FREE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2004

Volume 3, Issue 250

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

FANTASY 5
1 2 17 31 39

DAILY 3
Daytime: 5 2 3
Evening: 7 3 1

DAILY DERBY
1st: 02 Lucky Star
2nd: 06 Whirl Win
3rd: 11 Money Bags
RACE TIME: 1:43.27

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Cape Town (South Africa)'s Old Town House museum has scheduled an exhibit for September featuring familiar 17th-century Dutch Master paintings, but with all of them turned to face the wall, which curator Andrew Lamprecht said will be a "conceptual art intervention" that turns the pieces "into something new and unexpected" which will "force gallery goers to reconsider their preconceptions about the art." "These are fascinating things to see from behind," he said.

■ An AFSCME union local filed a grievance against East Haven, Conn., mayor Joe Maturo recently for violating the city's labor contract by personally doing the civic task of reaching down into a storm drain and repositioning the drain cover, which Maturo noticed had become dislodged. According to the union, if a cover comes loose, the city is required to call out exactly four union employees, three of whom would get time and a half and be guaranteed four hours' work. Said union president John Longley, "It's not about the money; it's about our work." (Maturo, a licensed electrician, was a longtime union member himself.)

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We always like those who admire us; we do not always like those whom we admire."

FRANCOIS DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD
FRENCH AUTHOR & MORALIST (1613 - 1680)

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Downtown SM proves to be cash cow

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Downtown Santa Monica remains the lifeblood of the local economy, representing the largest growth in sales last year.

The Bayside District, which incorporates all of downtown, grew 22 percent from 2002 to 2003. And the shopping district is up nearly 23 percent for the first quarter of 2004, according to City Hall sales tax figures.

The Third Street Promenade also has seen remarkable growth — up nearly 24 percent this past quarter and 14 percent from 2002 to 2003. The Promenade brought in $2.3 million in sales tax revenue for City Hall last year, and $584,651 for the first quarter of 2004.

Santa Monica shoppers are taxed 8.25 percent on purchases, and City Hall gets 1 percent of the cut.

"Bayside is really coming into its own," said Gwen Pentecost, City Hall's economic analyst.

The Promenade is nearly 100 percent full and its secondary streets are beginning to fill up with retailers and restaurants.

"Sales are phenomenal in the

See ECONOMY, page 6

City of Santa Monica Sales Tax Receipts, Calendar Years

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Comparison
Santa Monica Blvd	$ 4,132,384	$ 4,778,597	$ 4,926,341	$ 4,861,494	$ 5,537,509	13.9%
Wilshire Blvd.	$ 2,699,160	$ 2,746,925	$ 2,523,543	$ 2,624,086	$ 2,838,454	8.2%
Third St. Promenade	$ 1,816,070	$ 2,062,020	$ 2,034,196	$ 2,079,681	$ 2,306,767	14.3%
Colorado Ave.	$ 841,415	$ 1,129,947	$ 1,197,799	$ 1,041,953	$ 1,170,451	17.1%
Santa Monica Place	$ 1,559,232	$ 1,575,459	$ 1,352,398	$ 1,203,794	$ 1,143,487	-5.0%
Lincoln Blvd.	$ 984,048	$ 1,040,079	$ 1,040,571	$ 1,085,222	$ 1,139,644	5.0%
Broadway	$ 975,086	$ 985,933	$ 1,091,979	$ 1,169,891	$ 1,026,151	-12.3%
Ocean Ave./Pier/Hotels	$ 793,635	$ 914,681	$ 956,406	$ 946,449	$ 1,111,107	17.4%
Montana Avenue	$ 763,301	$ 852,966	$ 853,154	$ 883,655	$ 906,409	2.6%
Pico Blvd.	$ 678,924	$ 690,224	$ 741,380	$ 785,597	$ 755,456	-3.8%
Main Street	$ 723,745	$ 722,539	$ 708,648	$ 700,939	$ 760,481	8.5%
Bayside District	$ 651,282	$ 719,989	$ 697,966	$ 700,594	$ 855,960	22.2%
Olympic Blvd.	$ 740,423	$ 799,424	$ 661,689	$ 692,146	$ 724,817	4.7%
Ocean Park Blvd.	$ 512,593	$ 575,165	$ 419,306	$ 371,029	$ 376,935	1.6%
Airport Area	$ 371,721	$ 310,968	$ 293,721	$ 251,078	$ 288,345	14.8%
Citywide	**$ 21,211,908**	**$ 23,558,192**	**$ 22,815,272**	**$ 22,371,888**	**$ 24,114,833**	**7.8%**
Annual Increase		11.1%	-3.2%	-1.9%	7.8%	

Source: City of Santa Monica

Getting their kicks



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Soccer season is in full swing. A group of kids practice their moves at Memorial Park on Monday.

Trials coming in SM murder case

BY GENEVA WHITMARSH
Daily Press Staff Writer

LAX COURTHOUSE — Four people will be put on trial this fall for their alleged role in the murder of a Santa Monica man who was gunned down in front of an apartment complex in Ocean Park earlier this year.

Gabriel Becerrada, 38, died in early March at the doorstep of an apartment rented by his girlfriend, Sandra Alfaro, 34, and her two children. Becerrada was released from prison just three months before he was fatally shot.

Police arrested Alfaro, her then 17-year-old son, Anthony Alfaro, and his friend, Luke Yeron, 19, in connection with the murder. After an investigation, Anthony Alfaro and Yeron were charged with murder. Police believe Alfaro allegedly pulled the trigger.

Sandra Alfaro and a family friend, Mikey Marquez, have been charged with accessory after the fact. Sources close to the case say Sandra Alfaro initially lied to police when asked who fired the deadly shot at Becerrada, while Marquez allegedly drove them away from the crime scene, prosecutors said.

Becerrada had spent nearly 11 years behind bars before he was killed. In 1986, he was sentenced to five years in prison for attempted robbery. He served two years and was released on probation.

See TRIALS, page 6

Fact and fiction often collide with Gov. Schwarzenegger

BY BETH FOUHY
AP Political Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — When Arnold Schwarzenegger takes the stage at the Republican National Convention today, he'll be praised as a vanquishing hero — a wildly popular Republican who, like the party's most beloved icon, Ronald Reagan, parlayed Hollywood fame and cheery optimism into political power.

But recently, Schwarzenegger has started to resemble Reagan in another way — his tendency to say things that bear only a passing resemblance to reality.

Just as the genial Reagan infuriated his critics with outlandish claims — such as suggesting trees cause more pollution than cars or inventing Cadillac-driving welfare "queens" — Schwarzenegger's verbal gaffes often seem only to bother nitpicky reporters or diehard Democrats in Sacramento.

Earlier this month, he told radio talk show host Tony Snow that he was working so hard that, "I haven't even taken a vacation yet. I have not gone anywhere. I don't have time for anything."

Schwarzenegger, however, vacationed on the Hawaiian island of Maui in April, where he allegedly rescued a tired swimmer from the sea. He's also flown off to his $12 million mountain home in Idaho for skiing outings and spent three days in early March at his annual Arnold Fitness Classic in Columbus, Ohio.

In yet another national interview, this one on NBC-TV's Tonight Show, Schwarzenegger boasted that like the swimmer in Hawaii, he had "saved" the state budget.

"Now we've turned the whole thing around again ... and resolved the budget problem," Schwarzenegger told Jay Leno.

But Schwarzenegger didn't fix the state's chronic budget mess,

See RNC, page 7

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Enjoy being top dog, Aries

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)
★★★ What might be worrying you ceases to be a problem by the afternoon. You feel your Wheaties. You know what you are doing. As you take command of the steering wheel of life, you will make the right moves. Tonight: Enjoy being top dog.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★ You might have a serious conversation or be working through a key issue. This afternoon, go within for answers. No one knows the situation better than you. Trust yourself, but take your time mulling over your thoughts. Tonight: Vanish. Enjoy your own company.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Get as much work done as you can in the a.m. Concentrate on a serious money concern. You will find a solution. Brainstorm with your buddies and find answers. Your knee-jerk reaction to a suggestion or two might be "no," but stay open. Tonight: Do what you want with who you want.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Check out your facts, though you might be overly concerned with what you hear or the information that comes forward. Take charge in the afternoon. If you care about the outcome, you might need to direct a project. Tonight: Work late; out late.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Reach out for others, after sharing with one key person. You might make a strong partner. Don't close down, but let go of a key problem. Holding grudges could be dangerous for your well-being. Make calls in the p.m. Absorb other perspectives. Tonight: Do something different.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Someone might be difficult, and you, in return, could be stubborn. Evaluate what is happening with a friend or a trusted loved one. Not everything is as it appears to be. Don't allow someone to push or corner you. Tonight: Spend quality time with a pal.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ The more you get done this morning, all the better. By the afternoon, others seek you out, even if it is only for your opinion. You have a special way about you right now. Others know you mean business. Tonight: Go with another's suggestion.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ You might be late to work, as you want to handle a personal matter. Trust that you will be distracted from your job or your daily life. By the afternoon, settle in and clear your desk. Make your presence known. Tonight: Consider working late.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★ You might feel challenged in your personal life this morning, or before you leave your home. Don't brood. Don't take another's ultimatum as anything else but a statement. Dip into your well of creativity. Use your sense of humor. Tonight: Let go as only you can.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ What you say might close someone down rather than open him or her up. You might be upset that you cannot get this person to open up. Give him or her space. Pull within and handle your responsibilities. Tonight: Bring extra work home.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Be aware that you can only do so much and cannot push any more. Expressing what has been a problem becomes the first step in settling it. Brainstorm with others. Together solutions become possible. Tonight: At a favorite spot.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Use the morning to your benefit. Others react to a stern statement or decision involving a risk or a relationship. Emphasize what you need, your work and achieving success. You have what it takes! Tonight: Pay bills.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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1427 Third Street Promenade, Ste. #202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • www.smdp.com

PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa .....ross@smdp.com
EDITOR
Carolyn Sackariason .....sack@smdp.com
STAFF WRITER
John Wood .....wood@smdp.com
STAFF WRITER
Geneva Whitmarsh .....geneva@smdp.com
ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER
Rob Piubeni .....rob@smdp.com
ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Rob Schwenker .....schwenker@smdp.com
ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Chris Allen .....chris@smdp.com
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II .....alex@smdp.com
PRODUCTION ARTIST
Rick Reynoso .....rick@smdp.com
EXECUTIVE TRAFFIC MANAGER
Heather Rich .....heather@smdp.com
CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE
Mitch Troy .....mitch@smdp.com
CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE
Kitty Seeger .....kitty@smdp.com
NIGHT EDITOR
Lori Luechtefeld .....lori@smdp.com
NIGHT EDITOR
Michael Tittinger .....mikeyt@smdp.com
CIRCULATION MANAGER
Mike Aviles .....mike@smdp.com
CIRCULATION
Keith Wyatt .....keith@smdp.com
CIRCULATION
Glenn Bolan .....glenn@smdp.com
SPECIAL PROJECTS
Dave Danforth .....dave@smdp.com
MASCOT
Maya Furukawa .....maya@smdp.com

LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Preschoolers walk with diplomas

By Daily Press staff

As school begins for most children, a handful of preschoolers graduated last week.

Seven children, age 5, received diplomas from the full-day child care Early Learning Center (ELC) in an Aug. 27 ceremony at St. Joseph Center in Santa Monica, while 13 of their fellow students sang "Baby Beluga" and "Love Is Something" in enthusiastic support.

The 20 preschoolers and their parents are part of the center's ongoing childcare, development, and case management services encouraging self-sufficiency for homeless and low-income families. Staff member Bernardo Contreras asked the graduates about their career goals, and there were many future professionals in the class, including a pilot, a nurse, and a teacher who wants "to keep children out of trouble."

"This ceremony is very special to me," said April Wright, ELC coordinator. "It marks the first graduation in our expanded Early Learning Center program that moved to Fourth and Ashland last year. Here we are preparing children for the future."

St. Joseph Center has been working with the less fortunate in Venice, Santa Monica, and the Westside community for 28 years. Volunteers and funds are needed to support the center's 11 ongoing programs, which include emergency services, childcare, counseling, job training, and senior services for over 8,000 men, women and children each year.

For more information on St. Joseph Center, call (310) 396-6468, ext. 325, or visit www.stjosephctr.org.

Women needed for a status check

By Daily Press staff

Santa Monica women are continuing the fight for gender equality and are looking for more residents who wish to do the same.

Since 1981, the Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) has worked to eliminate inequality between the sexes in all areas of life including employment, health, education, political life and law enforcement.

The commission has a vacancy and are seeking persons interested in serving. Candidates must be residents of Santa Monica and must be committed to improving the status of women through advocacy, education and related efforts. Public meetings are held every second Wednesday at 7 p.m.

With a total of nine members, the COSW makes regular recommendations to the Santa Monica City Council and staff on programs and policies affecting women and girls.

The COSW is currently conducting a "Work-Life Survey" to assess how different employment environments affect women's lives and highlight Santa Monica employers who encourage a positive work-life balance for women. The COSW recently prepared a report on the Status of Women and Girls in Santa Monica that included demographic and social welfare data. The COSW anticipates that the examination will help them better advise the City Council on ways to support women and girls, and address gender inequalities.

On Sept. 26, the COSW is co-hosting a public screening of the HBO film "Iron Jawed Angels" in conjunction with the League of Women Voters.

Application forms and information are available at Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main St., information booth, or in the City Clerk's office, room 102. People interested can request an application by mail by calling (310) 458-8211, or can apply through the city's Web site at www.santa-monica.org. Applications must be received in the City Clerk's office by 5 p.m. Sept. 30 to be considered for the vacancy. Applications are also accepted on an ongoing basis for future vacancies. Only those candidates appointed will be notified.



Wyles Vance is this week's mystery photo, which was taken of a mural painted on the side of Ambiance Salon on Main Street. Vance has won a gift certificate to Izzy's Deli. Check next Monday's edition for another mystery photo.

SURF REPORT

The southerly swell mix will provide inconsistent, but playful, surf through today and then wind down through the middle to second half of the week. A smaller southerly swell mix is expected for the end of the week, with an increase in W wind swell also likely.

Morning winds will be mostly light through Wednesday, with building W to NW wind in the 8-12 knot+ range for the afternoons. Expect 2-3' waves, with knee- to waist-high, occassionally 4 feet and fair conditions.

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

Today the water is:

69°

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	- 1:42	1.0	1:42	0.3	7:32	4.5	8:03	5.2
SUNDAY	- 2:21	0.3	2:12	0.4	8:20	4.5	8:28	5.7
MONDAY	- 3:01	-0.4	2:44	0.7	9:09	4.5	8:58	6.1
TUESDAY	**- 3:44**	**-0.1**	**3:17**	**1.1**	**9:59**	**4.3**	**9:31**	**6.4**
WEDNESDAY	- 4:30	-1.3	3:51	1.5	10:52	4.1	10:08	6.5
THURSDAY	- 5:20	-1.4	4:29	1.9	11:52	3.7	10:49	6.4
FRIDAY	- 6:16	-1.3	5:12	2.3	1:02	3.5	11:37	6.1

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The Q Line

Some 2,500 delegates descended upon New York City this week for the Republican National Convention.

Pre-convention polls showed the race to be evenly split, as Democratic challenger John Kerry has lost some of the steam garnered in Boston a month ago. Candidates traditionally enjoy a bounce in popularity immediately following conventions. A Time magazine poll suggests that Bush has gained ground on Kerry on the economy and Iraq.

This week, Q-Line wants to know, **"Do the national conventions typically affect the way you vote? Can President Bush's speech sway you one way or another in light of your current leanings?"**

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

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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cross display at beach lopsided

Editor:

On Sunday, Aug. 29, I went by the "veterans for peace" so called "memorial" to our fallen troops. A documentary of this group was being filmed. As I walked around I saw one of the vets "for peace" rehearsing with a few of the other vets on how to "post-up" and maneuver for the cameras. Embarrassed by their bumping into each other, I went to the group's information tent for some enlightenment and was not very surprised to see items for sale that included more of the anti-Bush/Cheney variety than anti-war, or for that matter, pro-peace. As I read a label on the DVD of a new movie that pokes fun at Fox News, I heard the veteran "for peace" drill instructor say, "make sure you show the stump!" I turned to see a few vets posing for a photographer and sure enough, one of them was missing part of his right arm. Might this be construed as exploiting a wounded veteran? I think so.

I asked the vet "for peace" why are there no names of the troops killed in Afghanistan on the display of names, and why are there no white crosses in the sand for each one like it is with the fallen in Iraq. He said, "We just want to keep it simple you know."

I pressed him a bit more and then finally got the answer I knew I'd get — a bumper sticker line about "blood for oil." I then went to one of the filmmakers and asked him if the question about why there is no recognition for our fallen in Afghanistan on the beach would be posed. He said, "There wouldn't be enough sand." I said, "How about even one cross with a logo mentioning 'To our fallen in Afghanistan.'" The filmmaker just shrugged his shoulders and gave me the brush off.

I asked several more members of "veterans for peace" the same question and got the same type of lame response.

The truth of the matter is that this group's "Arlington West" is nothing more thana veiled protest against President Bush. I wasn't alone in this for as I tried to get a straight answer from yet another vet "for peace," the family of an airman serving in Iraq came by and voiced their anger as to why this group is hypocritical when it comes to our fallen troops. As I walked with this brave family up to the Palisades bluff, they told me of their son and brother who, in his second tour of duty "in country," is very proud to serve his nation. I parted ways with this family near the very tall and strikingly beautiful granite monoliths that over look the bay ... the real memorial to all our fallen. The same memorial that is not cared for by the city (all the lights are out) and is spray painted with hoodlum graffiti.

In closing, I noticed the vets "for peace" display has a story on its board about a father who tried to burn himself to death when told of his own son's death in Iraq — if that's not exploiting a grieving person, I don't know what is.

James Zeruk
Veteran, United States Air Force

Resident unhappy with police response

Editor:

Having resided in Santa Monica for 30-plus years I recall how our police department once was and now is. We have gone from a proactive force to a reactive force, and in many cases a no active force. I live near the beach and have had many situations that caused me to call the police. In many cases I find the people that receive the calls to be rude and condescending. And then after being abused by the dispatchers, the police either never respond or maybe hours later, long after the original reason no longer exists. Now to add insult to injury we find out some officers are making over $100,000 and some almost $170,000 — not bad considering the benefits and the great pension. I might almost tolerate the pay if I was getting great service. Maybe the time has come that we look into the system used by the city of West Hollywood and many others. That is you contract to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department instead of having your own police department. The cost might be less and they have great resources, after all whenever the Santa Monica Police are overwhelmed that's who they call.

Irving Baron
Santa Monica

Remember the laborers but don't forget bosses



LEGAL NEWS & VIEWS

BY DAVID PISARRA

The world sees employers in a love/hate fashion. On the one hand they are crucial to the system, they are the source of income for most people. They are the providers for the many.

On the other hand, many people see employers as the source of the world's sorrows, and wonder why we need them. They fail to see the crucial role that an employer plays in the circle of life. These people want to have goods provided for them and have vacation time. They want health insurance for all, but don't see why people should have to work low paying, unskilled jobs.

There are those who see only exploitation of the worker, and those who see only the potential for profit. The nearsightedness of these two opposing views is what allows for the sad state of our political system. We have a two-party system that has broken down into "greedy corporations" on the one side — Republicans, and "socialist labor sympathizing sickos" on the other — Democrats.

For most of us, Labor Day means the end of the summer. But its real purpose is to honor those who make our society possible. To say "thank you."

It's important to recognize employees and their contributions to the society we live in. Without an employee, any business would not survive. Even the self-employed are employees of their own companies, and generally work harder than anyone.

If it were not for the employees of the world, the computer I write on would not exist. No individual man would likely have the skills, knowledge and abilities to build this computer by himself, for my purchase, at any price. It is only through the cooperative efforts of many that I am to sit down and hit keys that become electronic letters that are then turned into a column, which is printed by others, on machines made by yet more people, on paper manufactured by an even larger group of people. There are literally thousands of people who are responsible for the words on the paper you are reading.

The collective effort of these people is what has allowed our society to grow to the level it has. We have information literally at our fingertips, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, thanks to employees.

Men and women work all shifts during the day to provide for people they don't know, and will never meet. The capitalist society we live in is run on the concept of profit.

Who would work at a late night café, pouring coffee for drunks and college students, (frequently the same thing) if there were not something in it for them? Granted, they are probably making the minimum wage, plus tips, but they are still valuing their time and being paid for it. They put forth effort and get back money. That is a profit. It may not be a huge profit, but few companies make huge profits.

The swing shift worker at the grocery store is restocking shelves at 3 a.m. for a reason. It's not because he wants to make sure that there is a can of sardines for me when I come in at 7 p.m. He does it because the company pays him, and that provides him with a home for his family, food for his table and hopefully some vacation time.

Labor Day is about profit. It is profit for the worker and for the employer. If an employer cannot make a profit, he will soon be out of business, and that means the employee will be out of a job. The interests of the employee are linked, in a life and death struggle with the employer in this way.

This is a hard concept for many people. They want to limit the profits that a company can earn. They say it is immoral for a company to make vast amounts of money, at the expense of the lives and labor of others. I disagree.

I own pieces of three active companies. I contribute to the livelihood of roughly 30 people directly and probably another 20 through investments.

Our employees depend on the checks we write them being negotiable at the bank. The money must be there when they need it. I carry the responsibility of making sure that employees are paid, so that they in turn can pay their nanny, to provide care for their children.

There are those who would say that the level of profits should be reduced so that more people could have our services — if more people had our services it would be better for society. Maybe. But these people are not the ones who invested the money, who worked late nights at the copy center getting the presentations ready for the salesmen, who make the company profitable.

I've always found it curious that those who most condemn employers have never actually been one. The people who champion the rights of the worker the loudest, and bemoan the profits of the employer the most, have never actually had it all on the line. They have not spent sleepless nights wondering how they were going to make payroll.

It is important to remember, and honor, labor this coming weekend. But let's remember that the boss is also part of the equation. You can't have one with the other, and they both make society operate. CEOs have been getting a lot of abuse these days. Sometimes they deserved it. But no good CEO would forget that their employees are the lifeblood of the company.

(David Pisarra is a business development lawyer in the Santa Monica firm of Pisarra & Grist. He welcomes your questions and comments. He can be reached at dpisarra@pisarra.com or (310) 664-9969).



OPINION

A gene pool problem? LA breeds the self-absorbed



ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL

Life is too short to be pissed off by crappy people and yet that's what I spend most of my time thinking about. People who usurp your turn at a stop sign, cut in line at the super market with six months worth of groceries, and blare their horn at you when they almost kill you and your family so they can make it through the three-second stale red light.

I can give you a running example from even this week. Let's see ... there was the lady who had to try every frickin' flavor at the Yogurt Factory on Santa Monica Boulevard. She bought three larges, but added them on every time the cashier rang one up. Then she asked for 50 cents worth of chocolate sprinkles instead of paying the full 80 cents (I know), and then paid for it in slow motion with loose change — "10 cents … 15 cents," as even the cashier rolled her eyes. Or the woman who held up the entire line in Von's for five minutes because she wanted to know about prune juice. Why is there no prune juice when she specifically asked there'd be more prune juice on Monday. Oh, I don't know … because the demand of prune juice is equal to the number of people who saw Doris Day movies when they were actually in the theater.

And then there were those bicyclists in unneeded tight spandex, as there are every week I drive around Venice and Santa Monica. I don't understand how people so fit can't seem to peddle the extra two feet to the sidewalk. So by default, they impede traffic with their right to be treated as a car. But while they cuss when they're almost hit by a Ford Taurus at night, they disregard red lights because they're not actually a car and cuss at you again when you take this right away from them. It's like a bad girlfriend, and I say make up your mind and get rid of the Richard Simmons shorts.

Before I moved to LA, I don't remember fearing for my life when I entered an open intersection, expecting to be cut off, almost run into, or turned in front of when there's no green arrow in the other direction. Now, I have to factor this in to my everyday driving. I seem to remember people waiting their turn, stopping at red lights, and not using the SUV card to plow in front of my little compact that wouldn't make it out of the cat fight alive.

So I guess my question is, why are there so many zeros in Southern California as the Volkswagen commercial eludes to, and is it really unique to just LA?

Yes, yes it is. I'm not saying you won't find people that suck anywhere in the U.S. As seen, people can be jerks from anywhere, but there really is a large concentration of them right in LA. But I wonder if people in the Midwest are better or worse than I remembered. I especially wondered this because my car gets blocked in once a week by some "unknowing" neighbor. But when a man pulled off the road in upper Wisconsin this summer so we could pass, and then smiled and waved us through, it was hard not to notice the subtle difference.

So I guess the real question is, why do people suck specifically in LA? As part of the human genome project, scientists have completed a study of subjects in different locations across the U.S., cross-referenced demographics within these various sites, and have repeatedly found the "me" gene is abnormally dominant in Southern California patients, specifically within Los Angeles parameters.

Actually, no they haven't, but wouldn't it be nice if we could blame science? Science spilled the prune juice in the hall, I swear. The plain fact is a lot of people are self-focused in LA and it doesn't take an IQ over 120 to figure that out.

My guess is that to make it in a place where $100,000 houses go at $1 million, and rent can take half to three-fourths of a month's salary, you have to be a little driven. If you're going to make it in LA, you have to be focused on your job, your finances and your personal situation. The second you lose your focal point, you could start to run out of resources and possibly have to move back to where you came from. If people slack off at their jobs, there's also the fact that 75 other people searching for employment can quickly take their place. With these odds, you don't always have the liberty of worrying about someone else's job or situation in LA, although it'd be nice if you did.

And for the most part, people who have made it into the high-paying jobs and $3 million houses had to bring themselves up by their bootstraps as much as anyone else. I'm guessing that this same drive and self-determination they possessed at one time is still very much alive today, helping them to stay and succeed at the present point they find themselves at.

It's not that there aren't nice people here. I just think it takes a special person to make it in LA, which can drive some of the nicer people away. So while this frustrates me as I currently can't get online (as we discovered someone's stealing my Internet), I notice that I'm still here in LA, and I'm not sure what that says about me.

(Heidi Manteuffel is a resident of Santa Monica, a freelace writer, an advertising fool and a lover of pug dogs. Ask anybody. To reach her, e-mail to anydayinla@gmail.com).

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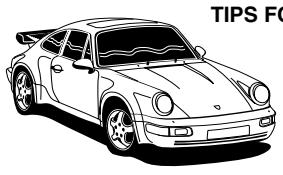
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LOCAL

Santa Monica economy continues to grow steadily

ECONOMY, from page 1

district," said Kathleen Rawson, executive director of the Bayside District Corp., which manages downtown with City Hall. "We are obviously pleased and we make sure quality tenants know about the area and move into the area."

Economic analysts attribute the growth to new businesses moving downtown — an area that has seen a transformation in the past several years. Whether it's viewed as good or bad, that transformation has meant a proliferation of chain stores and as a result, more shoppers. On weekends, particularly during the summer and holiday seasons, it's difficult to walk along the three-block-long mall because there are so many people.

"The momentum is clearly there ... There aren't many places that show those kind of numbers," said Rob York, a consultant who works with Bayside. "People respond to a good experience and a good selection of restaurants and retail.

"The stores are providing what people want," he added.

And even with its problems — panhandlers, smelly alleyways and a lack of parking, to name a few — the Promenade and Bayside still remain significant sales tax generators for the city. The area even increased — although slightly — from 2001 to 2002, after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and the recession.

"Third Street has been extremely resilient even through tough times," York said, adding high profile retail stores continue to be drawn to the area. Retail space on the Promenade costs between $7 and $10 a square foot.

York expects the outer areas of the Promenade to experience "really impressive" sales tax gains in the next two years. A lot of office space along Second and Fourth streets is planned to be converted into retail and restaurants, he said. And more high profile retailers like Circuit City, which recently opened on Fourth Street and Arizona Avenue, contribute a large amount of sales tax revenue.

"Statistically, it's been emptier on Second and Fourth streets," York said. "But because of the strength of the Promenade, people have invested and spilled onto the secondary streets."

The key to the district's continued success is meeting its challenges, keeping up with competition and planning for the future. That means building new movie theaters, providing more parking and cleaning up the alleys.

"If we sat back, saying everything is hunky dory, in a few years we'd be accused of sleeping at the wheel," Rawson said. "We have to invest back into the district so we can enjoy increased sales tax for years to come."

The pier, hotels and Ocean Avenue is another business district that has seen significant growth — up 17 percent from 2002 to 2003, and 11 percent in the first quarter of this year.

The Santa Monica economy overall has fared well, despite a decline in tourism, the recession and the crash of the technology industry, which combined took about 5,000 jobs out of Santa Monica, Pentecost said. In 2001, overall sales tax figures declined 3.2 percent and in 2002, that figure was 1.9 percent.

The Santa Monica economy had a 7.8 percent increase in sales tax revenue from 1999 to 2003.

"It's an interesting four-year period because there's a tremendous change with the tech crash," Pentecost said, adding there are fewer people employed in Santa Monica. Those people would have normally supported the local economy by shopping and eating here, she said.

The city is still recovering from the loss of jobs. At the end of 2003, there were 72,740 jobs in Santa Monica, compared to 75,000 at the end of 2002. Still, Santa Monica businesses spent $4.1 billion in payroll last year, Pentecost said.

Santa Monica Boulevard saw sales tax gains of nearly 14 percent from 2002 to 2003, directly relating to "no interest" financing and other incentives used by the industry to keep consumers buying. Their $1.4 million increase is responsible for almost 50 percent of the $2.9 million increase in sales tax revenue between 1999 and 2003, Pentecost said.

The decline in sales tax revenue on Broadway from 2002 to 2003 can be attributed in general to retail changes at locations such as Fred Segal, and offset shifts in business services, which tend to reflect changes in the office clientele along the business district. If a single advertising firm or other high-dollar business moves and is replaced by a service business which does not generate sales tax, the impact on the sales tax totals can be fairly significant, Pentecost said.

Jack Kyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, said the past few years fared well for many in Los Angeles because consumers benefited from income tax cuts, refinancing of their homes and the return of the international tourist.

But he cautions people that consumers will continue to budget themselves as a result of increasing gas prices and no tax cuts this year. He predicts that people will be more subdued in their spending this upcoming holiday season.

"It's going to be an interesting second part of the year," he said. "(Christmas) is always a nail biter."

Defense attorneys go after victim's criminal history

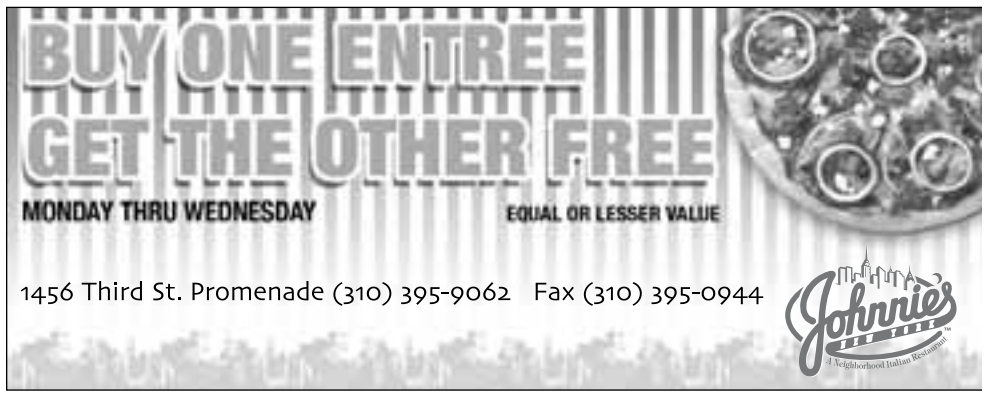
TRIALS, from page 1

Then, in 1992, Becerrada served seven months for second-degree burglary. Three months after being released, he was arrested for possessing a firearm and spent a year in prison. Most recently, he served seven years for drug possession and was released on Dec. 2.

Yuron's attorney, Robin Yanes, said Becerrada was a known gang member with ties to a gang called the "Venice 13."

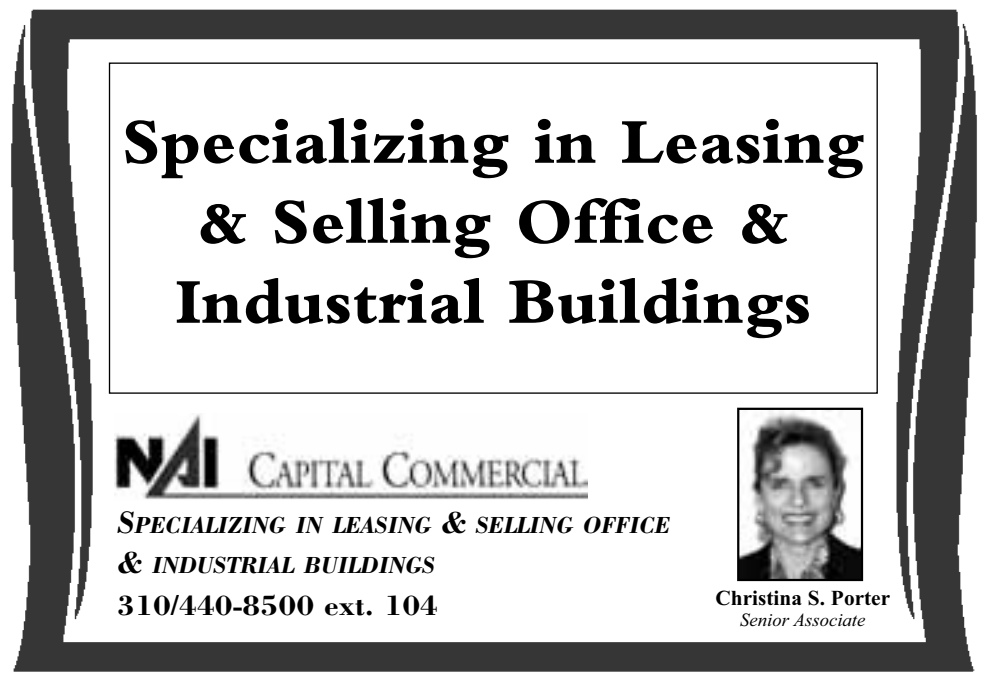
Defense attorneys asked that the trial date not be set until another hearing scheduled for Sept. 29 was held. They have requested evidence on Becerrada's criminal background.

The shooting prompted residents of the low-income housing project at Ashland Avenue and Lincoln Boulevard to call a community meeting soon after the crime. Officials from the Community Corp. of Santa Monica, a non-profit that oversees 78 buildings and 2,400 tenants, told residents they would act immediately on a handful of security concerns. But, they said, new cameras and better lighting wouldn't have prevented the shooting.











STATE

Schwarzenegger's verbal record playing out in public

RNC, from page 1

even though his pledge to do so was one of the key reasons voters swept him into office. While he did negotiate a balanced budget with legislators, it is balanced for only a short time and only because of borrowing and transfers — the kind of accounting gimmicks that his predecessor, Democrat Gray Davis, was panned for.

Similarly, Schwarzenegger has vastly outraised Davis in campaign contributions after deriding Davis' greedy fund-raising habits and declaring that he himself couldn't be bought. Most recently, Schwarzenegger's office announced the $350,000 tab for his trip to the Republican convention would be paid by ChevronTexaco and other corporations with legislative interests before the state.

In February, with only minimal anti-gay protests evident at the height of San Francisco's gay marriage spree, Schwarzenegger told NBC's Tim Russert that the state needed to crack down on the marriages or risk anarchy.

"All of a sudden we see riots and we see protests and we see people clashing and the next thing you know there is injured and there is dead people," Schwarzenegger said, as the parade of peaceful weddings continued at San Francisco's city hall.

Perhaps his biggest reversal so far is on his pledge during the recall campaign to oppose urban casinos and to reduce the influence of Indian gaming tribes in Sacramento. Last week, Schwarzenegger announced a deal with the Lytton Band of Pomo Indians to build one of the nation's largest casinos in the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area on the promise the tribe would share 25 percent of its revenue with the state. He and the Indians scaled back and then shelved the plan this week after furious opposition in the Legislature.

So far, none of these misstatements or reversals seem to have affected Schwarzenegger's popularity with voters. A poll this month by the Public Policy Institute of California showed that fully 69 percent of voters are happy with the job he is doing as governor.

Besides Schwarzenegger's Hollywood star power and unique ability to project a nonpartisan image, political scientists have differing theories on what explains' the public's willingness to cut him so much slack.

"Reagan was the Teflon president, and Schwarzenegger is the Teflon governor," said Republican strategist Kevin Spillane. "Like Reagan, people believe in his good intentions and trust his overall vision for the future. The public's not interested in the kind of details that press often complains about."

While some of Schwarzenegger's misstatements amount to little more than harmless exaggerations, or can be blamed in part on his occasional mangling of the English language, others are more substantive and cut to the heart of his credibility.

That, said Bruce Cain of the University of California, Berkeley, could cost Schwarzenegger some public confidence if he begins to resemble the type of politician he campaigned against.

"On the trivial, humorous inconsistencies — only Sacramento cares about those," Cain said. "But he now has some issues, like urban gambling, that are starting to look like the kinds of politics he's trying to get rid of.

Jack Pitney, a government professor at Claremont McKenna College, said Schwarzenegger would be wise to keep looking to Reagan for answers.

"During his presidency, Reagan was able to maintain the image of an outsider — someone there to reform the government," Pitney said. "With Schwarzenegger as with Reagan, people like the music even if the lyrics don't always come out right."

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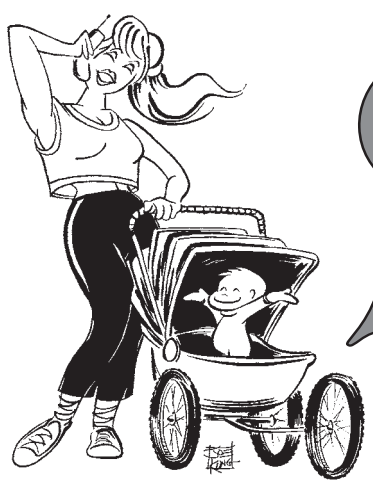
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Life is a lesson sometimes not realized until later



How Much Is Enough?

By David J. Bredehoft, PhD

My siblings and I recently came together from all parts of the country to celebrate our mother's 90th birthday. For one of her mementos we each wrote a memory or story special to us and placed it in a memory book. Now that the party is over, I would like to share my memory with you because I realize that loving mothers and fathers choose not to overindulge their children — and we grow up so much better because of it.

Dear mom,

First let me congratulate you on your 90th birthday! What an achievement. I only hope we all live as long and with such a full, rich life as yours!

On this day I would like to take a moment to tell you about four important lessons you taught me. I will always cherish them as they guide me through life.

Mom, thank you for teaching me so many important "life lessons" which guide me every day of my adult life. These lessons are simple ones, but they have been keys to my success as a college professor. And, oh by the way, as chair of the faculty senate, I can attest that many intelligent individuals did not learn these lessons, and as a result, have had many difficulties succeeding in their adult professional lives.

Lesson one: "Work hard for what you want"

Mom, you taught me how to work hard for what I wanted. It all started even before I was 10 years old. I remember I was so proud of the used bicycles you and dad bought us boys for Christmas, 1959. They were used, but wow they were bikes! We were so excited to get them that Christmas Eve. We rode them around the block in the dark. But after a while, I decided I needed the new shiny red bike that I had my eye on in the Western Auto store. I asked you to buy it for me, and you said, "We don't have the money to buy you a new bike. All we could afford was the used one we bought you for Christmas." Then you said, "If you want that new bike, I guess you will have to get a job and earn the money to buy it yourself." And so I did. I went down to the Coffeyville newspaper office and got my first paying job as a newspaper boy. And I was so proud the day I bought that new bike with my own hard-earned money. Whether it was throwing papers, mowing lawns, tending the garden, irrigating the lawns and flowers, raising pigeons, washing dishes at the diner, working for Lyons Van Lines, being a waiter at Christopher's Restaurant, working as a marriage and family therapist and a college professor, you taught me a valuable life lesson — work hard for what you want.

Lesson two: "Choose your friends wisely."

I can still hear your voice inside my head saying: "It is important to choose your friends wisely." What an important lesson! I have chosen wisely. I have wonderful, supportive friends both at work and outside of work. The friends we choose can support us, or they can lead us astray. This simple rule has been so valuable to me, particularly at work. I have chosen friends that were leaders, hard workers, who kept complaining to a minimum and were genuinely interested in helping others. My colleagues who chose friends who were complainers, who put a lot of energy into getting the "administration" have not faired so well. This is a simple lesson, but not everyone gets it.

Lesson three: "Be kind and share."

How many times did you tell us boys "Be kind and share?" Again, this is a simple life lesson, but one that a lot of children do not learn. Kindness and justice are some of my most cherished values. You worked so hard to treat us children fairly and equally. If John got a new pair of pants, I got one (maybe his used one), and Mark got one too. It was important to treat us fairly. Thank you. As a result, later on in my life, when one of us needed something that the other did not get, it was easy for me to understand that sometimes in life being treated fairly means that another person's needs may be greater than your own needs right now. They need it more than you do. A time may come when you need something more than the other, and then it will be your time. And be kind! I can't tell you how many times that has been a blessing. Thanks.

Lesson four: "The simple things are sometimes the most fun."

As you know, growing up we did not have a lot of money. Please don't feel bad about that because we certainly had more than enough love to make up for that. And by not having a lot of money you taught me that the simple things in life are sometimes the most fun. One example of this is going B-B shooting on Sunday afternoons in Albuquerque. You would save bottles and when you had a significant stash of them you would say, "Boys let's go target practicing at the ditch." We would rush to grab our B-B guns and off we would go. When we got to the ditch, you would throw the bottles in and as they floated along all three of us, John, David and Mark, would take aim and try to be the first to sink them. So simple, but oh so fun!

Mom I love you. Thanks for teaching me well. Be proud of your life work! I give you an A+++++.

Love,
Dave

Tips for avoiding overindulgence:

Teach your children these four life lessons:

- "Work hard for what you want"
- "Choose your friends wisely"
- "Be kind and share"
- "The simple things are sometimes the most fun"

To participate in a new study on overindulgence and parenting styles, log onto our web page at www.overindulgence.info.

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

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SPECIAL EVENTS
THURSDAY, SEPT. 2 – TWILIGHT DANCE SERIES, 7:30 p.m.
Last show of the season! The Santa Monica Pier's "Twilight Dance Series" is back for its twentieth year. Bring the kids and picnic on the beach next to the pier for great family fun.

FRIDAY – MONDAY, SEPT. 3-6 – DAY OUT with THOMAS
Thomas the Tank Engine will be in Fillmore, CA at the Fillmore & Western Railway. This is a real steam engine that has been converted into Thomas, the classic storybook character. This fun-filled family event, that offers the opportunity to ride with Thomas the Tank Engine and experience other Thomas & Friends themed entertainment, will engineer miles of smiles at every scheduled arrival. The 25-minute train ride with Thomas the Tank Engine will depart every 50 minutes, rain or shine, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. daily. This event is expected to sell out, so advance purchase is recommended to ensure a choice of dates and times. Tickets are $14 for ages one and up.
Fillmore & Western Railway is located at 351 Santa Clara Avenue in the historic city of Fillmore off of Highway 126 in the Heritage Valley. Tickets are available by calling 866-468-7630 or logging onto www.fwry.com. For information and directions contact Fillmore & Western Railway at 800-773-8724 or www.fwry.com.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 4 – KIDTRIBE DANCE PARTY, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Kids dance, socialize and make friends in a healthy, safe environment. Tonight's theme: School of Rock. Santa Monica Place Mall Community Room (3rd Floor). Ages 5 – 11, $18 per child, 455-0580, www.kidtribe.org

SATURDAY, SUNDAY and MONDAY, SEPT. 4 – 6.
AFRICAN MARKETPLACE and CULTURAL FAIRE – 10:00 a.m – 9:00 p.m.
Celebrating African influences around the world in themed villages such as health, fine arts, merchants and sports. Food and musical performances. Children's village features games, petting zoo, drumming and dance demos. For all ages. $6 adults, $3 kids. Exposition Park, 710 State St., LA. 323-734-1164

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TUESDAYS, SEPT. 7 - 28 – ART for TODDLERS – 10:30 – 11:15 a.m.
Explore age-appropriate creativity and experiment with color, texture and patterns. Zimmer Children's Museum, 6505 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 100, LA. Ages 20 months – 3 years, $5, reservations required, 323-761-8998.

SPECIAL NOTE – Yoga Baby Studio in Venice is operating on a limited schedule for Mommy and Me and pre-natal classes. Call 306-9381 for a current schedule.

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Movies for Moms!
"Suspect Zero" starring Aaron Eckhart, Ben Kingsley and Carrie-Anne Moss. Crime/Suspense; rated "R."
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www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms.

Storytelling
Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.
Toddler Storytime; 10:00 & 10:30 a.m. Next series begins Sept. 7. For 2 year olds with adult.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
Cuentos Para Pequenos – 10:00 a.m., six-week series in Spanish for 24 – 36 month olds with adult. Next session dates are Sept. 7 – Oct. 12.
Lap Time – 11:00 a.m, six-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by the SMMUSD Infant & Family Support Programs. Next session dates are Sept. 7 – Oct. 12.
Twilight Story Time -7pm – an ongoing program for 3-5 year olds.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Family Story Time – 7:00 p.m., all ages.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.
Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 24-36 month olds with adult. Thru Aug. 31. Next session starts Sept. 21, registration required.
Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis
Themes change weekly; for ages infant to 3. 11:00 a.m. 116 North Robertson, Plaza A, LA. 310-358-2500, www.storyopolis.com
Barnes and Noble at the Grove
Storytime for ages 2 – 6. 10:00 a.m. 189 Grove Drive, LA, 323-525-0270

Yoga & Exercise
Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA
10:00 – 11:00 a.m and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members $90 for 10 classes. (also Thursday nights 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., $15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.
Mommy Care – 11870 Santa Monica Blvd, at the Dance Factory, West LA, 310-394-6711. Pregnancy Exercise – 9:15 – 10:15 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise – 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Breastfeeding Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774 - no pre-reg required, first class free, $10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Storytelling
The Talking Stick Coffee Lounge – 1630 Ocean Park Blvd., 450-6052
10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4 at this neighborhood coffee shop.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
Preschool Story Time – 10:30 a.m.,; six-week series for 3-5 year olds with adult. Next session dates are Sept. 8 – Oct. 13.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Lap Time - 10:00 & 10:30 a.m., for ages 0-2, next session begins Sept. 15.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. –392-3804.
Preschool Twilight Story Time – 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Parents/children ages 3-5.
Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 2 pm – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144
Border's, Westwood – 11am – 310-475-3444.
Aug. 25th - Ms. Betsy's Storybook Tree at Delphi Academy - 12:30 – 1:15 p.m., ages 3 – 8, 1610 Broadway, 526-2700.

Yoga & Exercise
Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, $15
Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Step Aerobics, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay $90 for 10 classes.

Breastfeeding Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774, no pre-reg required, first class free, $10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

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

THURSDAY

Storytelling
Babystyle, 1324 Montana Avenue, 434-9590
10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4.
Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.
Toddler Storytime; 10:00 a.m.; next session begins Sept. 9. For 2 year olds with adult.
Preschool Story Time; 10:30 a.m.; next session begins Sept. 9. For ages 3-5.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
Toddler Story Time – 10:30 a.m; for ages 2 –3. Next session dates are Sept. 9 – Oct. 14.
La Hora Del Cuento – 7:00 p.m. Spanish stories, songs and rhymes for all ages.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Toddler Story Time – 10:15 a.m., for 2 year olds, next session begins Sept. 16.
Preschool Story Time – 11:15 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds, next session begins Sept. 16.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.
Lap Time – 9:20 & 10:20 a.m., 6-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by SMMUSD Infant & Family Support Program. Next session dates are Sept. 9 – Oct. 14.

Yoga & Exercise
Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA
7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members $90 for 10 classes. (also Tuesdays at 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., $15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.
Mommy Care – 11870 Santa Monica Blvd, at the Dance Factory, West LA, 310-394-6711. Pregnancy Exercise – 9:15 – 10:15 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise – 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Breastfeeding Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-826-5774 - no pre-reg required, first class free, $10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 4-8 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Other
Twilight Dance Series thru Sept. 2 – free concert on the Santa Monica Pier. 7:30 p.m.
Sept. 2 – Nature Walk – Children's Nature Institute
Sullivan Canyon, 13500 Bayliss Rd., W. Los Angeles. Make reservations by calling 998-1151 or email naturewalks@childrensnatureinstitute.org

FRIDAY

La Leche League of LA/Mar Vista – meets the 2nd Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Call 310-390-2529 for info. (next meeting May 14)
Mommy and Me Dance– celebrate the wonderful world of imagination Fridays at the Electric Lodge. 9:45 – 10:45 a.m. ages 14 - 24 months; 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. ages 2 – 4.
6 classes for $75 or $14 per class. First class free! 1416 Electric Ave, Venice, 306-1854.

Yoga & Exercise
Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Indoor Cycling, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay $90 for 10 classes.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45 p.m., $15.
Prenatal Breath and Movement – a Continuum Movement and Yoga-based program designed to support women through various sound and movement explorations that celebrate pregnancy and labor as powerful rites of passage. 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
With Deborah Raoult at the Continuum Studio, 1629 18th St., #7. For more info call 625-3739, www.openskymovement.com. $108 for a six-week session.

SATURDAY

Storytelling
Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – Kid's Story Time – 10am – 310-260-9110
Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 10:30am – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144.
Children's Book World, 10580 1/2 Pico Blvd, LA - 10:30 a.m., 310-559-BOOK.
Village Books, 1049 SwarthmoreAve, Pacific Palisades – 10:30 a.m. – 454-4063.

Yoga & Exercise
Santa Monica Yoga – Pre- & Post-Natal Yoga, Saturdays – 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
1640 Ocean Park Blvd, 396-4040, www.santamonicayoga.com
Mommy Care – 11870 Santa Monica Blvd. at the Dance Factory, West LA, 394-6711; Pregnancy Exercise – 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise – 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Other
Snowhite, a brand new musical for kids of all ages, at the Santa Monica Playhouse
Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m. thru Sept. 26, $12 adults, $10 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 1 for reservations, www.santamonicaplayhouse.com
Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested
Magicopolis – 2 and 8 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is $20 for evening, $15 for matinee. Call 310-451-2241 for info.
Family Fundays at the Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum (also Sundays)
Ages 4 and up, 11:00 a.m., $8, 1419 N. Topanga Blvd., Topanga Canyon, 310-455-3723.

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

Breastfeeding
Working Mother's Support Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd. - 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., $12 fee, led by Ilka Sternberger, certified lactation educator. Call 826-5774 for more info.

SUNDAY

Snowhite, a brand new musical for kids of all ages, at the Santa Monica Playhouse
Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m. thru Sept. 26, $12 adults, $10 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 1 for reservations, www.santamonicaplayhouse.com
Main Street Farmer's Market – 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., corner of Main St. and Ocean Park Blvd. Pony rides, live music, lots of vendors and great family socializing.
Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested
Magicopolis – 2 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is $15. Call 310-451-2241 for info.
Family Fundays at the Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum (also Saturdays)
Ages 4 and up, 11:00 a.m., $8, 1419 N. Topanga Blvd., Topanga Canyon, 310-455-3723.

MONDAY – HAPPY LABOR DAY!
Get out and do something fun with your family.







NATIONAL

Republicans sharpen attacks on Kerry at RNC

BY TOM RAUM
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Republicans at their national convention portrayed President Bush as a strong wartime leader, adopting a platform endorsing his agenda and putting his and Vice President Dick Cheney's names in nomination for a second term.

"We will leave here with momentum that will carry us to victory in November," Republican National Committee Chairman Ed Gillespie said to a roar of approval as the convention got under way in Madison Square Garden. Gillespie promised a positive agenda that he said would expand Republican control of Congress and state governorships.

Republicans mixed praise of Bush with efforts to discredit Democratic rival John Kerry and his vice presidential candidate, John Edwards. House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., called the Democratic ticket "weak on war and wrong on taxes. Folks, it's an easy choice."

Democrats were quick to challenge the GOP theme that Bush was a strong leader, pointing to his comments in a television interview suggesting that the war on terror could not be won.

"This is no time to declare defeat," Edwards said. And Democratic Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack told reporters in New York, "This is a president who doesn't believe we can win the war on terror."

Republicans were paying tribute to victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks in their opening convention session. "We've shown the world New York can never be defeated," Mayor Michael Bloomberg said in welcoming delegates.

Thousands of police kept the city under tight security as the convention opened. Normally bustling Penn Station was all but empty of travelers, with police officers posted every few feet.

Protesters, who numbered at least 120,000 during loud but peaceful demonstrations on Sunday, generally gave back the streets of Manhattan to commuters. One group of protesters in oversize Bush masks and wild costumes heckled convention-goers as they left their hotels Monday morning.

Republicans roared voice-vote approval of a party platform that rallies behind Bush's agenda while endorsing positions dear to conservatives, including backing constitutional bans on gay marriage and abortion.

"Our platform highlights the principles that unite our party," Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, the platform chairman, told delegates.

Earlier, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said it was fair game to criticize Kerry's anti-war protests of three decades ago.

McCain told CBS's "The Early Show" that television ads accusing Kerry of lying about his military service in Vietnam were "dishonest and dishonorable." But, he added, "what John Kerry did after the war is very legitimate political discussion." Kerry was a leader of Vietnam veterans who opposed the war.

Bush, campaigning in Nashua, N.H., called McCain "a true American hero."

"They're kicking off the convention with positive speeches," he said. "It's gonna be a positive experience for the people of this country to see what we believe. I talked to the vice president this morning, he's gettin' ready to crank it up."

In an interview on NBC's "Today" show, Bush promised no retreat from the war on terror. But when asked "Can we win?" Bush said: "I don't think you can win it. But I think you can create conditions so that the — those who use terror as a tool — are less acceptable in parts of the world."

That brought a storm of Democratic criticism just as the convention was getting under way.

"I decided a year ago that he cannot win the war on terror," said retired Gen. Merrill McPeak, former Air Force chief of staff, at a news conference organized by Democrats.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan sought to clarify the president's remarks, telling reporters aboard Air Force one, "He was talking about winning it in the conventional sense ... about how this is a different kind of war and we face an unconventional enemy."

While seeking to energize the party's conservative base with anti-Kerry rhetoric, Republicans also were reaching out to moderates who remain undecided. Most of the prominent convention speakers — McCain, former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger — are popular among moderates and independent-minded voters.

Democratic Sen. Zell Miller of Georgia gives the keynote address on Wednesday.

Former New York Mayor Ed Koch, also a Democrat, delighted delegates by telling the opening session, "This year, I'm voting for the re-election of President George W. Bush." Koch was mayor from 1978-89.

Edwards, in a speech in Wilmington, N.C., criticized Bush's foreign policy.

"We have seen what this administration's approach does to our standing in the world. It isolates us. It costs us respect from our allies. It means we must face these new challenges alone," Edwards said.

The convention begins with polls showing Bush and Kerry in a virtual tie. The first day was intended to focus on Bush's leadership in the war on terrorism, with a tribute to families of the Sept. 11 attacks.

"In choosing a president, we really don't choose a Republican or Democrat, a conservative or liberal," Giuliani said in prepared remarks that compared Bush with Ronald Reagan and Winston Churchill. "We choose a leader. And in times of danger, as we are now in, Americans should put leadership at the core of their decision."

Republicans convened about four miles north of Ground Zero, where two hijacked planes destroyed both towers of the World Trade Center. Nearly 3,000 people died there, at the Pentagon and at a crash site in Pennsylvania.

Bush arrives Wednesday after a tour of eight battleground states. He'll spend one night in New York before returning to the campaign trail.

Lying low while Republicans command the spotlight, Kerry spent Sunday at his home in Nantucket, Mass., and was remaining there until he addresses the American Legion in Nashville on Wednesday. Bush talks to the veterans' convention on Tuesday.

The names of Bush and Cheney were placed in nomination for second terms on Monday and an alphabetical state-by-state roll call was begun that will be spread out over several nights. Cheney was cheered as he walked into the hall.

There are 2,508 voting delegates and a candidate needs a simple majority to be nominated.







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Grant Langston — 2:00PM



Seecret Level — 3:00PM



Melvin Eddy Blues Band — 4:00PM

DISTRICT CHILI AWARDS — 4:45PM



Bonsai Tribe — 5:00PM

Sunday, Sep 5



Just Dave — 12:00PM



Spooky Jones — 1:00PM



Debra Davis Band — 2:00PM



Chris Murphy — 3:00PM



Preston Smith & the Crocodiles — 4:00PM

REGIONAL CHILI AWARDS — 4:45PM



Speed Buggy — 5:00PM

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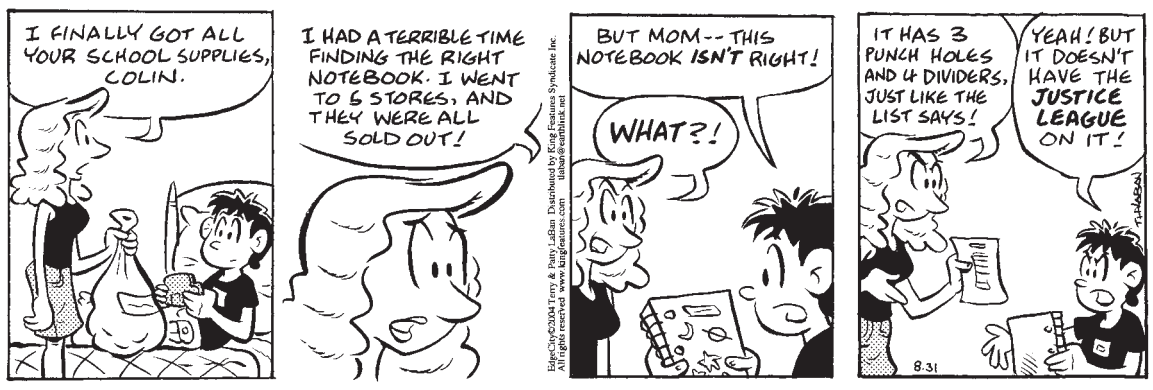
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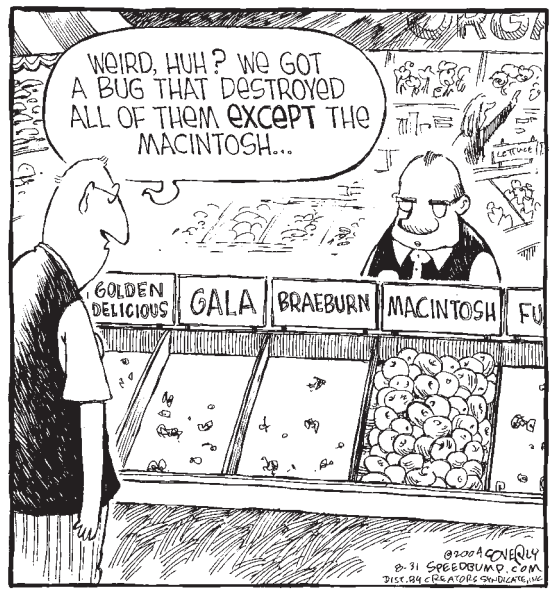
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ACROSS

1 On the ball
6 Flag features
11 Like the ice caps
12 Available, as a room
13 2, 3 or 5
15 Baseball's Durocher
16 Writer Rand
17 Menu phrase
18 Manor settings
20 Writer Anaïs
21 Wager
22 Warble
23 Carried
26 Theater feature
27 Mile or meter
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41 Spooky
42 Beginning
43 Tirades

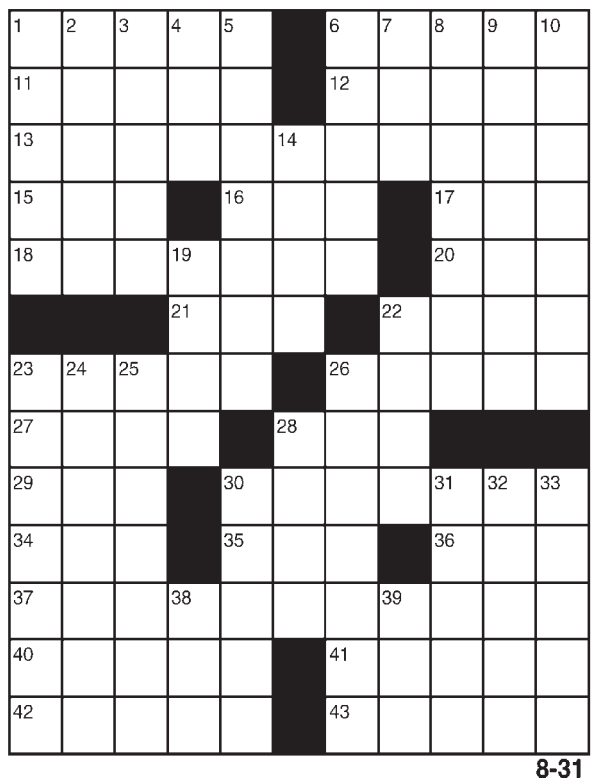
DOWN

1 Bob hope?
2 Folk learnings
3 "The Waste-land" author
4 Lamb's dad
5 Picked up the tab
6 Amazes
7 Huck's pal
8 Balkan nation
9 Staggering
10 Peculiar
14 Denial from Putin
19 Aid in crime
22 Stair
23 Sign with a team, perhaps
24 Golfer's cleek
25 Choice morsels
26 More unpleas-ant
28 Move like a moth
30 Turn outward
31 Boat back
32 Weird Al song
33 Coo callers
38 Noted Stooge
39 — culpa

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8-31

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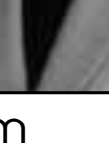
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Russell Crowe gets in a brawl with bodyguard

By The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia —"Gladiator" star Russell Crowe took the blame for his latest battle — a fight with his own bodyguard — saying it was sparked by a misunderstanding at a drinks party for the cast and crew of a movie he was shooting.

The Oscar-winning actor made headlines in Australia recently by scuffling with Mark "Spud" Carroll, a former rugby league star who now is his bodyguard, in Toronto where Crowe is shooting his latest movie, "The Cinderella Man."

Reports said New Zealand-born Crowe, who engaged in highly publicized brawls before he got married last year, even chomped on Carroll's ear during the fight.

But in a letter to The Sunday Herald Sun tabloid, Crowe said the punch-up was sparked by a misunderstanding and said the pair made up the next day.

Crowe said he had been talking to a young woman, who was an extra on the film and a friend of both men, as the cast and crew gathered for post-shoot drinks.

Carroll approached Crowe and told him what he thought people might be imagining the pair's conversation was about.

"I thought he was accusing me specifically of something and I took offense to it," Crowe said in the letter.

Carroll also wrote to the newspaper and denied reports Crowe had bitten his ear.

"That never happened, simple as that," he said. "He did take a nip at my chest — I was trying to smother him at the time, so I can understand the move."

Crowe said they "called each other a few ripe names, had a hug and got on with the job," he said.

ANAHEIM, Calif. —Swimming star Michael Phelps had his sights set on more than just winning a fistful of Olympic medals.

"Since I was a kid, I've dreamed of winning the gold medal and shouting 'I'm going to Disney World!"' said Phelps, who won six Olympic gold medals and two bronzes in Athens. "Now I'm really doing it — and going to Disneyland, too."

Disney officials announced Sunday that Phelps and fellow U.S. Olympic gold medalists Lenny Krayzelburg and Ian Crocker are launching a 12-city "Swim With the Stars" tour. It begins Tuesday with a parade in their honor at Florida's Walt Disney World and ends on Oct. 5 at the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim.

Each stop will feature a two-hour swimming show, as well as personal appearances by the swimmers.

Other cities on the tour are: Atlanta, New York, Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Seattle and San Francisco.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand —The actor behind the Gollum character in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy isn't monkeying around as he prepares for his next role as King Kong in a remake of the classic gorilla thriller.

Andy Serkis, who was the human model for the creepy computer animated "Gollum" in the films by New Zealand director Peter Jackson, has been hanging out with gorillas in Rwanda to prepare for the role, a co-star in the upcoming film said.

"He's extraordinary, the amount of research he's done," Australian actress Naomi Watts, who will play the heroine in the new movie, was quoted by the Dominion Post newspaper in Monday's edition. "He brought back incredible tapes of all that (gorilla) behavior that we need to get very familiar with."

Serkis provided the voice for Gollum and Jackson used his movements to create the computer-generated character.

Watts, Serkis, offbeat comedy actor Jack Black and Oscar winner Adrien Brody have begun rehearsals in the New Zealand capital Wellington and will begin shooting within days in preparation for a release in late 2005.

LOS ANGELES —Actor David Schwimmer says the script to the indie feature "Run, Fat Boy, Run" was too good to resist.

The former star of "Friends" will direct the movie about a charming but oblivious overweight man who tries to win back his former girlfriend by running the New York marathon.

"I've been waiting for the right feature comedy to direct and am so happy to have found 'Run, Fat Boy, Run,"' Schwimmer told The Hollywood Reporter. Michael Ian Black's script "was simply too funny and smart to put down."

Schwimmer will direct the movie for Gold Circle Films.

LOS ANGELES — "Frasier" star Kelsey Grammer and his wife, former Playboy model Camille Donatacci, are the parents of a boy, born to a surrogate mother.

Jude Gordon Grammer weighed 7 pounds, 11 ounces. He was born Saturday in Sacramento, Grammer publicist Stan Rosenfield said Monday. The infant is now in Los Angeles with his parents, who married seven years ago.

"They are happy and healthy," Rosenfield said.

The couple's daughter, Mason Olivia, was born to a surrogate mother in October 2001.

Grammer, 49, won three Emmy Awards for his role as Dr. Frasier Crane on the popular NBC comedy series.

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