The program the young women chose was not a safe offering of pretty, standard choral pieces. It included works by three early 20th century composers (Stravinsky's "Russian Folk Songs" was stark) and three born after 1950, as well as two from the Renaissance. It opened and closed with an "Ave Maria," and smack in the middle was a head-turner, a great take on a well-known piece by another late 20th century composer — Prince. "When Doves Cry," like you've probably never even imagined it. That pleased my eclectic and Prince-loving rock and roll heart to no end, and then I practically cracked my face grinning with pride as my daughter Nicole (Madrigals, '11) stepped forward to take one of the three solos. Didn't tell me. Wanted to surprise her dad. Did. I'll never forget that moment.

Will there be an encore next summer? Nothing's definite, but this was such a success, and these young women are so gloriously hooked on the choral high, I wouldn't be surprised. But I don't think anything can match the splash of what they did this time. To a woman they all declared they had not found a choir experience as good as what they had at Samohi, even though they were attending some prestigious, music-oriented schools. So instead of whining, they just did it themselves. That says a lot about Jeffe Huls. But it says even more about these 19 young women.

We have so many treasures here in Santa Monica, and Samohi is one of them, for more than a century. So is Jeffe Huls, and now, add Huls' Angels.

ONE LITTLE LINE

I have a lot to learn yet about the Bergamot Area Plan, but something I have learned is to pay attention to certain things Rec and Parks Commissioner Phil Brock has to say about the future of Santa Monica.

This one caught my ear, that he threw out at a small, unrelated meeting: he said the plan includes one line that could change everything, if allowed to stand, and that is the single sentence that gives anything in the approved plan precedence over existing laws. I hope that is addressed at the September council meeting.

CHARLES ANDREWS has lived in Santa Monica for 27 years and wouldn't live anywhere else in the world. Really. You can reach him at therealmrmusic@gmail.com

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The Q Line

Legalize it?

The City Council recently asked city staffers to draft regulations that may pave the way for medical marijuana dispensaries in Santa Monica.

This past week, Q-line asked:
Where do you stand on allowing medical pot shops in the city and why?

Here are your responses:

"THERE SHOULD BE NO POT SHOPS IN Santa Monica. The city is already overloaded with drugs. They come far and wide to partake in the readily available harvest. Pot shops feed right into the permissive attitude in this city. Everyone knows they are fronts for harder drugs. And as far as medical, that's a laugh. There are many questionable M.D.s, sorry to say, who will write prescriptions for any price. You want more bums and addicts in this city, which is already overwhelmed with them? Go ahead and see what happens. Other cities' horrors should have warned you. Some people never learn."

"HYPOCRITES RUN OUR TOWN! THEY forced no smoking bans everywhere, including our own apartments, yet several said they were in favor of legalizing pot when asked in the last election. They need to change their fascist anti-smoking laws to allow smoking pot in apartments. Legalize it, don't criticize it!"

"YES, I AM DEFINITELY IN FAVOR OF having a medical marijuana dispensary in Santa Monica. I would like it to be either in a medical building or an office building and have it open either six or seven days a week at hours such as 9 in the morning to 9 at night, and not have it on the first floor and have a camera before you go in, and then when you go into the suite also have a security guard, but have it real simple for the people without having it blatantly advertised when you drive by and you can see what it is. Naturally the people would have to be certified and bring something from their doctor, but I am in favor of it. No more than two of them in Santa Monica."

"SANTA MONICA DOESN'T NEED POT shops. Just visit the Venice boardwalk and you will find three or four pot shops eager to serve you. If you aren't careful you might get dragged in to see the kush doctor, who will even testify for you in court. There is no medical indication for marijuana. 'Medical' marijuana is just a phony excuse for people to get stoned. Of course, in the People's Republic, smoking tobacco, a legal substance, is verboten, while anyone can light up an illegal weed without fear of punishment."

"THIS ISSUE ONLY MATTERS WHEN IT comes to collecting taxes. Have you seen how bad our city's deficit is? Any revenue this city can collect will be valuable. For me personally, it does not matter if Santa Monica has any legal pot shops. There are mobile services and I can drive to Lincoln Boulevard in Venice to fill my prescription. In Santa Monica these businesses should be treated the same as liquor stores: Regulate their distance from churches and schools, not too many per neighborhood, etc."

"SO MANY PEOPLE ARE USING MEDICAL marijuana. If you believe every single one of them needs it for medical reasons, call me, I have this bridge I am trying to sell."

"NO. MEDICAL POT SHOPS SHOULD NOT BE allowed. If medical marijuana is to be dispensed it should be done by regular pharmacies, not by head shops run by seedy misfits."

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"I DO BELIEVE THAT SANTA MONICA should allow medical pot shops in the city. The reason is that people who are sick and in need of marijuana, it would make it less difficult. Why punish them [by] having [them] travel outside the city?"

"I DON'T SEE WHAT'S WRONG WITH HAVING legalized marijuana, as long as it goes to people who truly need it. I'm all for freedom of expression, so why not? I knew of a woman who had multiple sclerosis, and she used marijuana all the time to lessen her woes. So I'm all for it, as long as it's properly administered and not sold to drug bums, of which there are many in this day and age."

"AS A RESIDENT AND BUSINESS OWNER FOR almost 34 years in Santa Monica, I say let's allow regulated marijuana shops in the city. Coming from a background in the research industry business, it is a proven fact that medical marijuana treatments have less harmful side effects than most prescription drugs that are approved by the FDA. Let's level the playing field away from the pharmaceutical companies' stronghold on medical help for those who need it."

"HERE WE GO AGAIN WITH THIS POT menace. It's disturbing to see how the city big shots who think they can do whatever they want. And then they are going to say, "oh hey, how can kids do things like that, killing each other for drugs?" It starts with pot and it gets even bigger. I see driving by the college on 17th Street and Pico Boulevard where there's this group of kids, they still call them kids even though they go to college, hiding out behind the bus stop passing each other joints. Nobody says nothing. They just let them do it. Then of course all the kids beating up little kids because they don't buy their pot, breaking their arms and beating them to death. Don't the city and parents see what message they are giving to our youth? They are just going on and on with corruption. They will cry when these kids go out of control. Not only will they be driving with alcohol, but now marijuana. And why do they call it medical marijuana? Stop calling it that. It's not medical. I see people who are very angry if they don't smoke it 24/7."

editor@smdp.com









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City of Santa Monica

NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS
CITY OF SANTA MONICA

Civic Working Group and Technical Advisory Subcommittee

Applications due by 5:00 p.m., Monday, September 16, 2013

Applicants are invited to fill advisory board positions on the Civic Working Group (CWG) and its Technical Advisory Subcommittee (Subcommittee). At its meeting on August 13, 2013, City Council approved the establishment of the CWG and the Subcommittee, a body that will convene a community process and serve in an advisory capacity to Council regarding options for the future of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium.

The CWG will be composed of nine (9) CWG members and three (3) Subcommittee members.

This Notice is an invitation for at-large applicants for five (5) CWG positions and three (3) Subcommittee positions for a two year-term ending in November 2015, with qualifications as follows:

- Five (5) CWG members who will be people with broad knowledge of Santa Monica and who will possess professional expertise in one or more of a variety of relevant disciplines.
- Three (3) Subcommittee members who will possess extensive professional and technical expertise associated with the CWG objectives, in particular the financing, management and programming of venues similar to the Civic.
- Members of the CWG are preferred, but not required, to be Santa Monica residents; or to maintain a business in the City, or to be employed in Santa Monica. Members of the Technical Advisory Subcommittee are exempt from residency requirements.

Through a concurrent nomination process at upcoming Commission meetings, City Commissions will recommend four (4) CWG members who are individuals who currently serve, or have served, on the City's Arts, Landmarks, Planning, and Recreation and Parks Commissions.

Applications due by 5:00 p.m., Monday, September 16, 2013.
Appointments to be made by Council on October 22, 2013.

The CWG's objectives are to work with City staff and consultants to draft a vision for the future cultural and community use of the Civic as the hub of a cultural campus; explore an appropriate mix of compatible adjacent uses, from open space to additional facilities as identified in the Urban Land Institute report; evaluate potential financing options and programming and operating models for the Civic; convene a community process to gather input and to build consensus regarding the future of the Civic; and provide Council with recommendations regarding the vision, feasible renovation options and the preferred long-term operating model for the Civic.

Applications and information on CWG and Subcommittee eligibility criteria, potential conflicts and disclosure requirements are available from the City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Room 102 (submit applications at this same location), by phone at (310) 458-8211 or on-line at http://www.smgov.net/cwgapp. All current applications on file will be considered. All persons are invited to apply for membership on City Boards and Commissions regardless of race, age, sex, religion, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual preference, or disability. Applicants shall not, however, be under 18 years of age.

Disability related assistance and alternate formats of this document are available upon request by calling (310) 458-8211.

San Diego mayor agrees to resign

BY ELLIOT SPAGAT & JULIE WATSON
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO Mayor Bob Filner agreed Friday to resign in return for the city's help defending him against claims he groped, kissed and made lewd comments to women, allegations that shook and embarrassed the city and turned the former 10-term congressman into a national punch line.

Filner was regretful and defiant during a City Council meeting as he explained the "the toughest decision of my life." He apologized to his accusers but insisted he was innocent of sexual harassment and said he was the victim of a "lynch mob."

"The city should not have to go through this, and my own personal failures were responsible and I apologize to the city," Filner said after the council voted 7-0 on a deal that ended a political stalemate after 17 women publicly accused him of harassment.

"To all the women that I've offended, I had no intention to be offensive, to violate any physical or emotional space," he said. "I was trying to establish personal relationships but the combination of awkwardness and hubris led to behavior that I think many found offensive."

The city will pay Filner's legal fees in a joint defense of a lawsuit filed by the mayor's former communications director and pay for any settlement costs assessed against the mayor except for punitive damages, said City Attorney Jan Goldsmith. The city would also pay up to $98,000 if Filner wants to hire his own attorney.

Goldsmith said the city was obligated to provide his legal defense no matter what.

Filner, backed by a sometimes boisterous crowd of supporters, challenged the City Council to pursue a laundry list of his policy initiatives, ranging from addressing climate change to bringing the Olympic Games to the region. He warned of dire consequences if his priorities are ignored by well-entrenched power brokers.

"I am responsible for providing the ammunition," he said. "I did that and I take full responsibility, but there are well-organized interests who have run this city for 50 years who pointed the gun, and the media and their political agents pulled the trigger."

Filner choked up as he apologized to his former fiancee, Bronwyn Ingram, who ended the relationship just before the scandal erupted and called for him to resign.

"I love you very much. You came to love San Diego as much as I did and you did memorable things in the short time that you were first lady," he said.

The 70-year-old Filner, a liberal Democrat, served 20 years in Congress before becoming mayor of the nation's eighth-largest city.

He had previously insisted he still could be an effective mayor and underwent two weeks of behavioral therapy before returning to work this week.

But his support diminished as more women — one of them a great-grandmother and another a retired Navy admiral — came forward.

Some of Filner's closest political allies and all nine members of the council called on him to quit.

On Friday, just before the council vote, the Democratic National Committee took the extraordinary step of passing a resolution demanding Filner leave.

Dozens of people spoke for and against the mayor before the council convened behind closed doors to discuss terms negotiated between Filner and the city attorney.

"Without the mayor's resignation, our city will continue to be paralyzed by this scandal, progress will be arrested and our focus will continue to be monopolized by this dark chapter in our history," said Laura Fink, a political consultant who accused Filner of patting her buttocks in 2005 when she was deputy campaign manager to the then-congressman.

Still, many who came to the special meeting supported the embattled mayor, hailing his work on behalf of civil rights and struggling minority groups.

"When my children ask me, 'Where were you when the public lynching of Mayor Filner took place?' I will tell them I was not an accessory," said Enrique Morones, president of immigrant advocacy group Border Angels.

Filner's biggest bargaining chip at the negotiating table was his refusal to resign.

The deal does not include attorney Gloria Allred, who represents Filner's former communications director, Irene McCormack Jackson, in a lawsuit filed against Filner and the city.

Allred had said earlier that the City Council should not support it if in exchange for his resignation the city is going to use taxpayer money to pay Filner's legal bills.

"The mayor's resignation should not be bought at the expense of his victims," she said Thursday. "It would be morally wrong and hypocritical for the city to align itself with the mayor by helping him pay his legal fees."

McCormack, as she is known professionally, was the first woman to go public with allegations against Filner and her lawsuit is the only filed against the mayor and the city. McCormack claimed the mayor asked her to work without panties, demanded kisses, told her he wanted to see her naked and dragged her in a headlock while whispering in her ear.

Filner still faces a criminal investigation. Nicholas Pacilio, a spokesman for the California attorney general's office, confirmed after the mayor announced his resignation that an investigation was underway but declined to elaborate.

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department is fielding complaints of sexual misconduct by the mayor and delivering its findings to the attorney general's office. San Diego County District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis, who lost to Filner in last year's election, has recused herself.

San Diego is not new to political scandals — Mayor Dick Murphy resigned in 2005 amid a financial crisis and Mayor Roger Hedgecock stepped down in 1985 after a felony conviction for conspiracy in connection with illegal campaign contributions — but even so Democratic consultant Chris Crotty said this has reached a new level.

When Filner's resignation takes effect, Todd Gloria, the Democratic City Council president, becomes acting mayor until a special election is held within 90 days. Democrats enjoy a solid edge over Republicans in voter registration, but the GOP will capitalize on the Filner debacle to try to reclaim an office it has held for nearly all of the last four decades.

After taking office on Dec. 3, 2012, Filner struck a five-year labor agreement with city unions and opened a city of San Diego office in Tijuana to strengthen ties with the Mexican border city, However, he alienated many key players even before the allegations surfaced, including members of the City Council, the city attorney and hoteliers.

Filner, who began his political career on the San Diego school board and later served on the City Council, is twice divorced. Ex-fiancee Ingram ended her marriage engagement days before the scandal broke and later said Filner sent sexually explicit text messages to other women and arranged dates in her presence.

Vegas case seen to show 'sovereign citizen' threat

BY KEN RITTER
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS A foiled plot by two self-proclaimed adherents of a sovereign citizen movement to kidnap and execute Las Vegas police officers shows the potential for violence from a growing group that renounces government and is considered a domestic terror group at its extremes, experts and investigators said Friday.

Allegations that David Allen Brutsche, 42, and Devon Campbell Newman, 67, planned to confront police officers during traffic stops and kill them if they resisted illustrated the volatility of official interactions with people committed to the idea of fighting governmental authority, they said.

"You look at their motivation being that the government that gives the officer authority isn't viable, and if they get a following, it's a threat to be reckoned with," said Kory Flowers, a Greensboro, S.C., police detective who studies sovereign citizen groups and teaches police about them.

"Even if it's a crackpot idea, four or five guys can be a tactical assault team," he said.

Heidi Beirich, director of the Intelligence Project at the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala., counted seven killings of law enforcement officers by alleged sovereign citizen members in the past 10 years in South Carolina, Louisiana, Arkansas and last year in Alamo, Calif.

Other officers have been served with "paper terrorism" arrest documents and bills for millions of dollars, Beirich said, or discovered liens filed against their personal property.

"It becomes, at the end of the day, 'We hate the government, and the government has no right to tell us what to do,'" Beirich said.

The center estimates there are 300,000 adherents to the sovereign citizen anti-government philosophy around the country.

Former West Memphis, Ark., Police Chief Bob Paudert thinks there may be twice that number.

Paudert blames the 2010 death of his son, West Memphis Police Sgt. Brandon Paudert, on a sovereign citizens confrontation during a traffic stop in their hometown. Another officer also died in that shooting, before suspected sovereign citizen followers Jerry Kane and his 16-year-old son, Joe Kane, were killed a short time later in a separate police shootout in West Memphis.

"They're willing to die for their beliefs," said Paudert, who now travels the country talking about the group.

Brutsche is an ex-felon child sex offender who sometimes sold water to tourists on the Las Vegas Strip, while Newman has only speeding, parking and vehicle registration tickets in her background.

The two stood before a judge Friday and told him they didn't recognize his authority to keep them in jail.

Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Conrad Hafen had none of it.

"So noted," he responded.

The judge made sure Brutsche and Newman read the criminal complaints against them, then sent them back to jail pending a Sept. 9 preliminary hearing on charges of felony conspiracy to commit murder, conspiracy to commit kidnapping and attempted kidnapping.

Over Brutsche's rambling objections, the judge appointed the county public defender's office to represent him and set bail at $600,000.

Hafen named a lawyer to represent Newman and scheduled her bail hearing for Monday. Newman's lawyer didn't immediately respond Friday to messages.

Police allege Brutsche and Newman held training sessions about sovereign citizen philosophy, shopped for guns, found a vacant house to serve as a "jail," and drilled bolts into wall studs to hold cross-beams on which captives could be bound during interrogation.

A police report alleges Brutsche and Newman recorded and planned to post videos about their actions and sovereign citizen ideology following the first abduction.

Brutsche said he expected to draw a large following once they started because of the publicity, the report said.

Police began investigating Brutsche after he insisted to police and judges that he wasn't subject to their authority and the laws and regulations of the United States, Las Vegas police Capt. Chris Jones said.

Jones characterized Newman as an acquaintance and roommate of Brutsche who shared his ideology.

Records show Brutsche served three stints in California prisons before leaving a facility in Tracy, Calif., in Sept. 2011. Since then, in Las Vegas, he racked up more than 20 criminal cases on misdemeanor offenses ranging from doing business without a license, driving without a license, driving an unregistered vehicle and failing to appear in court.

Judges noted his declarations that he was a sovereign citizen and continued to move his cases forward.

"Each time we came in contact with him, he became increasingly adamant that police had no authority over him or his actions because he considered himself a sovereign," said Jones, head of the Las Vegas police regional counterterrorism center.

Federal authorities regard sovereign citizen extremists as domestic terrorists.

Beirich, at the Southern Poverty Law Center, said not all people who consider themselves sovereign citizens are violent.

But she called traffic stops involving people driving with fake license plates or without registration or driver's licenses a "typical flash point between cops and sovereigns."

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You don't need to be vegan to appreciate tofu

BY J.M. HIRSCH
AP Food Editor

Many years ago, I was vegan. And I was rather fond of my tofu.

That was many years ago. Today I am rather fond of my bacon. And steak. And eggs. And all manner of cheeses.

Still, every now and again it's worth revisiting the culinary paths we walked before. I may no longer wish to abstain from things meat and dairy, but that doesn't mean I must in turn abstain from tofu. It is, after all, a healthy, delicious, affordable and versatile protein that — thanks to being naturally lighter than meats and seafood — is particularly good in summer.

Back in the day, I loved cutting tofu into cubes, then tossing them with chilled soba noodles and spicy peanut sauce. It was a robust, yet cool salad for a warm day. And lately I've found myself craving it.

But I decided to play around with the concept a bit. I wanted more flavor. And I wanted to make use of the grill to get it. The results were terrific.

One caution. It is important to search out tofu that is already smoked and baked. Not only is the flavor of this style of tofu (which are widely available in the produce/refrigerated Asian section at mainstream grocers) better, the texture is superior, as well. It has almost a cheddar cheese-like density. Conventional tofu is watery and flavorless and can be fussy to grill.

If you need a shortcut for this recipe, you could use bottled peanut sauce, but the flavor won't be nearly as good. It would be better to make the sauce ahead of time and store it in the refrigerator, where it will keep (tightly covered) for several days.



Photo courtesy www.sodahead.com

LOOKS LIKE CHICKEN : The grill isn't just for meat. Try marinated tofu to help keep things light.

J.M. HIRSCH is the food editor for The Associated Press. He blogs at www.LunchBoxBlues.com and tweets at http://twitter.com/JM_Hirsch. E-mail him at jhirsch@ap.org

Spicy peanut noodle salad with tofu

Start to finish: 40 minutes
Servings: 6
4 cups broccoli florets
Olive oil
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
8-ounce block marinated and baked tofu (check the refrigerated Asian section at the grocer)
6.2-ounce package soba noodles
2/3 cup natural peanut butter
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/4 cup water
3 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar
1-inch chunk fresh ginger
2 cloves garlic
Hot sauce, to taste
2 scallions, chopped
1/4 cup chopped roasted peanuts

Heat the grill to medium. Check the grates of your grill to see whether the broccoli florets are likely to fall through. If so, line a small baking sheet or metal roasting pan with foil, then mist with cooking spray.

In a medium bowl, combine the broccoli florets and about 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Toss until evenly coated. Season with salt and pepper.

Place the tofu slabs on the grill. Carefully transfer the broccoli to the grill, either directly on the grates or on the prepared baking sheet or roasting pan. Grill the broccoli for 3 minutes, the tofu for 8 minutes, or until the broccoli is lightly charred and the tofu is nicely seared. Transfer everything to a baking sheet in a single layer. Place in the refrigerator to cool.

While the broccoli and tofu cool, bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add the soba noodles and cook for 5 minutes, or until just tender. Drain well, then transfer to the baking sheet in the refrigerator to cool.

Meanwhile, to prepare the peanut sauce, in a blender combine the peanut butter, soy sauce, water, rice vinegar, ginger and garlic. Blend until smooth. Add a splash of hot sauce, blend then taste and adjust with additional hot sauce, if desired.

When the tofu, broccoli and noodles have cooled, transfer the tofu to a cutting board and cut into bite-size chunks. Transfer the noodles to a large bowl and drizzle the peanut sauce over them. Toss to coat evenly, then add the tofu and broccoli and mix gently. Garnish with chopped scallions and peanuts.

Nutrition information per serving: 420 calories; 220 calories from fat (52 percent of total calories); 24 g fat (4 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 0 mg cholesterol; 37 g carbohydrate; 4 g fiber; 7 g sugar; 21 g protein; 1,330 mg sodium.



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Tour De Feast

Michael "Snacks" Ryan Send comments to editor@smdp.com



Michael Ryan *michael@smdp.com*

HOME COOKIN': **The rotisserie chicken at Country Kitchen. The spices make the dish.**

Country Kitchen chickened out

IT'S A GOOD TIME TO BE A RESTAURATEUR in Downtown Santa Monica. With all the overdevelopment occurring it seems like the city is going for some kind of world record. It's like an old-fashioned phone booth stuffing, or clowns cramming into a car. Or maybe the city is like the crazy cat lady (or man) that just can't say no to another stray. Nevertheless, hoards of people spell great opportunities for restaurants — that is if they offer delicious food at the right price.

The big strain falls upon us food critics. Restaurants open and close at such a frenetic pace it's a challenge to stay on top of things. I can hardly cram a cafe's food down my review hole before a new one opens up.

That was the case for Jack N' Jill's, which I have always viewed as a Santa Monica mainstay, that is until it is gone. Owners of the Seasalt Fish Grill, located on the 500 block of Santa Monica Boulevard, have acquired the adjacent storefront of the now departed Jack N' Jill's. If you were walking down the street with your phone glued to your face, you would never know there was a change. After all, the Jack N' Jill's trademark yellow facade remains intact, but upon closer review there is indeed new signage that reads Country Kitchen.

Country Kitchen is an apparent parlay from Seasalt Fish Grill's immediate success (Check out my review of Seasalt at "More fish in the sea," Tour de Feast, May 24-25). The menus are very similar, almost interchangeable. Just swap out chicken for fish or vice versa. The dinning rooms are the same as well. Both have a small set of tables up front, with stairs leading to a second floor of more tables bunked over the kitchen. Even the restaurants' logos are alike.

With Seasalt's lunch lines usually out the door, Country Kitchen gives customers an alternate option with a menu focused mostly on poultry. Mostly that is. Deviations such as burgers, steak sandwiches and beef bowls seem a bit out of place for a restaurant that has rotisserie chicken as their main selling point. I guess some people go to Red Lobster and order the sirloin steak, otherwise it wouldn't be on the menu.

Getting back to the basics, the rotisserie chicken is Country Kitchen's signature dish. For good reason too. The chicken is cooked just right, but it's the spices that give Country Kitchen's birds a slight edge over places like Koo Koo Roo or the California Chicken Cafe. Seasoning choices include chipotle BBQ and the signature salt n' pepper. The chicken plates, served with mashed potatoes, gravy and seasonal vegetables, are substantial and range from $10 to $15 depending on white or dark meat plus extra sides.

On a less slow-cooked note, the salads such as the California Berry, Quinoa Veggie Harvest and Farmer's Backyard Kale Caesar are all sensible fresh-eating options. But like the devil on the other side of the shoulder, the fried chicken sandwich beckons. The deep fried chicken filet, topped with a pickle, dijon slaw and garlic aioli is tough to resist. It's a really good sandwich that is seemingly really bad for you.

Whether it's to accommodate the displaced Jack N' Jill's crowd or not, Country Kitchen serves breakfast with a number of items, most notably the chicken and waffles.

When I think of the words "country kitchen," the Cracker Barrel gift shop comes to mind. There really isn't anything "country" about the Country Kitchen. But I suppose MTV has nothing to do with music and Lucky Charms have never been proven to actually be lucky. Semantics and a crowded menu aside, Country Kitchen does excel with their chicken, which is important since the restaurant's logo is a silhouette of just that.

If you're on foot or on bike, the Country Kitchen is worth a shot. But I wouldn't recommend a drive into Downtown Santa Monica during business hours, even to my worst enemy. The crowds will subside post Labor Day, but the construction certainly will not.

More restaurants, more reviews. As I wrote this, three restaurants opened on Main Street. I better get my bike.

MICHAEL can be seen riding around town on his bike burning calories so he can eat more food. He can be reached at michael@smdp.com. Follow him on Twitter at https://twitter.com/greaseweek

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BUSINESS
FROM PAGE 1

structure is $43.165 million, according to a 2011 city staff report. When finished, it will have three subterranean and eight above-ground parking levels with over 700 parking spaces, roughly doubling what was there before. There will also be enough room for up to 90 bicycles and 19 motorcycles.

There will be 7,042 total square feet of retail space, city officials said.

Barbara Bryan, vice chair of the Downtown board, said she was surprised on who the proposed tenants were and wondered what they would do four or five months in if business wasn't going well. She was concerned about duplicating what is already available on Second Street. For example, Bryan said there are already two other yoga places on that street.

"There's an urgency to rent it and I'm not sure what this urgency is," said Bryan, who co-owns Interactive Cafe on Broadway. "The city itself really owes something to the businesses that have been here. It's not just, 'you've been here, time's up, we are going to bring in something new.'"

Rob York, president of York Consulting Group, LLC, said city officials should "take a hard look" at the proposed tenants' business plans and financial information.

"[S]ome board members felt there was an opportunity to get a little more diversity in the uses and the tenants," York said. "Part of the issue was there wasn't enough clarity or information on the tenants."

> "THERE'S AN URGENCY TO RENT IT AND I'M NOT SURE WHAT THIS URGENCY IS."
>
> Barbara Bryan
> Vice chair, Downtown Santa Monica Inc. board

That led the board to ask city officials to come back with more details before it could recommend tenants to the City Council for approval.

York said another substantial challenge was the property is going to be a "really, really raw space and there are no tenant improvements," meaning any entrepreneur that comes in will have to invest a significant amount of money upfront on bathrooms and other essentials.

"It's basically concrete slabs," said York, who works as a consultant for Downtown Santa Monica Inc.

For board member Johannes Van Tilburg, of Van Tilburg, Banvard & Soderbergh (VTBS Architects), the concern was about the design of the structure. Van Tilburg said he wanted to see the store fronts protrude to the front of the building and wanted to get the opinion of the City Hall architectural department.

"The lease space should come out to the front of the sidewalk," Van Tilburg said.

Board member Bruria Finkel recommended that city officials do some "fresh thinking" on the space as well as the particular businesses that will go into it.

City officials, meanwhile, told the board part of the challenge was the retail space is a very "ill configured space."



Image courtesy City of Santa Monica

THE RIGHT MIX: **A rendering of Parking Structure 6 and its storefronts on Second Street.**

Jason Harris, the economic development manager for City Hall, said the real sense of urgency is not to have vacant storefront.

"Our true goal and intent here was to activate the space," Harris said.

When City Hall reopened parking structures attached to Santa Monica Place there were vacant storefronts along the Broadway portion for several months. Those spaces have since been leased.

ameera@smdp.com

KITAR
FROM PAGE 1

"You can make different outfits with it," she said. "You can put different effects in there so when you switch out the neck on a different body, it gives you a different effect on the strings."

As of Friday, the group had raised $5,741 out of the $18,000 goal. The deadline is Aug. 29.

Watenmaker said his relationship with music, which he started playing in elementary school, influenced his desire to invent new instruments. He had classical training at Samohi, even performing at Carnegie Hall. Pham, meanwhile, came from a "craft" background and enjoys building.

The kitar comes in two body shapes, a "Jack" or a "Jill," with Jack being more angular and the Jill design having more feminine curves, Pham said.

The duo, who work out of a converted warehouse across the street from the Bergamot Station Arts Center, met two years ago and both found they had a common goal of "wanting to build everything," Pham said.

The kitar is in its second prototype form. The first prototype was heavier so they decided to hollow out the body and use less wood, Watenmaker said. They also changed the connection joint between the neck and body.

The name hearkens back to the long history of plucking strings, Watenmaker said. It also derives from the Greek word "cithara" which was an ancient Greek string instrument resembling the lyre.

> YOU CAN PUT DIFFERENT EFFECTS IN THERE SO WHEN YOU SWITCH OUT THE NECK ON A DIFFERENT BODY, IT GIVES YOU A DIFFERENT EFFECT ON THE STRINGS."
>
> Thao Pham
> Partner in We Anything Build

There's a long tradition of people altering guitars to form a hybrid instrument, said Isaac Parfrey, general manager at McCabe's Guitar Shop on Pico Boulevard. He gave examples of a keytar, a small keyboard with a neck like a guitar that is supported by a strap around the neck and shoulders, similar to the way a guitar is held. It was popular during the synth-pop days of the 1980s.



Paul Alvarez Jr. *editor@smdp.com*

BUILDING SOMETHING NEW: **Noah Watenmaker (L) and Thao Pham jam together on their kitars in their studio by Bergamot Station.**

Other examples of innovation are harp guitars, or a six string guitar that has harp strings as its base strings.

"It's pretty common," Parfrey said.

Pham and Watenmaker have plans to get involved in transportation and lifestyle sectors with their company, using the same open platform model and enabling collaboration among creators and users. They want to put production back into the hands of the people.

"[We want to] bring builders and users back into a community where they can actually interact with these platforms," Watenmaker said.

To learn more or to contribute to the effort, go to www.kickstarter.com and search for kitar.

ameera@smdp.com





NUCLEAR
FROM PAGE 1

of a leak from a tank that stores contaminated water used to cool the reactor cores. That 300-ton (80,000-gallon) leak is the fifth and most serious from a tank since the March 2011 disaster, when three of the plant's reactors melted down after a huge earthquake and tsunami knocked out the plant's power and cooling functions.

But experts believe the underground seepage from the reactor and turbine building area is much bigger and possibly more radioactive, confronting the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., with an invisible, chronic problem and few viable solutions. Many also believe it is another example of how TEPCO has repeatedly failed to acknowledge problems that it could almost certainly have foreseen — and taken action to mitigate before they got out of control.

It remains unclear what the impact of the contamination on the environment will be because the radioactivity will be diluted as it spreads farther into the sea. Most fishing in the area is already banned, but fishermen in nearby Iwaki City had been hoping to resume test catches next month following favorable sampling results. Those plans have been scrapped after news of the latest tank leak.

"Nobody knows when this is going to end," said Masakazu Yabuki, a veteran fisherman in Iwaki, just south of the plant, where scientists say contaminants are carried by the current. "We've suspected (leaks into the ocean) from the beginning. ... TEPCO is making it very difficult for us to trust them."

To keep the melted nuclear fuel from overheating, TEPCO has rigged a makeshift system of pipes and hoses to funnel water into the broken reactors. The radioactive water is then treated and stored in the aboveground tanks that have now developed leaks. But far more leaks into the reactor basements during the cooling process — then through cracks into the surrounding earth and groundwater.

About 1,000 tons of underground water from the mountains flows into the plant compound each day, of which 400 tons seep into the reactor and turbine basements and get contaminated. The remaining 600 avoids that area, but at least half of it is believed to eventually come in contact with contamination elsewhere before entering the sea, according to an estimate by Japan's Agency for Natural Resources and Energy.

Scientists, pointing to stubbornly high radioactive cesium levels in bottom-dwelling fish since the disaster, had for some time suspected the plant was leaking radioactive water into the ocean. TEPCO repeatedly denied that until last month, when it acknowledged contaminated water has been leaking into the ocean from early in the crisis. Even so, the company insists the seepage is coming from part of a network of maintenance tunnels, called trenches, near the coast, rather than underground water coming out of the reactor and turbine area.

"So far, we don't have convincing data that confirm a leak from the turbine buildings. But we are open to consider any possible path of contamination," said TEPCO spokesman Yoshimi Hitosugi.

The turbine buildings at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant are about 150 meters (500 feet) from the ocean. According to a Japan Atomic Energy Agency document, the contaminated underground water is spreading toward the sea at a rate of about 4 meters (13 feet) a month.

At that rate, "the water from that area is just about to reach the coast," if it hasn't already, said Atsunao Marui, an underground water expert at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology who is on a government committee studying the contaminated water problem. "We must contain the problem as quickly as possible."

TEPCO, nationalized and burdened with the astronomical cleanup costs, has been criticized for repeatedly lagging in attempts to tackle leakage problems. As a precautionary step, it has created chemical blockades in the ground along the coast to stop any possible leaks, but experts question their effectiveness. After a nearly two-year delay, construction of an offshore steel wall designed to contain contaminated water has begun.

The utility has also proposed building frozen walls — upside down comb-shaped sticks that refrigerate surrounding soil — into the ground around the reactor areas, but that still has to be tested and won't be ready until 2015 if proved successful.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe earlier this month announced that the government would intervene and provide funding for key projects to deal with the contaminated water problem.

"This is a race against the clock," said Toyoshi Fuketa, a commissioner on Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority.

Compounding TEPCO's problems is the new leak discovered this week. Most of the 300 tons is believed to have seeped into the ground, but some may have escaped into the sea through a rainwater gutter, said Zengo Aizawa, the company's executive vice president.

That, too, may be a harbinger of more problems ahead.

Some 1,000 steel tanks built across the plant complex contain nearly 300,000 tons (300 million liters, 80 million gallons) of partially treated contaminated water. About 350 of the tanks have rubber seams intended to last for only five years. TEPCO spokesman Masayuki Ono said the company plans to build additional tanks with welded seams that are more watertight, but will have to rely on rubber seams in the meantime.

Shinji Kinjo, a regulatory official in charge of the Fukushima disaster, said the rubber-seam tanks were mostly built in a rush when the contaminated water problem started, and often lacked adequate quality tests and require close attention.

Workers spotted two more questionable tanks during an inspection Thursday.

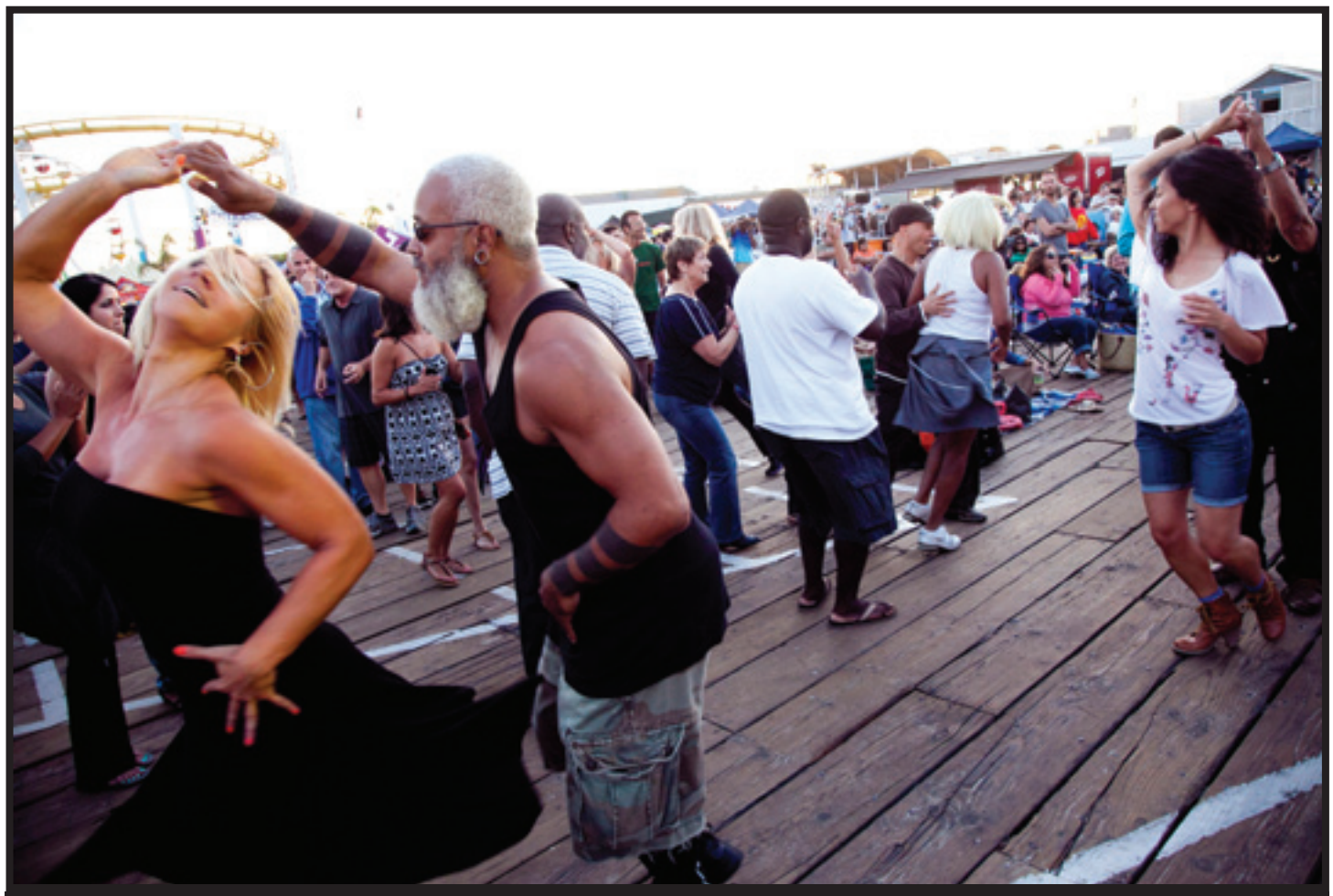
After his inspection Friday, Fuketa, the regulatory commissioner, said that the plant's twice-daily leak-spotting patrols were "sloppy," and that there were hardly any protective measures taken in anticipation of a potential tank leak.

"It's like a haunted house, one thing happening after another," said Nuclear Regulation Authority Chairman Shunichi Tanaka, referring to the spate of problems at the plant. "But we must take any steps that would reduce risks to avoid a fatal accident."

Leaks of highly contaminated water from the aboveground tanks aggravate the groundwater problem.

"Any contamination in the groundwater would eventually flow into the ocean. That is very difficult to stop even with barriers," said Ken Buesseler, a marine chemist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts. He found that radioactive cesium levels in most fish caught off the Fukushima coast hadn't declined in the year following the March 2011 disaster, suggesting that the contaminated water from the reactor-turbine areas is already leaking into the sea.

But TEPCO hasn't provided the details he and other scientists need to further assess the situation.



CUT A ... PLANK

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Folks get down to the Latin-fusion sounds of the Boogaloo Assassins at the Twilight Concert Series Thursday at the Santa Monica Pier. Next week check out New Orleans cool kid Trombone Shorty.

HOUSING
FROM PAGE 3

Most economists expect the housing recovery will continue, albeit at a slower pace.

"We've been spoiled by low rates," Greg McBride, senior financial analyst at Bankrate.com. "People are gnashing their teeth now over a rate we had never seen four years ago." He notes that, based on their figures dating back to 1985, rates on the 30-year loan had never sunk below 5 percent until 2010.

The impact of higher mortgage rates has surfaced in the new-home market faster than the re-sale market because the new-home sales are measured when contracts are signed.

Higher rates may have also caused potential buyers to cancel some purchases of new homes. Vitner says that may explain why sales were revised down in May and June. Most of the revisions occurred in sales of homes not yet under construction. Buyers don't need mortgages until construction begins.

Sales of previously occupied homes reached a nearly four-year high last month. But that report measured completed sales, which typically reflects mortgage rates locked in a month or two earlier.

The jump likely reflected a rush by home buyers to lock in lower rates. Next week, a measure of contract signings in July will be released. Many economists expect that will drop.

Fed officials are closely watching the impact of higher mortgage rates on the housing recovery. The drop in sales could strengthen the hand of those Fed members who want to delay reducing the bond purchases.

Though new homes represent only a fraction of the housing market, they have an outsize impact on the economy. Each home built creates an average of three jobs for a year and generates about $90,000 in tax revenue, according to data from the homebuilders association.

"The spike in mortgage rates is slowing the pace of improvement," Dan Greenhaus, chief global strategist for BTIG, an institutional brokerage, said in an e-mail. "Given the speed at which housing was improving, and the growing talk of a renewed bubble, some moderation, assuming it doesn't materially worsen, is not a terrible outcome."

SURF REPORT



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Surf Forecasts

Water Temp: **62.1°**

SATURDAY – **POOR TO FAIR** – SURF: **1-2 ft** knee to thigh high occ. 3ft
Weak mix of SSW swell and NW windswell - possible plus sets at top southern hemi spots

SUNDAY – **FAIR** – SURF: **2-3 ft** knee to waist high
Bit more SSW swell - plus sets at top southern hemi spots;
weak NW windswell; keeping an eye on the tropics

MONDAY – **FAIR** – SURF: **2-3 ft** thigh to waist high
Modest SSW swell - plus sets at top southern hemi spots; weak NW windswell; keeping an eye on the tropics

TUESDAY – **FAIR** – SURF: **2-3 ft** knee to waist high
Modest SSW swell eases; weak NW windswell

BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous 30 days up to the ending date of **August 21, 2013**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - beachreportcard.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS (for the last 30 days)
Number of sewage spills -- 1
Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
Number of wet days -- 8
Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 27 / xx
Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 0 / xx

The Beach Report Card is made possible by: simplehuman, LAcarGUY, SIMA, and Grousbeck Family Foundation

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth.	A+	xx
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	xx
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechusa and Los Alisos creeks.		
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach.	A+	xx
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth.	A	xx
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth.	A+	xx
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private).	A+	xx
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	xx
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach.	A+	xx
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	xx
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach.	A+	xx
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth.	A+	xx
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 21672 Malibu Rd..	A+	xx
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence.	A+	xx
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily.	A	xx
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east.	B	xx
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon.	C	xx
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero).	A+	xx
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs.	A+	xx
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach.	A+	xx
Tuna Canyon.	xx	xx
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth.	A	xx
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	xx	xx
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	A+	xx
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain).	A+	xx

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence.	A	xx
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain.	A+	xx
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain.	A+	xx
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua).	A+	xx
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain.	A	xx
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain.	A	xx
Santa Monica Municipal Pier.	F	xx
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain.	A	xx
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms).	A+	xx
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain.	A	xx
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain.	A+	xx
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain.	B	xx
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain.	A+	xx
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south.	A	xx
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St..	A+	xx
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower.	B	xx
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth.	C	xx
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain.	A	xx
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach.	A	xx
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of DWW jetty).	A+	xx
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain.	A	xx
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant.	A+	xx
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain.	A+	xx

LEGEND
DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone
WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days
xx -- no sample taken

Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card™ is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles' Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A-F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

Heal the Bay



Photo courtesy Jon SooHoo/Los Angeles Dodgers

IRON MAN: Los Angeles Dodgers broadcaster Vin Scully will return for a record 65th season.

Vin Scully to return to Dodgers booth in 2014

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES Vin Scully, one of baseball's most beloved broadcasters, will return to the Los Angeles Dodgers for a record 65th season in 2014.

"I can tell you from the bottom of my heart that I have always felt that I am the most ordinary of men who was given an extraordinary break of doing what I love to do at a very early age," Scully said on Friday. "I pray that I'll be allowed to do it for at least one more year.

"As far as I'm concerned, it could have been one line in the note sheet tonight. But I don't take any of it for granted in any way, shape or form. I know that this miracle was given to me, and I could lose it in 30 seconds between the time I leave here and go up to the booth. I'm just so blessed to be doing what I love to do and full of thanks."

The 85-year-old Scully said he is quite impressed by what the new ownership group has brought to the Dodgers, along with the energy fans are creating at the ballpark. The club has surged from last place in the NL West to a lead of 9 1-2 games.

"I do think that the success of the team had something to do with it," Scully said. "These last 50 games, coming to the ballpark and watching them pull out some miraculous victories, it was so thrilling — even for someone who had seen however many games I've seen before.

"It became so much exciting again and so much fun. I don't really know how I would have felt had they stayed in last place with 30 some-odd games left. I probably would have come back, anyway, because I love it so much, but this made it pretty easy. And as long as I feel the emotion, I feel like I should be here."

Scully began his professional baseball broadcasting career in 1950 with the Brooklyn Dodgers, and he has called three perfect games, 25 no-hitters, 25 World Series and 12 All-Star games. With every passing year, the adoration of Dodgers fans and the city of Los Angeles has humbled him even more and made him want to continue his lifelong passion.

"The thought of just suddenly walking away from all these friends in the ballpark, and this great game, and this very exciting team, and this fandom that's so thrilled with what's going on, I thought there's just no way," Scully said. "The best way that I could describe it was the night of the bobblehead, a couple of weeks ago, and they played that little tribute on the screen. And the ovation was overwhelming. I was as close to crying as I've been in a long, long time."

Scully will work all Dodgers home games and road games in California and Arizona that aren't nationally televised. He will call all nine innings of the team's television broadcasts on Time Warner SportsNet LA beginning in 2014, with the first three innings of each of his games simulcast on the radio.

When Scully began broadcasting, the Dodgers had yet to win a World Series. Three years later, at 25, he became the youngest person to broadcast a World Series game. In 1955, he had his most memorable moment behind the microphone, as he called the Dodgers' only championship in Brooklyn.

"The Dodgers are overjoyed to have Vin back with the team in 2014," Dodgers Chairman and Owner Mark Walter said. "Vin IS Dodger baseball. The Dodgers, the sport of baseball and the city of Los Angeles are extremely fortunate to have him in our midst."

Scully also has called Dodgers World Championships in 1959, '63, '65, '81 and '88, and he was elected the top sportscaster of the 20th century by the American Sportscasters Association.

"Vin brings a unique perspective to Dodger baseball," Dodgers President and CEO Stan Kasten said. "Everyone in the Dodger family and within the sound of his voice benefits each and every time we are afforded the opportunity to hear him call a Dodger game. We are thrilled to know that experience will continue through at least the 2014 season."

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MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(310) 260-1528

Saturday, Aug. 24
The Master (R) 2hrs 24 min
7:30pm

Sunday, Aug. 25
Cowboy Bebop: The Movie (R) 2hrs
5:30pm
Discussion following with acclaimed voice actor Steve Blum and others.

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade
(310) 451-9440

Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (PG) 1hr 46min
11:20am, 2:00pm, 4:45pm, 7:35pm, 10:20pm

Paranoia (PG-13) 1hr 46min
2:15pm, 5:10pm, 8:00pm, 10:40pm

World's End (R) 1hr 49min
11:30am, 2:05pm, 5:00pm, 7:50pm, 10:35pm

Lee Daniels' The Butler (PG-13) 2hrs 12min
11:15am, 1:00pm, 4:05pm, 7:20pm, 10:30pm

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 451-9440

Elysium (R) 1hr 49min
10:35am, 1:30pm, 4:15pm, 7:15pm, 10:15pm

Planes (PG) 1hr 32min
10:50am, 4:05pm, 9:30pm

You're Next (R) 1hr 36min
11:55am, 2:45pm, 5:35pm, 8:25pm, 11:10pm

Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (PG-13) 2hrs 00min
10:30am, 1:40pm, 4:45pm, 8:00pm, 11:15pm

Kick-Ass 2 (R) 1hr 43min
11:40am, 2:30pm, 5:20pm, 8:15pm, 11:05pm

We're the Millers (R) 1hr 49min
10:40am, 1:25pm, 4:25pm, 7:30pm, 10:30pm

Jobs (PG-13) 2hrs 02min
10:30am, 1:35pm, 4:35pm, 7:45pm, 11:00pm

Planes in 3D (PG) 1hr 32min
1:20pm, 6:45pm

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 478-3836

Hunt (Jagten) (R) 1hr 46min
11:15am

Artist and the Model (El artista y la modelo) (R) 1hr 44min
11:10am

Spectacular Now (R) 1hr 35min
1:40pm, 4:20pm, 7:10pm, 9:40pm

Blackfish (PG-13) 1hr 30min
1:00pm, 3:15pm, 5:30pm, 7:50pm, 10:00pm

Way, Way Back (PG-13) 1hr 43min
1:55pm, 4:45pm, 7:30pm, 10:00pm

Blue Jasmine (PG-13) 1hr 38min
1:50pm, 4:30pm, 7:20pm, 9:50pm

Spark: A Burning Man Story (NR) 1hr 30min
10:45am

Herblock - The Black & The White (NR) 1hr 40min
11:00am

Rider and the Storm (NR) 15min
1:15pm

For more information, e-mail **editor@smdp.com**

RETURN CALLS, LIBRA

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Your efficiency emerges, even if it's just playing softball or organizing a get-together with family. No one can deny your enthusiasm and energy. Opportunities seem to fly right by you. Tonight: Trust your whims.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ You will continue to be slightly remote. Assure a loved one that the issue has nothing to do with him or her. The unexpected occurs, which gives you more insight into what is happening. Tonight: Remain open to someone else's idea.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Follow through on plans involving your immediate circle. You'll enjoy yourself no matter where you are, as long as you're with friends. Don't say "no" to an unorthodox invitation. Renew your energy with the excitement of something new. Tonight: You are the party.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Pressure could build quickly, which will encourage you to take charge in the near future. You might feel in sync with this project. Recognize that an older family member needs some of your time. Tonight: A force to be dealt with.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Keep reaching out to someone you care dearly about who might not be in the same town as you. When the two of you connect, you'll support each other in making positive changes toward a long-desired goal you share together. Tonight: Go where you can be entertained.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Relate to someone directly. Understand what is happening within a key relationship and/or business partnership. You don't often try to "get" this person, so try walking in his or her shoes. Your self-expression will be far more dynamic with greater understanding. Tonight: Be a duo.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ You might discover that there are limits to what you can do without the support of a friend or loved one. You often put up a good front, but you would be more successful with the person in question if you were more vulnerable. Tonight: Make and return calls.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Take in a different perspective. You can get stuck in your own opinions and ideas, if you are not careful. Your creativity will flourish once communication starts to flow. Tonight: Carry the day's interactions into the night.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ It might be too much for others to ask you to contain yourself, and fortunately no one will. You seem to be able to share your feelings openly. Others respond to your enthusiasm in kind. Tonight: Feel like a kid again.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ You might feel as if you can do no wrong, but a surprise could happen. A partner could try to branch out into new areas. Take a leap of faith; otherwise, you'll have to deal with a hassle. Tonight: Entertain guests.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ You have a way with words that draws several people closer. If you are single, you could have a situation evolve between two potential suitors. Your best bet is to remain your charming self and continue maintaining a low profile. Tonight: Favorite people, favorite place.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Rethink a recent expenditure, especially if some important information comes up that could affect your finances. Your creativity will kick into high gear, as you try to manage to have it all. Be reasonable, for everyone else's sake. Tonight: Pick up the tab for the group.

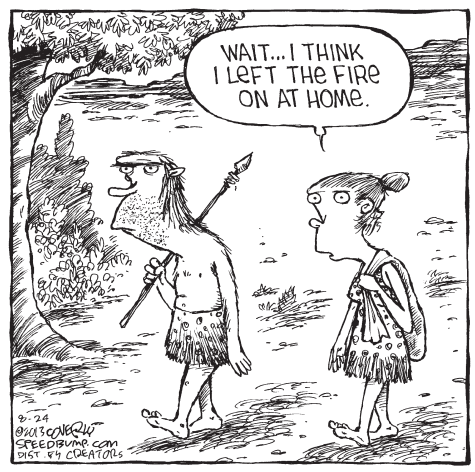
August 24-25, 2013

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

This year you feel more comfortable kicking up your heels and becoming more playful than in the past. You often will be juggling two different interests. Knowing what you want can't be emphasized enough. You could be unusually fortunate, especially in your personal life. If you are single, you seriously might be considering a change of status this year. If you are attached, the two of you benefit from special time together. In some cases, you will be getting to know each other again. ARIES can be demanding.

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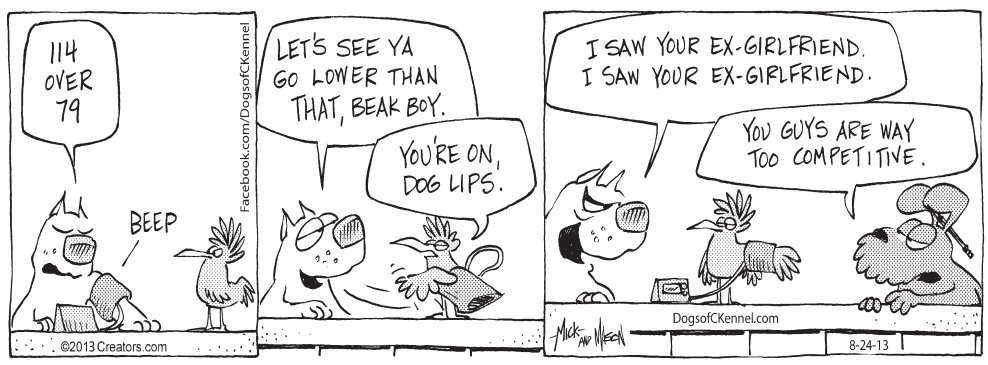
Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



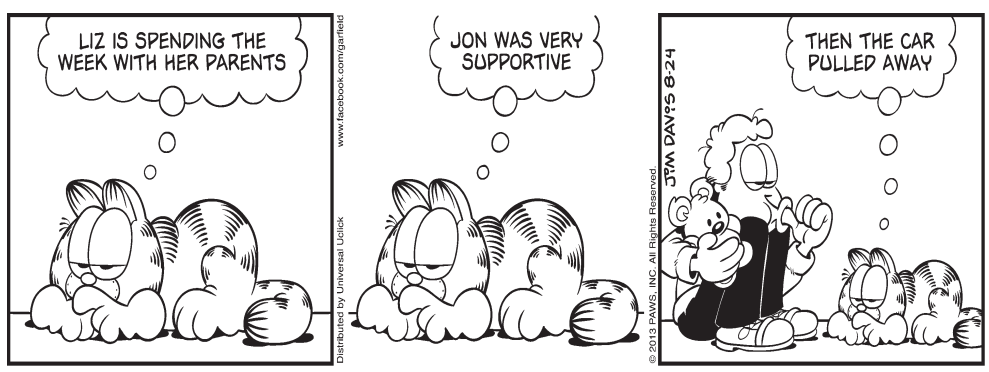
Strange Brew
By John Deering



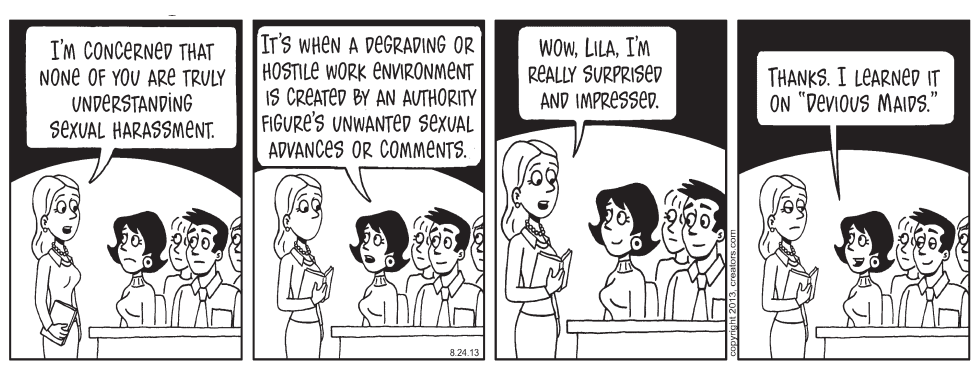
Dogs of C-Kennel
By Mick and Mason Mastroianni



Garfield
By Jim Davis



The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from ★ (easiest) to ★★★★★ (hardest).

Difficulty Level ★★★★

	9		6	3			7	
5		7						3
	1				8			
2						7		
7				1				8
		4						6
			3				1	
1						2		7
	8			6	1		5	

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GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

1	2	6	3	9	8	7	5	4
7	3	4	6	1	5	9	8	2
8	9	5	7	4	2	1	3	6
2	5	1	9	7	6	8	4	3
3	8	7	1	5	4	2	6	9
4	6	9	2	8	3	5	1	7
9	4	2	5	3	1	6	7	8
6	1	3	8	2	7	4	9	5
5	7	8	4	6	9	3	2	1

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Aloud
7 Petty argument
11 Get in
12 Choir voice
13 Flute's cousin
14 "Toodle-oo!"
15 Pandora's box held them
16 Banjo's cousins
17 Jazz club units
18 Be contrite
19 News article
21 Bill-boards, e.g.
22 Camera feature
25 Jumble of noise
26 Letterman rival
27 Tell, e.g.
29 Brewery sights
33 Swell
34 Emerald, for one
35 Letter opener
36 King of music
37 "Lonely Boy" singer
38 Mis-treated
39 Midterm event
40 Docu-ments

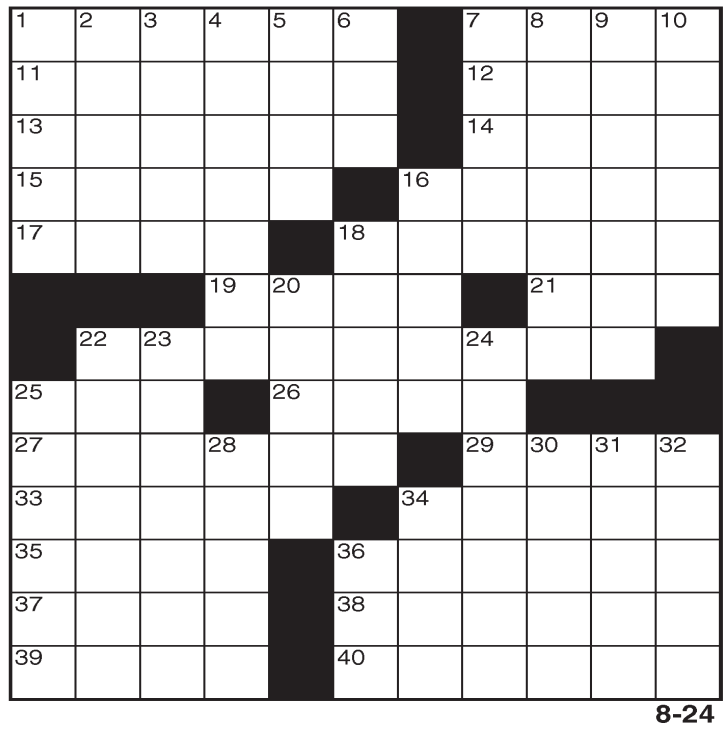
DOWN

1 Wise guys
2 Bear out
3 Round-the-world trip
4 Does a great standup act
5 Prepara-tion times
6 Tennis need
7 Showed interest
8 Mesa's kin
9 Goes to
10 Wedding reception events
16 Cleaner scent
18 Allude
20 Apartment sign
22 Fleet owner
23 Pops open
24 Suppres-sion of a sort
25 Blots
28 Fights
30 Came up
31 President with 15 children
32 Some coasters
34 Rum-soaked cake
36 Pinnacle

P	U	P	A	S	■	M	A	P	L	E
E	M	A	I	L	■	A	L	L	I	N
A	P	P	L	E	■	M	E	A	N	T
L	I	E	■	E	Y	E	■	S	E	E
E	R	R	■	V	E	T	■	T	A	R
D	E	U	C	E	S	■	S	I	R	S
■	■	M	A	S	O	N	I	C	■	■
A	B	B	Y	■	R	U	N	S	T	O
B	A	R	■	A	N	T	■	T	E	N
O	R	E	■	D	O	C	■	R	A	M
R	I	L	K	E	■	A	B	A	S	E
T	U	L	I	P	■	S	O	W	E	D
S	M	A	R	T	■	E	A	S	T	S

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475



8-24



NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ An unnamed restaurateur from Nagoya, Japan, has filed a lawsuit against an affiliate of the country's largest organized crime syndicate, Yamaguchi-gumi, demanding a refund of "protection" money she had been paying for more than 12 years (in total, the equivalent of about $170,000). The affiliate, Kodo-kai, burned down a bar in 2010, killing people, in a similar protection arrangement that went bad, and the plaintiff said she, too, was threatened with arson when she decided to stop paying. According to an expert on Japanese "yakuza," a relative of one of the victims of the 2010 fire may also sue Kodo-kai.

■ At Atherstone, England's, Twycross Zoo, a program is underway to try to teach quarter-ton giant tortoises to speed up. An extended outdoor pen had been built for Speedy (age 70), Tim, 40, and Shelly, 30, but that meant it took a longer time to round them up for bed at the end of the day. The Leicester Mercury reported in June that zoo officials were trying to use the lure of food to get the tortoises to significantly improve their way-under-1-mile-per-hour gait.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1991 – Ukraine declares itself independent from the Soviet Union.

1992 – Hurricane Andrew makes landfall just south of Miami as a Category 5 hurricane.

1994 – Initial accord between Israel and the PLO about partial self-rule of the Palestinians on the West Bank.

1998 – First radio-frequency identification (RFID) human implantation tested in the United Kingdom.

WORD UP!

viceroy
\ VAHYS-roi \ , noun;
1. a person appointed to rule a country or province as the deputy of the sovereign: the viceroy of India.

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