

# Santa Monica Daily Press

*A newspaper with issues*

## DAILY LOTTERY

### SUPER LOTTO

11 15 18 35 46  
Meganumber: 18  
Jackpot: \$29 Million

## NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Reuters reported in July that a court in Macerata, Italy, had scheduled Amelia Cuccioletti's property-rights case for further proceedings at 9:30 a.m. on March 25, 2010. Cuccioletti is 98 years old. (The average civil case runs about eight years in Italy.) And in London in May, lawyer Nicholas Stadlen finally came to the end of his opening remarks for the defense in a creditors' lawsuit against the failed BCCI bank. He spoke for 119 days and referred to files stacked so high that neither side's lawyers could see each other. The plaintiff's lawyer had taken only 73 days.

■ In July, a jury in Los Angeles awarded Robert Johnson, the former "chief physician and surgeon" at California State Prison at Lancaster, \$1.6 million in compensatory damages for age discrimination after he had been forced to retire in 2001 at age 80. Most of that award represents future salary for Johnson, signifying that the jury perhaps accepted trial testimony that Johnson was fit to continue in his job until the age of 96.

## TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 249th day of 2005.  
There are 116 days left in the year.

On Sept. 6, 1901, President McKinley was shot and mortally wounded by anarchist Leon Czolgosz at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, N.Y. McKinley died eight days later; he was succeeded by Theodore Roosevelt. In 1939, South Africa declared war on Germany.

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We live in a fantasy world, a world of illusion. The great task in life is to find reality."

IRIS MURDOCH  
ANGLO-IRISH AUTHOR AND PHILOSOPHER

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## Unflappable



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Shelley Kay is careful to get behind the ears while giving her 10-year-old Basset hound Millie a scrubbing at the Kitty and Doggy Dunk, a self-service pet wash on Lincoln Blvd. in Santa Monica.

## Students expect more elbow room

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

**SMMUSD HDQTRS** — Santa Monica public school students can expect to have much to look forward to this year, as City Hall and other groups help the district maintain high quality programming, officials say.

Students coming back to school this fall will also find they have a little more elbow room in their classes.

Officials from the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District say the 2004-05 school year is expected to have a slight decline in enrollment. While records show last year's class had 12,400 students, this fall is expected to begin with 200 less.

District officials said they won't know for sure until school is underway. Although enrollment does affect funding for next year's budget, officials didn't speculate what the impact would be until the number of students attending the SMMUSD is official.

Meanwhile, the district is going strong, despite financial setbacks within the last four years and a shaky economic forecast for the

California public school system, said John Deasy, superintendent.

Last year, the district had its first surplus, with \$1 million at its disposal.

However, Deasy, other school officials and parents are concerned that Proposition 76, if approved, will strip K-12 funding throughout the state and devastate public education in California.

Not taking any chances on the district's financial future, the local public schools continue to be subsidized \$6 million per year by City Hall, in order to maintain the high level of programming residents expect.

## WHAT'S NEW?

The SMMUSD approved five new programs last year intended to increase student engagement and tighten the achievement gap within Santa Monica schools, which will be going online soon.

The programs will offer students who are slipping academically a chance to re-engage with the school system by tutoring younger students for pay; having better access to counseling services to work through the college

application process; and taking advantage of an improved liaison service intended to facilitate communication among students, parents and the schools.

Those who have left school will have the option of attending a new community day school as a way to

See **BACK TO SCHOOL**, page 7

## Holding out on giving to homeless

County keeping \$24M earmarked for homeless until LASHA can crawl out from financial fiasco

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON  
Daily Press Staff Writer

**LA COUNTY** — Elected leaders who two months ago earmarked tens of millions of taxpayer money to combat homelessness are holding onto the public's wallet until the county's lead agency gets its financial house in order.

A July audit of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LASHA) showed that it owed \$5 million in unpaid bills from service providers, some in Santa Monica (See related story, page 6).

In mid-August, LASHA still owed hundreds of thousands of dollars to Santa Monica City Hall and service groups which serve homeless individuals locally.

See **LASHA**, page 6

## From coast to coast



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Eric Faber (handing out information), a board member of the Santa Monica Red Cross, was on hand over the holiday weekend helping to raise financial support for the victims of Hurricane Katrina on the Santa Monica Pier.

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**HOROSCOPE**



**In the limelight, Cap**

*Santa Monica Daily Press*

**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)**  
★★★★★ Others seem to be ready, willing and able to pitch in. You accomplish a lot and gain new insight into those around you. Be willing to break past your normal thought patterns, and you will ultimately gain. Walk in another's shoes. Tonight: Follow a special person's wish.



**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**  
★★★★ You put in a stellar performance right now, causing others to step back and applaud, or at least admire your abilities. You get the job done. A partner revises his or her attitude toward you. This might be a continuing process. Tonight: Work out.



**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**  
★★★★ You might want to explain a lot, but somehow actions mean more than words. Let your creativity surge, and you have a way of enchanting others. Be more observant about those around you. You will learn a lot. Tonight: Do you really care that it's Tuesday night?



**CANCER (June 21-July 22)**  
★★★ If you can stay home, do, even if it means working from there. You will feel much better and more creative in this setting right now. You become a troubleshooter and handle a crisis well. Curb spending. Tonight: How about a favorite dessert?



**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**  
★★★★★ Loosen up and drop your shield. Good news will head in your direction if you put yourself out there and reach out to others. Your creativity surges, no matter where you direct it. There are no problems, only solutions. Tonight: Help someone open up.



**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**  
★★★★ Finally, money seems to be heading toward you. Of course, this isn't a money tree. So although you might feel wealthy today, don't think this will be your status forever. You could get a pay raise. Your family and your domestic life are changing. Tonight: Buy that item you have been eyeing.



**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**  
★★★★★ For once, you can do no wrong. Loosen up and enjoy yourself. You might find a different style of communicating to be more effective. Change plans and adjust to others. You have nothing to lose. Tonight: Your request is another's pleasure.



**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**  
★★★ Know when to back off. You have more information than others do, but you cannot share all the facts right now. Use caution with money. Consider revising your budget or portfolio. Be willing to do your own research. Your instincts are right-on. Tonight: Vanish into your own world.



**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**  
★★★★★ As the result of your flexibility, you come out a winner. Others appreciate the way you can transform a situation through your own acumen and perceptions. Meetings serve your purposes. Tonight: Celebrate living.



**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**  
★★★ Others turn to you for advice. You intuitively know what to say. Perhaps the best way of teaching is through example. You seem to be able to follow through on work and other commitments. Tonight: In the limelight.



**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**  
★★★★★ Stretch your wings and look at a situation with renewed eyes. A different perspective helps you resolve a problem. You understand what is going on with a friend. Perhaps you need to do some changing, too. Tonight: Choose an activity that helps your mind relax.



**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**  
★★★★★ A partner might be more helpful than you thought possible. If you are attached, he or she might be getting a pay raise. You appreciate what this person does for your life. Do more together in public. Tonight: Say thank you to this person.



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## LOCAL



### COMMUNITY BRIEFS

#### Bank establishes Hurricane Katrina relief effort

By Daily Press staff

U.S. Bank has established a "Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund" for people who want to contribute to relief efforts in the aftermath of the devastating and deadly disaster in the Southeastern portion of the United States.

Contributions can be made at any of U.S. Bank's 2,383 locations, which can be found online at [usbank.com](http://usbank.com) or by calling 1-800-USBANKS. Current U.S. Bank customers can also make donations via phone by calling 1-800-USBANKS and speaking with a customer service representative.

All donations to the fund will be forwarded to the American Red Cross.

#### Keeping seniors connected

By Daily Press staff

Be part of planning an important program for the community.

The Center for Healthy Aging and ITNSantaMonicaTM will be holding a free public forum on Thursday, Sept. 8, the first of three public forums to gather the input, questions and comments from Santa Monica and nearby communities as we discuss the feasibility, plans and launch of the Independent Transportation Network program presently scheduled for the spring of 2006.

The forum will be staged at Emeritus College, Room 107, at 1227 Second Street, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Special Guest Speaker will be Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. Other speakers include Kathy Freund, President and Executive Director of ITNAmericaTM, and Dr. Monika White, President/CEO of Center for Healthy Aging.

Admission is free.

#### SMC Students Receive Transfer Scholarships at UCLA

By Daily Press staff

Three Santa Monica College students have received Transfer Alliance Program scholarships from UCLA that they will use when they begin classes at the Westwood campus Sept. 29.

In all, 27 TAP scholarships were awarded to community college transfer students to UCLA from throughout the state.

SMC transfer students Esther F. Rivera, Irina Y. Shef and Tanishia Geneiver Wright will each receive \$4,000 a year for two years. Recipients are selected on the basis of academic merit and financial need.



## SURF REPORT

On Tuesday, we're expecting the SW swell to continue with similar size as Monday. NW wind swell will likely back off a bit, making the SW once again the dominant swell along the coast.  
Fewer pulses going towards head-high.

**Today the water is:**

**68°**

Write us at [alex@smdp.com](mailto:alex@smdp.com)  
and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.



#### LOW TIDES

#### HIGH TIDES

|           | Morning | Height | Evening | Height | Morning | Height | Evening | Height |
|-----------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| MONDAY    | 4:45    | 0.5    | 4:53    | 1.3    | 11:00   | 4.5    | 10:52   | 5.0    |
| TUESDAY   | 5:05    | 0.9    | 5:32    | 1.3    | 11:22   | 5.0    | 11:28   | 4.5    |
| WEDNESDAY | 5:25    | 1.3    | 6:18    | 1.3    | 11:46   | 4.3    | N/A     | N/A    |
| THURSDAY  | 5:43    | 1.8    | 7:15    | 1.3    | 12:12   | 4.0    | 12:14   | 5.2    |
| FRIDAY    | 6:02    | 1.7    | 7:40    | 0.9    | 12:40   | 3.2    | 12:09   | 4.6    |

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The **Q**Line

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The State Senate approved legislation last week that would legalize same-sex marriages in California, the most populous state in the country. The 21-15 vote made the Senate the first legislative chamber in the nation to approve a gay marriage bill, setting the stage for a showdown in the Assembly, which narrowly rejected a similar bill in June.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know: **Do you support the state's official sanctioning of gay marriages, or do you feel our elected leaders are off track? Why?**

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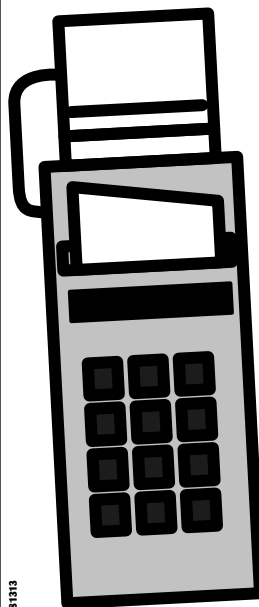


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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Take care of our sisters

Editor:

"Venice is gone. Venice is no more." Can you imagine hearing that news? I did, on the radio last week. The news came from Venice, Mississippi, a Gulf port town completely erased when Hurricane Katrina came calling. Perhaps we can answer the call by contributing to the aid of our semi-sister city, unless there is a Santa Monica somewhere under water too.

Henry Rosenfeld  
Ocean Park

### Time for justice to prevail

Editor:

The Republicans impeached President Clinton for lying about a sexual peccadillo, the only chivalrous thing to do if you don't want to do if you don't want to hurt family even more than was already done.

How many more people must die before America comes to its senses and eminenence again in the world? How many more people and countries must we alienate?

It is time for Americans (probably led by some brave Democrats in Congress) to impeach President Bush for his criminal acts: for creating a war under false pretenses; for knowingly sending our young soldiers directly into harm's way for no reason; no 'noble cause', with insufficient protection, weapons, armor, vehicles; with no exit strategy, against the advice of many honorable CIA agents; for jeopardizing Valerie Palme and all the people who worked in her 'company'; for aiding and abetting the embezzlement of \$9 billion in taxpayers' money.

An impeachment should also be extended to Vice President Dick Cheney and Condoleezza Rice for their complicity in every aspect along the way. And then they should all be criminally indicted, along with Tom Delay and Karl Rove, and all the way down, until all the criminals have been named and brought to justice.

The person who then emerges to take the position of president must be far enough removed to have had no complicity with these crimes. And someone who will not pardon these criminals or protect them from the American public's right for justice to prevail.

Who has the guts to take the initiative to bring these criminals to justice, to account for the actions and the deaths and grief they have brought to so many Americans and Iraqis?

(Bush) will never resign. He will never step down. And as long as he is 'in power' he will continue doing whatever he wants, with no thought of what he is causing others. We cannot afford to wait out the rest of his term. He must be stopped.

(This letter was originally sent to U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer.)

Florence Ginsburg  
Santa Monica

### Free speech is alive and well

Editor:

As a political activist who has been working on the Third Street Promenade for six years, I would like to say how proud I feel to have a public forum in the city of Santa Monica, where I can express my political opinions.

And even though there are times we may not always agree on the issues, it does seem that we all make compromises that bring us together in unity.

So that is why I would personally like to thank the city of Santa Monica and the Bayside Corporation for their continuing effort to make sure that we all have the right to express ourselves freely on the Third Street Promenade.

Vincentt Garofalo  
Santa Monica

GUEST COMMENTARY BY ELAN JOURNO

# The perversity of U.S. backing the Gaza retreat

In a step fraught with danger, Israel is uprooting its citizens and withdrawing its military from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. That Palestinian terrorists are rejoicing over this momentous pull-out is hardly shocking. That the United States is also applauding is contemptible. Worse still, America is demanding more concessions of land: Secretary of State Rice has insisted, "It cannot be Gaza only."

Why is America urging Israel to make such perilous concessions? The rationale is that the withdrawal will open an unobstructed path for the "downtrodden" Palestinians toward a self-governed ethnic state. Such a state, Washington hopes, will alleviate their suffering and establish peaceful co-existence between Israel and the Palestinians.

But such a state will intensify the misery of the few genuinely freedom-seeking Palestinians by entrenching a tyrannical regime. The Palestinian Authority, a provisional governing body, has drained the lifeblood out of its citizens, trampled on their rights and, despite receiving billions in foreign aid, kept them in devastating poverty. Under the PA's anarchic reign, rival "security forces" arbitrarily seize property, arrest and jail people without charge, and summarily execute dissidents.

The actual victors of the withdrawal are terrorists and their vast legions of reverent supporters in the Palestinian population. The motto emblazoned on banners throughout Gaza expresses their belief, borne out in practice, that violence works: "Gaza Today. The West Bank and Jerusalem Tomorrow." The withdrawal has strengthened their resolve, not to achieve peace, but to destroy Israel. "We're going to keep our weapons," one terrorist told reporters, "because the battle with the enemy is a long one." A cleric allied to Hamas, which has carried out umpteen suicide bombings in Israel, observed that "when we offer up our children [as 'martyrs'], it is much better than choosing the road of humiliation and negotiations."

As some have observed, with a populace and leadership so hospitable to terrorists, in time the Palestinian territories may succeed Taliban-ruled Afghanistan as a training ground for jihadists, lusting to murder not only in the streets of Jerusalem and Baghdad, but also London and New York.

Israel's retreat from Gaza--rightly celebrated by terrorists--is neither a means of fostering peace, nor a solution for the plight of innocent Palestinians. Why, then, does America support it?

Because Washington holds that Israel has no moral right to assert its interests, but the Palestinians do. Their quest for statehood enjoys Washington's wholehearted support, encouragement and financing as an incontestable entitlement--even if they tyrannize themselves and terrorize Israel. But if Israel pursues its interests, by contrast, Washington

considers that a moral transgression. Israel could, and for a time did, easily protect the lives and property of all individuals within its borders and the contested territories, by smashing aggressors and imposing its rule of law on Palestinians (which innocent Palestinians welcomed). But Washington refuses on principle to endorse such assertions of Israeli interests.

Why this double standard? Our leaders believe in altruism: the view that one's highest moral duty is to selflessly serve the needy--and thus that the world's "haves" must sacrifice for the sake of its "have-nots." The productive, on this abhorrent view, have no moral right to pursue their own interests; their only justification for existing is to serve the needy. Because Israel is strong and prosperous, it is thereby forbidden from imposing its will on the destitute Palestinians--even though it is the innocent victim of Palestinian aggression. Because the Palestinians are weak and poor, they may demand anything they wish--including a state with which to terrorize Israel.

It might seem that President Bush is being hypocritical: forbidding an ally, Israel, from fighting terrorism effectively even as U.S. forces wage a "war on terror." But observe that in fact he is being devastatingly consistent. For Bush, Iraqis are entitled to the sanctity of their Mosques--but our troops are forbidden from rooting out insurgents hiding and sniping from within; Iraqis are entitled to textbooks, hospitals, sewers, roads--but, in defending themselves, our troops must place the lives of Iraqi civilians (some of whom are or aid insurgents) above their own. Attesting to the cost of this sacrificial policy is the burgeoning U.S. death toll.

And Washington has refused to impose on Iraq a constitution that would make the new regime non-threatening--as we did in Japan after World War II. In the name of satisfying the poor Iraqis' demand for "self-determination," President Bush has pledged to recognize as sovereign whatever regime the Iraqis vote for - even a militantly hostile Islamic theocracy that, in unison with Iran's mullahs, clamors for "Death to America."

Neither Israel nor the United States can vanquish Islamist terrorism unless it repudiates the corrupt morality of altruism, which enjoins the sacrifice of the successful as an ideal. Victory can only be achieved if one is convinced of one's moral right to live and to act consistently to achieve one's goals. Every self-effacing step that Israel takes--in lock-step with America and with our blessing--encourages the terrorists with the belief that their success is achievable.

(Elan Jurno is a junior fellow at the Ayn Rand Institute (<http://www.aynrand.org/>) in Irvine, Calif.)

## COMMENTARY



# Ounce of prevention can make difference



## ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL

The catastrophic event seemed far away when the tsunami hit India, Asia and Africa in December 2004. The results of over 160,000 dead was undeniably terrible, but I think America felt safe watching on plasma screen TV's, never imagining that such a thing could happen with our advanced system of technology and government.

Katrina reminded the U.S. that earth-shaking events can and do happen in our own country. With thousands presumed dead, I don't think we can accurately say that we were ready for this natural disaster either.

As we sit here in LA and watch the growing devastation of corpses strewn in the streets of Louisiana, and families displaced perhaps permanently from their demolished/leveled homes, we can't afford to settle back into myopic tendencies.

Now is not the time to have pity, but yet lack of awareness that slides us into the false but comfortable "not me" demeanor.

It is quite unlikely that Santa Monica will incur a catastrophic hurricane, but who's to say disaster won't come in the form of a Richter-shattering pandemic?

It's true, we all know we're slated for the next big one. And devastation doesn't care if you stop for old ladies or pay your taxes on time.

Which is why I ask: Are you ready?

You can't always predict when an earthquake will do with tectonic plates what water did to New Orleans. But you can do some planning to make it easier for you and your family to survive.

So, I give you Santa Monica's Earthquake Preparedness Guide.

The first thing that often comes to mind in preparing for an earthquake is gathering supplies. Obviously, water (3 gallons per person), canned food and a can opener are needed, but significant other essentials will arise. A first aid kit is mandatory to cleanly address any wounds that may occur, as medical aid will mostly likely be scarce and unorganized during a large-scale earthquake.

A battery-powered radio to hear safety instructions and updates is suggested, as well as a flashlight and extra batteries. Written instructions to turn off gas, electricity and water should be close at hand if advised to do so by the local authorities.

As seen with the victims of Hurricane Katrina, protective clothing, rainwear (even though it's Southern California), bedding and sleeping bags are prescribed as well. Earthquake preparedness kits

should be compiled for both your home and your car. It is LA, and that means 1/3 of us will most likely be driving in rush hour to the next destination.

Once prepared (as you can be), remember what to do when the shaking starts. The Red Cross says if indoors, obviously stay away from windows, bookcases or tall furniture that could fall in such an event. Find a sturdy desk or table. Go underneath it and hold on, protecting your eyes with your arm.

If there is no such furniture nearby, sit down against an interior wall, again away from windows or potentially falling objects.

If inside, please stay inside until the shaking stops. For those who are outdoors when an earthquake strikes, find a clear spot away from buildings, power lines or anything able to be leveled. Say you are driving, which would be stressful and hairy in itself, slow down and drive to a clear space, waiting to exit the car until the shaking stops.

After the initial earthquake has ceased, remember to expect an aftershock. While waiting, check yourself and others for injuries. Put on clothing that will protect your arms and legs from further damage, wearing sturdy shoes and work gloves if possible.

Search for damage in and around your home, and any small fires that may have arisen. If your home is detected unsafe, exit and find your nearest safe haven.

There are ways to make your house safer before the next earthquake as well. Bolt down bookcases and other tall furniture with wall studs. Install latches on your cupboards to avoid falling glasses and plates. If you are a homeowner, strap the water heater down firmly to wall studs.

Most likely a large LA earthquake will be frightening, but not as devastating as what the families in New Orleans and Mississippi are currently enduring. Nevertheless, it would be a travesty to not take the simple precautions that would divert a wide-scale tragedy had Santa Monica citizens done a little pre-planning.

I apologize for dropping the pen of sarcasm this week. But even the best cynics have concern for their fellow mankind. People can't always expect when a tragedy will hit, but they can prepare ahead of time to prevent an even greater one.

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

(The above information was compiled from the American Red Cross Web site. For more information on how to help Katrina victims, as well as earthquake preparedness, please visit [www.red-cross.org](http://www.red-cross.org).)

## got tension?

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# LOCAL

# County holding \$24M as agency restructures

LASHA, from page 1

While media reports showed that LASHA had only \$700,000 in the bank in July, the authority said it had \$1.4 million and was waiting on \$3.9 million in expected funding.

“It’s not a \$5 million deficit, it’s just that we were slow in requesting money from our agencies (that fund LASHA),” said LASHA Executive Director Mitch Netburn. “If we had done our job right, we would have asked for that \$5 million so we could pay our providers.”

Regardless, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors is waiting to give LASHA \$24.6 million that it approved in June to aid in homeless efforts, part of which local officials hope may go toward the creation of a new, year-round homeless shelter on the Westside. The allocation is said to be the largest single payment from either the city or county of LA for homeless services.

The board of supervisors had indicated in June that it would decide within 60 days how the money should be used. That all came to an abrupt halt when county officials learned of LASHA’s financial troubles in July.

“We were told after the fact,” said Joe Bellman, press deputy for LA County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, who represents the Westside. “We learned about (LASHA’s financial troubles) when we sat down to determine how to spend the money.”

LA city and county officials are working to restructure LASHA, which has been operating without a chief financial officer and minimal financial staff.

“It’s not responsible to allocate money without having transparency,” Bellman said. “We don’t want to flush money down a dysfunctional system.”

The funding allocation has been delayed to an unspecified date, but at least until after LASHA has straightened out its finances. County officials, however, will be cautious that the majority of money goes to new facilities, not administrative costs.

“This is not intended for it to be operational funding for LASHA,” Bellman said, adding about \$2 million of the \$24.6 million had been budgeted for administrative costs.

Netburn expects all of LASHA’s debt to be reconciled by Sept. 9.

## Looking to hospitals to lend helping hand

BY RYAN HYATT  
 Daily Press Staff Writer

**SANTA MONICA AIRPORT** — Regional officials are exploring how skyrocketing health care costs might be reduced once area hospitals can assess the tab they pick up for assisting the down-and-out.

Westside government officials at the Aug. 25 homeless subcommittee meeting said they may have discovered a way to divert more funding to social services, by helping hospitals assess how much they absorb annually for un-paid emergency room visits by the region’s homeless population.

A recent survey shows the Los Angeles area’s 90,000 down-and-out are a mixed demographic consisting of families, mentally-ill, substance abusers and more. In excess of 40 percent are considered chronically homeless, meaning they have been on the streets for the last three years or longer.

Government officials believe a significant portion of these people are a drain on local hospitals and might be contributing to rising health care costs. When police and firefighters get calls involving everything from homeless drunken episodes, fights, seizures and other events that might involve injury, emergency personnel often deliver these individuals to the hospitals for treatment.

Depending on their condition, these homeless hospital-goers may stay days at a time, according to officials. Meanwhile, since they’re poor and uninsured, the hospitals are forced to foot the bill.

Ultimately, the costs are passed on to the paying medical customers, who subsidize the homeless and other uninsured

groups with increased prices for health care to make up for the loss, according to officials.

However, according to Santa Monica City Councilman Bobby Shriver, hospitals may be willing to help support some homeless services, if they can see that doing so would take away from their need to subsidize medical care for the down-and-out.

“Once we know how much that pot is, we’ll be able to have a better idea if hospitals may be able to help with homeless service efforts,” Shriver said. “I suspect the pot will be big enough that they will be more than willing to contribute, once they know it will relieve their emergency rooms and costs.”

The problem, however, is that hospitals in the Los Angeles area are believed to have their own accounting system. Tracking for homeless services may be easier for some than it is for others, Shriver said.

That’s why Westside government officials involved with the homeless’ plight will discuss hiring a consultant at their September meeting, to see if Westside officials can ascertain a firm grasp of how much homeless stays are costing area hospitals.

Once that information is obtained, it might be possible to glean just what kind of “pot” hospitals might be willing to contribute to regional efforts to fight homelessness.

The need to secure homeless funding comes in light of a recent debacle in which the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA), which manages county homeless services, was discovered to be millions in the hole.

As of last month, LAHSA still owed \$280,000 to City Hall, plus tens of thousands of dollars more to other groups, including \$68,000 to St. Joseph’s Center, according to a recent report.

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# Classes will be given the world

BACK TO SCHOOL, from page 1

re-enter the educational system.

In addition, the school district is seeking to put a uniform cultural-studies curriculum in place for all 9th and 10th grade students that is intended to foster their appreciation for diversity and broaden their perspectives.

The SMMUSD school board unanimously approved the programs, with some warning they might need to be tweaked to fit the cultural needs of students.

The district is hoping to begin piloting many of these programs this fall.

## CULTURAL-STUDIES IMPROVEMENT

All 9th and 10th grade students will be required to take a cultural-studies course that will span two years and be incorporated into current course loads.

The cultural-studies course, which will explore world history from a cultural perspective, is being developed by faculty and the administration. It will be an intensive course with the intent of enhancing students' research and writing skills.

The course will culminate in 10th grade with a public project to be presented before a panel of experts familiar with the topic. The student will choose a topic having to do with current policy and events, research and explore it, and develop a policy solution to discuss with the experts.

School officials said the program will be developed through the summer and might begin in the fall.

## A PAID TUTOR PROGRAM

A nationally recognized tutoring program, in existence for 15 years, is to begin in Santa Monica in September.

The Value Youth program seeks to identify middle-school students who are becoming disengaged from the educational system and train them to become academic tutors for younger students.

The tutors will spend one hour a day, three days a week, assisting elementary-school students with reading.

Tutors will be matched with an adult mentor in the business community and be paid for their participation.

Hilary Rhodes, a doctorate fellow with the RAND Corp. who has helped the district coordinate the new program, said research shows the paid tutoring approach is effective in energizing middle-school students because it fosters a sense of value for tutors.

Nonetheless, some school board members approved the program on a note of caution, stressing the tutoring program needs to be tailored to local needs to be effective.

Deasy said the program will cost \$45,000 to \$50,000 to pilot this fall at John Adams Middle School.

## OTHER PROGRAMS ON THE WAY

In an effort to address the needs of minority students in the Santa Monica school system, the school board also approved two new policies last year.

The first mandates that all students must be counseled about the college application process before high school graduation.

In addition to the college counseling service, the school board also approved restructuring its liaison service to help students and parents coordinate their participation within the school community.

The effort, intended as a response to minority parents who are having trouble navigating their children through the school system, allows for more minority representation among liaison staff, many of whom will be hired this summer during the restructuring process.

In another effort to tighten the student achievement gap, the school board has approved a community day school that will allow students to re-enter the educational system, to be held at Memorial Park.

# Gas prices didn't keep travelers from hitting road over the holiday

BY GARY GENTILE

AP Business Writer

**LOS ANGELES** — Despite rising gas prices, a record number of California and Nevada residents were expected to hit the road over the past holiday weekend.

More than 4.9 million California residents were expected to travel by car over the Labor Day weekend, up 1.8 percent from last year's levels, according to AAA.

In Nevada, the number of residents traveling by car was expected to rise 2 percent.

But those results came from surveys taken a week ago, before the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. While California's gas supply has not been interrupted like some Southern states, gas prices have risen this week because of two refinery shutdowns in Northern California and increased demand.

"We don't know if that's going to cause some people to change their minds," said Carol Thorp, a spokeswoman for the Automobile Club of Southern California. "Historically when gas prices have gone up, people have not changed their minds."

The average price for a gallon of unleaded gas in California has risen nearly 36 cents over the past month. In Nevada, the price has gone up nearly 32 cents.

California prices have increased 5.8 cents since Thursday to an average of \$2.95 for unleaded regular, according to the AAA. In Nevada, the average price for unleaded is \$2.84.

But in some parts of both states, unleaded regular has risen beyond \$3 a gallon.

Nevertheless, hotel and tourism officials said they didn't expect that paying \$20 to \$50 more for a weekend trip would force tourists to change holiday travel plans.

"This is a holiday weekend where people have marked off some time and set aside money for vacation," AAA Nevada spokesman Michael Geeser said. "A few more bucks at the pump aren't going to dissuade them."

The average price of unleaded regular fuel reached \$2.96 in Reno, a record high that was up 6 cents from the day before, Geeser said. Unleaded regular averaged \$2.78 a gallon in Las Vegas, up 5 cents from Thursday and up 30 cents from July.

Katrina has not had a direct impact on gas prices in California, but is contributing to higher prices on the spot market, where the state is forced to buy the 2.2 million gallons of gas per day that state refineries do not produce, the AAA said.

Refineries in the state supply about 45 million gallons of the 47 million gallons consumed each day, Thorp said.

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Elton John fans are left in ruins

By The Associated Press

**ROME** — Thousands of fans clapped and danced as Elton John performed “Daniel” and some of his other hits at a free concert outside the ancient Roman Colosseum.

Fans of all ages had started lining up at dawn to grab good spots for the Saturday night celebration on the Via dei Fori Imperiali, the large boulevard that leads to the Colosseum and is lined with Roman relics.

“I love places that have an incredible history,” John said in recorded comments released before the concert. “I love the Italian way of life, I love the food, I love the people, I love the attitudes of Italians.”

Last year, a Simon and Garfunkel concert on the same stage drew hundreds of thousands of fans. In 2003, Paul McCartney also performed on the Via dei Fori Imperiali.

John has been performing in Italy since 1973.

**DETROIT** — The Rolling Stones were a huge hit at Comerica Park, and the damage wasn’t as bad as expected.

Damage to the sod in the outfield from the Aug. 31 Stones concert was expected to be repaired in time for Monday’s Tigers game against the Cleveland Indians, the team’s groundskeeper said.

Heather Nabozny told the Detroit Free Press that about 22,500 square feet of sod mashed down by the crowd would be replaced. A typical concert at Comerica requires 13,500 square feet of new sod.

“It turned out better than I thought,” Nabozny said.

After the Stones’ two concerts earlier at Boston’s Fenway Park, the Red Sox replaced 40,000 square feet of sod.

**VENICE, Italy** — Steven Soderbergh’s next picture starring George Clooney will be a murder mystery titled “The Good German,” set in Berlin some six weeks after the end of World War II in 1945.

The director and producer said Saturday that shooting would start soon on the film, which will also feature Cate Blanchett.

Soderbergh was in Venice to promote another murder story, “Bubble,” in which he used nonprofessional actors in a small Ohio town to give the film a realistic look.

“The Good German” will be a “more normal film,” said Soderbergh, an Oscar winner for “Traffic.”

Five years ago, he and Clooney formed a film company called Section Eight, based at Warner Bros. Its first film was “Ocean’s Eleven,” also starring Clooney.

**HOUSTON** — It wasn’t for a concert. R&B singer Macy Gray came to town specifically to help refugees from the flooding in New Orleans.

“I just really wanted to help out,” Gray said after spending Saturday handing out clothes and toiletries in the Astrodome. “I think the most important thing to them is their futures. They are here, and they have gotten out of that disaster but it is, like, now what? Because they can’t live like that forever.”

“It is crazy when you don’t know what is going to happen to you the next day and suddenly that is what their lives are like,” she said of the refugees.

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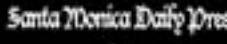
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# An 'Unfinished' sleep: Character haunts author

BY BECKY BOHRER

Associated Press Writer

**RED LODGE, Mont** — Mark Spragg was busy with his first novel when the bitter old man with the mob of cats started popping into his daydreams. The more Spragg tried to ignore the character he'd come to know as Einar Gilkyson, the more it persisted, eventually haunting the writer's sleep, seeming to demand his full attention.

On car trips, Spragg and his wife, a former therapist, began gossiping about Einar as though he really existed, trying to figure out his "backstory," what had hurt him so badly and whether the crusty, Wyoming rancher of Spragg's imagination could ever be redeemed.

Their dashboard musings, taken down by Virginia Korus Spragg in note pads over more than a year, led to Spragg's second novel, "An Unfinished Life," and a screenplay the couple co-wrote that has been made into a film of the same name, starring Robert Redford and Morgan Freeman. It is set for release Friday.

For the Spraggs, first-time collaborators on a big-screen project, this was an experiment in telling the same story in two very different mediums. When Spragg began writing the novel, Korus Spragg, who by then knew Einar and the other characters as intimately as her husband did, started the screenplay.

"It started out very innocently for us," Spragg said in a recent interview from the mountain-view home near Red Lodge, where he and his wife, who also have a home in Cody, Wyo., divide their time. "In the first place, you don't imagine you're ever really going to sell the novel to anyone or really sell the screenplay to anyone."

"This could so easily have never been made," he added. "It's a rural, character-driven piece."

Their story is set in the fictional Wyoming town of Ishawooa, a map-dot kind of place somewhere northwest of Sheridan.

Here Einar Gilkyson basically subsists, battling his own personal demons and caring for his friend, Mitch, when the woman Einar blames for the death of his son, Griffin, shows up — beaten by an abusive boyfriend and seeking refuge with the 10-year-old granddaughter Einar never knew existed.

Their story — intricately told, and, at turns, funny, familiar and shocking — is one of forgiveness, family and the ties that bind, even from beyond the grave.

"Certainly all of our lives are unfinished," Spragg said. That aspect, for nearly all the characters in the story, lends poignancy to "how they must learn to forgive what they perceive as wrong in their life, whether that wrong was committed by other people or by some form of cosmology."

But there is also a strong sense of wanting to finish the life of a loved one lost, Korus Spragg said.

"I think ... at first you're going to think of an unfinished life as someone who died too soon, and you need to move on," she said. "But I think there was a sense of how we honor our dead, how we live within the relationships we have with the people who are gone."

The couple, who were writing the screenplay around the time both of their mothers died, believe their own experi-

ences shaded their writing and added weight to their words.

"I think for both of us, and, hopefully, for all of us, we wonder, 'Do the dead view us? Do they forgive us our sins? Do they accept us? Do they shepherd us?'" Spragg said. "So that aspect was in the book and the film, both."

The Spraggs said they often fought, trying to understand each character's motivations. Mark Spragg said he'd often wander on the prairie near Cody for hours on end, working himself into a frenzy, trying to imagine how the abuser — Roy in the book, Gary in the movie — felt.

"And I'd rush back to the house and sit down at the computer and knock out a first draft of a Roy chapter and just collapse in those evenings, because it was — I hate to admit it — opening up some shadow side of myself and immersing myself there for that moment," Spragg said.

In both the movie and the book, blood is not a prerequisite for family and the image of the macho cowboy is challenged by the depth of commitment and love that Einar and Mitch have for one another. Korus Spragg said some of her favorite moments in the film show the two, played by Redford and Freeman, together on the front porch.

Spragg, who grew up on a guest ranch near Yellowstone National Park, said he's sure he drew parts of Einar from different men he once knew but based him on no one in particular.

When they were working on the screenplay, the Spraggs said they never pictured who might portray their characters — Spragg says that's a dangerous thing to do — but that they're pleased with who did. When the couple visited the set and first heard the two actors deliver their lines, Spragg says they teared up.

The film, which also stars Jennifer Lopez, is directed by Lasse Hallstrom, whose credits include "The Cider House Rules" and "Chocolat."

While the story's rural Wyoming setting was completely foreign to him, Hallstrom, who worked with the Spraggs on various incarnations of the script, told The Associated Press in a telephone interview that he was intrigued by the relationship between Einar and Mitch.

"When a character piece rings true, and I recognize the characters ... I'm compelled and drawn into it," he said, adding: "I treasure this one."

Spragg, a veteran screenwriter whose previous film credits he isn't eager to discuss, said the experience on this film was unlike any before. Both he and his wife say they're pleased with the result, which is largely a faithful retelling of the book.

The film, among the Miramax releases that had been delayed due to business negotiations, was recently screened in Red Lodge and Cody.

Gary Robson, a local bookstore owner in Red Lodge, said he was nervous about seeing the film since "so many good books get turned into bad movies," but was ultimately relieved.

"It was not a faithful word-for-word regurgitation, but it had the same dialogue, the same emotion, the same power," said Robson, whose store had recently run out of copies of "An Unfinished Life," a top seller behind the latest Harry Potter book.

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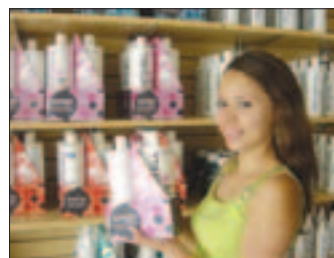
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## DEAR DORIE

### Be at the ready to read

Dear Dorie,

I have a 2-year old daughter and, I'm reluctantly admitting this, I want her to read before kindergarten. I hear horror stories about third-graders not reading yet and associations between knowing how to read and positive school experiences, college-bound ... you know, all the good things we want for our children. While I support the idea of each child at his or her own pace, what can I do to help my little girl learn to read without being a jerk?

Ready for a Reader

Dear Ready,

Your letter made me smile because it so beautifully illustrates the conundrum of parenting — you want what is appropriate for your child's own self-development, her positive self-esteem, her own pace and path of life, her unique personality, etc ... but if there's even a hint or risk that it might fail, you freak out. Believe it or not, this is a sign of good parenting.

I think you know the basic answer to your question: Read aloud to her frequently, follow her interests, include reading in the bedtime ritual and at other times throughout the day, read aloud with different voices and sounds, go to your local library for lap time and have fun. The other unwritten question is more complicated.

Ask yourself, what are you going to do if she has difficulty learning to read or difficulty in a traditional school in general? I'm willing to bet that the answer is you'll be the loving, devoted, "jerky" parent that you are right now. We give it our best shot with the best intentions we can muster ... that's the best we can do, no guarantees. Good luck.

Dorie

(Submit your questions to 'Dear Dorie' at meek@smmud.org or call (310) 452-6132)

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# Junior, it's time to get a job! Chores teach lifelong lessons



## How Much Is Enough?

By Jean Illsley Clare Ph.D.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, Ma, I'm lookin', yeah." Each time Molly inquired about the job search, her son gave her the same response. "Why isn't he getting a job?" she wondered. "Most things had been so easy for Keith."

Getting his degree in engineering had been easy for Keith. Taking college courses his senior year in high school had been easy for Keith. Getting 'A's had been easy for Keith. Winning math competitions had been easy for Keith. Avoiding chores as a child had also been easy for Keith — he figured out ways to get his younger brothers to do them.

Out of college, living at home, spending time with his girlfriend, life was easy for Keith. Well, not quite everything had been easy for Keith. During high school, he had tried a summer job doing gardening. Not easy. Boring, boring. The boss was too demanding and he was let go.

Out of college, a full-time engineering job wasn't appealing. He didn't look. The fast food job wasn't hard, but it wasn't easy either. They expected him to work some evenings, and that cut into his time with his girlfriend. Keith scanned the help wanted ads.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, Ma, I'm lookin', yeah."

What to do with this man-boy, this can-do brain in this won't-do body? Nate's parents, both hardworking people, were at a loss. They expected their children to be productive contributors to society, and here is this first-born, a parasite hooked on "easy." They blamed themselves, "What have we done wrong?"

What, indeed! Probably nothing. With every intent to be good parents, they surrounded their sons with love, and met their physical needs with abundance. Sometimes they worried about Keith getting out of chores, but since he continued to get 'A's in school, they thought he must be doing well.

However, it is possible for a child who can do many

things easily to decide that all of life should be easy, and it looked as if Keith had made that unfortunate decision. After a year of "Yeah, yeah, yeah, Ma," Keith announced that he and his girlfriend were getting married in three months. Parent consternation. Parent conference. "Have we been helping him too much? Letting him get by with too much?" Parent announcements. Mom was stern and stood firm as a rock. "You are not getting married until you have a full-time job with benefits." Dad was matter-of-fact, but firm as another rock. "And you can't live here."

What is a boy-man to do when faced with two solid rocks, side by side? Within six weeks, Keith had a job at an engineering firm and an apartment. Was that easy? We hope not. We hope this young man has started to grow up.

Overindulgence research participants who were overindulged as children reported that they resented not having done chores as children. The lack of skill sets children learn doing chores interfered with job performance in their adult work-life.

Reminder list for parents waiting to raise responsible children:

- Chores are a very important part of a child's education. Good grades are not enough.
- Chores teach lifelong skills.
- Children are born to be competent. Avoid teaching them to be helpless.
- Start 3-year-olds with age-appropriate tasks so children can experience success.
- Do chores with the child while teaching new skills and later sometimes for support and companionship.
- Invest the time necessary to teach skills, remind, supervise, and give recognition.
- Chores make a child a contributing member of the family, one important ingredient in the basic human need to connect and be in relationships.
- Beware of over-scheduling the child outside of the home.

(Jean Illsley Clarke Ph.D. is a co-author of *How Much is Enough? Everything You Need to Know to Steer Clear of Overindulgence and Raise Likable, Responsible, and Respectful Children*. E-mails to [jiconsults@aol.com](mailto:jiconsults@aol.com).)

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# SANTA MONICA PARENTING

## FOR SANTA MONICA PARENTS AND PARENTS TO BE

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### TUESDAYS – ONGOING TODDLER EXPERIENCE at the ZIMMER CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

10:30 – 11:15 a.m. Encourage children's creativity and imagination with play, music, art, movement and stories at this great kids' venue. 20 months – 3 years; \$20 for 4-week session or \$8 per class. Registration required, 323-761-8998. 6505 Wilshire Blvd., LA.

**FRI., SEPT 9 – SUN., SEPT. 11**  
**LA GREEK FESTIVAL** – Fri. – 5-9 p.m., Sat. – 1 – 11 p.m., Sun. – 1 – 10 p.m.  
Sample ethnic food, learn folk dances, stroll through a marketplace and see theatrical presentations as you become Greek for a day. \$3 adults, ages 12 and under are FREE! St. Sophia Cathedral, 1324 S. Normandie, LA, 323-737-2424, [www.lagreekfest.com](http://www.lagreekfest.com).

#### **FRI., SEPT 9 – SUN., OCT. 2 – LA COUNTY FAIR**

The fair returns with the usual exhibits and competitions including livestock, food and more, as well as lots more fun for the kids in a time travel exhibit at the Education Expo Building. Various times, adults \$10 - \$15, kids ages 6 – 12 46 - \$8, free for kids under 5. 1101 McKinley Ave., Pomona., 909-623-3111. More details available online at [www.lacounty-fair.com](http://www.lacounty-fair.com)

#### **SAT. SEPT. 10 BIG! WORLD! FUN! FAMILY SERIES at the FORD – 10:00 a.m.**

Today's performance features Folk Tales of Korea presented by the Kim, Eung Hwa Korean Dance Academy. Ages 4 -11, \$5. John Anson Ford Theatre, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood, 323-461-3673, [www.fordamphitheatre.org](http://www.fordamphitheatre.org)

#### **SUN., SEPT. 11 RHYTHM CHILD BAND at the SM FARMER'S MARKET**

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Experience the fun of Rhythm Child where kids can play along with the band on percussion instruments. FREE! 575-9372

### TUESDAY

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

**Movies for Moms!** 11:00 a.m., Loews Cineplex Broadway Theatre, 1441 3rd St. Promenade – for Moms and babies newborn – 1 year old. Today's movie, Sept. 6, is The Transporter 2; Action/Adventure, Rated "PG-13." Doors open early for socializing and getting comfortable. Visit [www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms](http://www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms) for details.

### Storytelling

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

**Toddler Storytime**; 10:00 a.m. For 2 year olds with adult.

**Preschool Story Time**; 10:30 a.m.; for ages 3-5.

**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. **Lap Time** – 11:00 a.m, six-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by the

SMMUSD Infant & Family Support Program.

Current sessions Sept. 6 – Oct. 11

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

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

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

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

**Toddler Storytime**, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 2 to 3 year olds. Next session Sept. 13 – Oct. 18. Registration begins Aug. 31.

**Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis**

For ages infant to 3. 11:00 a.m. 116 North Robertson, Plaza A, LA. 310-358-2500, [www.storyopolis.com](http://www.storyopolis.com)

**Barnes and Noble at the Grove**

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

### Classes

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

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

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

### Yoga & Exercise

**Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA**

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

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

**Mommy Care** – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end) **Itsy Bitsy Yoga** – Baby IBY (6 weeks to pre-crawling) – 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. With Khefri Riley at Ocean Oasis, 1333 Ocean Ave. Register at [www.khefri.net](http://www.khefri.net) or call 323-549-5383.

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

### Breastfeeding Group

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

### WEDNESDAY

**MOMS Club of Santa Monica Playgroups** – 4:30 p.m., separate groups for children born in

2000 and 2001. Call or email Alison at 393-4481/[riversalison@hotmail.com](mailto:riversalison@hotmail.com) for more info. All moms welcome!

### Storytelling

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

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

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

**Toddler Story Time** – 9:30 a.m., for two year olds with adult.

**Preschool Story Time** – 10:30 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds with adult.

Current session Sept. 7 – Oct. 12.

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

**Lap Time** - 10:15 & 11:15 a.m., ages 0-2. Current session Sept. 7 – Oct. 12

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

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

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

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

### Classes

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

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

### Yoga & Exercise

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

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

### Breastfeeding Group

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

### Other

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

### THURSDAY

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

### Storytelling

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

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

**Toddler Storytime**; 10:00 a.m.; for 2 year olds with adult.

**Preschool Story Time**; 10:30 a.m.; for ages 3-

5.

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

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

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

**Toddler Story Time** – 10:15 a.m., for 2 year olds, current session Sept. 8 – Oct. 13.

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

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

**Lap Time** – 9:20 & 10:20 a.m., for babies up to age 2. Current session Sept. 1 – Oct. 6.

### Classes

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

**BREAKTHROUGH PARENTING CLASSES** – 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.

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

### Yoga & Exercise

**Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA**

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

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

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

### Breastfeeding Group

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

### FRIDAY

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

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

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

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

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

### Classes

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

### Yoga & Exercise

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

**Yoga Works** – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45 p.m., \$15. Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit [www.strollerstrides.com](http://www.strollerstrides.com) for more info.

### Other

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

### SATURDAY

### Storytelling

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

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

**Children's Book World**, 10580 1/2 Pico Blvd, LA - 10:30 a.m., 310-559-800K.

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

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

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# NATIONAL

# Abused illegals don't always know rights

BY AMANDA KEIM

Associated Press Writer

**PHOENIX** — Maria never saw her husband explode until their wedding night, when he got angry at a guest and kicked a door. Five years later, he was pointing a gun at her head, threatening to shoot their two young children and saying he would harm Maria's family if she reported him. Then the rapes began.

Maria was too afraid to report the abuse to the police. As an undocumented immigrant living in southern Arizona, she lived in fear that she would be deported if she made any contact with authorities.

Maria isn't alone. Untold numbers of immigrant women across the country suffer at the hands of husbands who know their immigrant spouses are terrified of being forced to leave the country and exploit that fear to continue the abuse.

In Maria's case, that meant her husband refused to file her immigration papers. Maria didn't have legal status in the U.S. even though she had lived in the country since she was 9, said Valerie Hink, a Tucson immigration lawyer from Southern Arizona Legal Aid who started

handling Maria's case about eight years ago.

Hink, who recounted the details of Maria's case, said she couldn't put The Associated Press in touch with Maria because she did not have current contact information and declined to disclose her full name, citing privacy concerns.

"He would keep the children and she would be sent back to Mexico," Hink said as she looked over documents in Maria's case file. "We hear that threat all the time."

While their legal status makes illegal immigrants especially vulnerable to domestic abuse, experts say victims often have no clue what sorts of legal remedies are available to abused immigrants.

Spouses who are in the United States legally often use immigration status as a control tactic to keep victims from reporting abuse, said Montserrat Caballero, program director for Su Voz Vale, Spanish for Your Voice Counts, a bilingual and bicultural program in the Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault. The program offers therapy, crisis intervention and referral services primarily to Latina assault victims.

"If you're an immigrant, there's an idea of 'You're breaking the law, you don't have any rights,' which is wrong. You have equal protection under the law," Caballero said.

If an immigrant is married to a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, the immigrant's spouse can sponsor a petition to give the immigrant legal status.

But in abusive situations, the spouse will often threaten to cancel immigration papers and report the immigrant or her family to authorities, said Seattle attorney Ann Benson, director of the Washington Defender Association's Immigration Project, a program to advance immigrants' rights.

"They're essentially held hostage in this marriage because of their immigration status," Benson said. "Their abusive spouses kept green cards from them to wield control."

However, experts say most immigrants don't know the 1994 Violence Against Women Act gave immigrant women whose abusive husbands are legal U.S. residents a way out of their situation.

The act allows immigrants who can prove they have been victims of domestic abuse and would otherwise be able to gain legal status the ability to self-petition for a green card.

In the 2004 fiscal year, 5,076 such petitions were approved nationwide, which was 76 percent of the petitions the government took action on. Since the beginning of the 2005 fiscal year in October, the government has approved at least 4,300 petitions.

When Congress renewed the act in 2000, it added a provision to let undocumented immigrants who were victims of various violent crimes, including domestic abuse, apply for temporary U-visas as long as they agree to help with criminal prosecutions.

No U-visa applications have been filed since the law was created because the government is still developing regulations for the visas, said U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services spokeswoman Sharon Rummery.

But instead of having the knowledge that would let them take advantage of immigration laws, experts say an unknown number of immigrant women live in fear.

That was the case with a woman interviewed by legal assistant Margot Mendelson for a 2004 article on battered illegal immigrants.

Even as police arrested her husband, the woman pre-

ferred to hide behind her house rather than face the authorities, according to Mendelson's article.

While her spouse was a legal U.S. resident and could easily petition for her immigration papers, the woman's status as an undocumented immigrant had her convinced she could be deported for contacting the police, according to the article.

The story of the woman, who was identified only by the alias Margarita, is representative of many battered immigrants, said Mendelson, who works in the San Francisco area.

"It's just this constant reinforcement that I am safe here and you are not," she said.

Most immigrants lack concrete resources or information about VAWA and do not know where to turn for help, said Cecilia Menjivar, an associate professor of sociology at Arizona State University.

Often, immigrants don't have access to phone numbers of agencies that could help them, either because they can't find the information in their language or don't know where to turn, Menjivar said.

"What is a woman going to do if she reports an abusive partner and has nowhere to go? She's not going to report it," she said.

Part of that is because there aren't many places that cater to different cultural backgrounds or even know how immigration laws apply to domestic abuse cases, especially in rural areas, Caballero said.

And when programs are available, few people know about them.

Phoenix immigration attorney Dori Zavala said hardly any of her clients know she can help them file a VAWA petition unless she determines the situation might fall under the statute and explains the law.

"They're guided a lot by what they hear in their community," Zavala said. "It would be good if there was more public knowledge about it."

Caballero agreed, saying most people who turn to Su Voz Vale hear about the program through word of mouth.

When police do get involved in domestic violence situations, it can be hit or miss whether an individual officer knows about VAWA, Hink said.

"It's uneven. There's some awareness at the administrative level. I don't think all the officers on the street are knowledgeable," Hink said.

Police departments including Phoenix, Yuma, Los Angeles, Denver and Houston don't track how many of the domestic violence calls they respond to involve illegal immigrants.

Los Angeles Police Lt. Paul Vernon said his department was more concerned with enforcing domestic violence laws than federal immigration statutes and didn't want to scare away immigrants who need help.

Los Angeles police give domestic violence victims a flier with resources they can contact, but Vernon said he didn't know if any of those agencies specifically deal with illegal immigrants.

Outside involvement got police involved in Maria's case 10 years into her marriage, Hink said. Maria's husband was driving drunk with the family in tow when Maria took his keys and jumped out at a stop sign. She ran into a nearby business seeking help and people inside called police, Hink said.

Police arrested Maria's husband that night. Shortly afterward, she met Hink.

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## NATIONAL



# Northwest farmers contend not enough labor to be picky

BY SHANNON DININNY  
Associated Press Writer

**WAPATO, Wash.** — The Gala apples clinging to the trees in John Verbrugge's orchards are ripe and ready to be picked, but the people plucking them from branches look vastly different than years past.

For the second year in a row, Verbrugge has hired farm workers from Thailand under a federal guest-worker program to help harvest his crop of apples, cherries, peaches and pears.

Up the road, 79-year-old Robert McMahan propped up a large red-lettered sign outside his fruit stand: "Apple Pickers Wanted." He's had no takers.

Farmers across the state this year are bemoaning a worker shortage they say makes their jobs — already precarious in some places due to drought — even more difficult. In Eastern Washington's Columbia River valley, an asparagus grower halted a second cutting in June after farm workers abandoned his fields to pick cherries for more money. Berry growers west of the Cascades also complained about a lack of workers.

Labor groups, however, call claims of a worker shortage bogus. Only the growers who refuse to pay good wages or treat workers well have trouble finding farm workers, they contend.

Worker shortages — like storm damage — can be difficult to assess, said Jim Hazen, executive director of the Washington State Horticultural Association.

"There are pockets of individual disasters. Is it an industry disaster?" Hazen said. "No. But for those folks who are hit by the hail storm, yes, it's a disaster for them."

In recent decades, farmers have come to rely on Mexican farm workers. But more of those workers are finding better jobs outside of agriculture. In California, farm groups complain that too many farm laborers have turned to construction and retail work. And a border crackdown since the terrorist attacks also has slowed the migration of workers — both legal and undocumented — from south of the border.

But it depends on your definition of a shortage, said Guadalupe Gamboa of Grupo Mexico, an advocacy group for farm workers. Unless farmers see 10 people looking for a job, they consider it a shortage, he said.

"They have become so used to an oversupply, that when they have to actually compete for workers, they consider that a shortage," Gamboa said. "There hasn't been any documentation of a shortage or any crops that haven't been picked."

Lali Menchaca, who also works for the state

WorkSource agency, agreed. The state has had no reports of crops withering on the trees, she said.

"Workers right now have a situation where they can pick and choose where they're going to work and demand more money, because there are less workers in some areas," Menchaca said.

For small farmers like McMahan, that can prove difficult.

"It's a struggle," said McMahan, who has owned his orchards since 1964. "I don't think it's been the shortage of help as much as people are looking for longer-term jobs."

Surrounded by larger orchards that can hire workers for weeks at a time, McMahan has had to offer higher wages to attract workers for jobs that only require a few days' work.

"I put that sign out this morning. Didn't get a soul," he said. "When you look at labor, this seems to be the worst year I've had."

On the flip side, Fortunato Tapio, 55, of Sunnyside was jobless for two weeks earlier this summer when he was laid off by the vineyard where he found long-term work.

"There used to be a lot of work," Tapio said through a translator. "In the last four or five years, we've had to really think twice before leaving the job because there's no guarantee that we'll find the next one."

To the dismay of Tapio and other Hispanic farm workers in the valley, Verbrugge has turned to the federal H-2A visa guest-worker program, which allows farmers to hire foreign workers if they can prove a shortage exists. Verbrugge hired about 30 workers from Thailand through a labor contractor last year, and requested an additional 90 this summer to harvest his large orchards.

Farm labor groups raised concerns that the new workers would be mistreated. Three Yakima Valley farm workers sued, claiming they were intentionally displaced by the Thai workers.

In addition, the state cited the contractor, Global Horizons of San Mateo, Calif., for violating state labor laws. The company has appealed.

Using the guest worker program is more expensive, because the farmer pays for the contractor to provide housing and transportation for the workers, Verbrugge said. But it offers what Verbrugge says he seeks most — a stable and legal work force.

"I have undocumented workers because I have no choice. You have to get your crop picked," Verbrugge said. "But it's wrong."

## Illegal immigrants are dying in record numbers in unforgiving desert

BY ARTHUR H. ROTSTEIN  
Associated Press Writer

**TUCSON, Ariz.** — A record 415 people have died trying to cross the border illegally from Mexico in the past 11 months — far higher than last year's total of 330 and surpassing the previous high mark of 383 set in 2000, a spokesman for U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Washington said.

Record numbers of deaths are being recorded in both Border Patrol sectors that cover Arizona and in south Texas, said spokesman Mario Villarreal. In Arizona, the 228 deaths during the 11 months outstripped previous annual records.

Some of the increase in numbers reflect a change in the way Tucson Border Patrol officials are counting the dead. In late June, they began including some bodies or remains found by other law enforcement agencies but not previously counted.

Even accounting for the change, however, Arizona recorded more deaths so far this year than in all of the 2004 fiscal year, said Border Patrol spokesman Luis Garza.

Garza attributed the increase to unprecedented heat and an eastward shift by smugglers to a more mountainous and treacherous stretch of desert east of the Baboquivari Mountains and the Tohono O'odham Indian reservation.

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## NATIONAL

# Season had big range fires, small timber blazes

CHRISTOPHER SMITH

Associated Press Writer

**BOISE, Idaho** — The number of acres charred by wildfire across the West this year is almost double the 10-year average, but this summer's forest fires have not been as big nor as devastating as those in past years.

Fire behavior experts say the apparent contradiction is due to the unusual moisture patterns in the region earlier this year, which favored big grass fires on the open range. Timber in the mountains got more

moisture than usual well into the summer, keeping forest fires small.

And fate has played a role.

"It's sort of like Swiss cheese. All the holes have not lined up at the same time," said Tom Wordell, a wildland fire analyst for the U.S. Forest Service and leader of the multiagency group of scientists and meteorologists that predicts fire danger around the nation.

"To get a big fire, you need high temperatures, low relative humidity, dry fuels and winds all aligned on the same day," said Wordell. "We haven't seen that much

this year, yet our overall acreage burned is much higher than in the past."

According to the National Interagency Fire Center, over 7.3 million acres — more than 11,000 square miles — have burned in the U.S. since May. About half of that was in Alaska, where large fires often are not fought aggressively if they pose no threat to people or structures.

The national total is more than a million acres ahead of the record fire season of 2000, and is nearly double the 4 million acres that burned on average through late August over the past decade.

But with the 2005 wildfire season two-thirds over, the high acreage figures belie the consensus of public land managers that this has been a relatively tame fire year. The number of fires is down — about 44,000 compared to the 10-year average of 62,000 — and the number of firefighters summoned to help suppress the blazes has been lower than in recent years.

Analysts say the primary reason for the higher-than-average fire acreage this year is huge range fires that burned in the Southwest and Great Basin, where a wet winter allowed fine grasses and vegetation to flourish. Those "flashy" fuels then dried and cured early in the dry spring, inviting the spread of range fires as summer approached.

"Earlier this season, when we knew we had large fine-fuel loading, one of the sage old firefighters said to me, 'Man, the fires are going to be in the deserts this year and not the mountains.' And that's been the case," said Brad Smith, a Texas Forest Service fire behavior analyst who represents state foresters on the national fire prediction panel.

By the end of August in the Great Basin — which includes western Utah, southern Idaho and much of Nevada — the number of acres burned this season was 250 percent of normal. That was an improvement from the end of July, when the amount of land burned in the Great Basin was five times normal.

Many of the range fires in the Great Basin and Southwest have been epic in size and speed. The Clover fire in late July in southwestern Idaho at one point was burning 500 acres an hour. It eventually blackened an area 35 miles wide and 10 miles across.

Despite their size, though, the range fires have frequently burned in areas far from civilization and have caused relatively little structural damage.

"I'm always cautious to downplay range fires, because if it's your ranch building or grazing allotment that got burned up it's pretty important," said Wordell, head of the National Predictive Services Group at the Interagency Fire Center in Boise. "But timber fires require a lot more people, equipment, time and money to put out, and so far even when

we've had lightning ignition, we didn't get the large fire initiation."

The primary reason for this year's lack of huge timber fires — the 100,000-plus acre-blazes that make national headlines — is the moisture retained by trees and foliage in the higher elevations of the Cascades, the Sierra Nevada and the Northern Rockies, captured during an unusually long, wet spring.

"We're just not seeing significant spread through the alpine zones" because of the moist fuels, said Jack Cohen, a research physical scientist for the U.S. Forest Service's fire sciences laboratory in Missoula, Mont. "The fire is abating as it burns in these areas."

While the slow spread of fires in alpine conifer forests has helped firefighters, it's been a disappointment to those who advocate wildland fire as a natural rejuvenator of the woods.

"You're just not getting much use out of wildland fire if the fires don't get very big," said Greg Aplet, a forest ecologist with The Wilderness Society in Denver. "Rocky Mountain National Park had a wildland fire that kept burning in the park, and every day they reported its status and were very proud of it. But it was basically just a pile of duff smoldering at the bottom of a tree for a week."

Between the moist timber in the high mountains and the fine dry grasses on the desert range lies the greatest potential for catastrophic blazes in the remainder of this season, fire analysts say.

Mid-elevation woodlands with a heavy buildup of dry, dead material on the forest floor mixed with open areas that have heavy grass and shrubs are yielding higher than average "energy release components" — a measure of the available energy that would be released in the flaming front of a fire.

"In the area that runs from Northern California through Central and Eastern Oregon on into Central Idaho, we are seeing energy release components that are setting records," said Wordell.

Eastern Washington's School fire, the season's worst wildfire thus far in terms of property loss, was in that mid-elevation zone where prairie, woodlands and agriculture fields are interspersed. It broke out Aug. 5 and burned nearly 50,000 acres and 109 houses before it was extinguished some two weeks later.

"With the School fire, you had so many structure ignite because they generally had continuous grasses right up to them," said Cohen, a fire physicist who studies how wildfire burns houses. "It wasn't that you had this big humongous fire. It was that at significant times during the fire, the intensity was high but the rates of spread were extremely high. And that's just very difficult to contain."

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## NATIONAL



# Alaskans rush to help hurricane victims

BY RACHEL D'ORO

Associated Press Writer

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** — One man is staging karaoke marathons. A nonprofit group is planning a bowling benefit. A couple is offering steamboat tours.

Thousands of miles from the Gulf Coast, Alaskans just can't do enough for victims of Hurricane Katrina, sharing their wallets, their resources and their prayers. Individuals, organizations, businesses, government agencies, the military: scores are joining the national response to the surreal devastation they're witnessing on their TV screens.

"What we're seeing is heart-wrenching and nobody who is human can look at that and not be moved to action," said Skot Pierson of Juneau. "I couldn't just sit and watch this and not do something. I don't think anyone with a heart could."

Pierson said he watched the early reports with tears streaming down his face. His brother and sister and their families in New Orleans were unaccounted for and he had to find an outlet for his grief and a way to reach out to survivors of the disaster.

Karaoke was the natural solution for Pierson, who hosts karaoke nights at local clubs. This time all funds would go to the American Red Cross of Alaska. After announcing his idea on a local radio station, he held a 10-hour marathon and several dozen singers stepped up to the mike, belting out tunes ranging from country to Sinatra. Altogether, an estimated 300 people showed up.

Pierson, whose family has since been located alive, collected \$1,103 at the fund-raiser Wednesday night. As a result of the event, donors contributed another \$4,000 or so directly to the local office of

the Red Cross, Pierson said.

"I feel like it's barely a drop in the bucket but I've helped and will continue to help," he said. "This may be the biggest thing I ever do."

Pierson is among the multitude of Alaskans rushing to help, Red Cross officials said. Alaska offices have been inundated with calls from people wanting to give money or their services. So far, about 45 Red Cross volunteers from around the state are heading to the Gulf Coast.

As for donations, no amount is too small, said George Briggs, director of the agency's Southeast Alaska branch in Juneau.

"There's no drop in the bucket when it comes to this kind of disaster," he said. "If everyone here just contributed a small dollar amount it adds up. Suddenly it's hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Hoping to add thousands to the Red Cross till, an Anchorage-based nonprofit organization is planning a bowling fundraiser on Thursday. Hope Community Resources, a support group for people with developmental disabilities, already is signing up folks willing to bowl for dollars at the 30-lane Center Bowl.

Each lane represents a \$500 sponsorship and up to five players. So the ultimate goal is to raise \$15,000, an amount organizers believe is attainable. For one thing, many Hope Community employees have friends and relatives in affected areas, said Michele Girault, one of the organizers of the event who is still waiting to hear from family in the Mississippi towns of Biloxi and Gulf Port.

"I think people are very overwhelmed by the extent of the tragedy," Girault said. "There's a sense of people wanting to be together to do something for the greater good instead of just writing a check."

Patty and John George of Juneau plan

to spend Sunday taking people on quick jaunts around the city's harbor in their small steamboat that was built at the turn of the century — the 20th century, John George quipped. They'll do the tours again next Sunday.

The couple hasn't set a price for the rides on the 30-foot Laurie Ellen. They'll let people decide how much to contribute for the relief effort.

"I have a good friend who was married three weeks ago in New Orleans," Patty George said. "His wife's entire family is from there and they're waiting for news from them. When something happens to your family you want to help and sometimes you can't. It made me feel like I wanted to do something here."

Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., operator of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, is matching employee donations dollar for dollar. The Anchorage-based company has agreed to go as high as \$2,000 per worker, said Alyeska spokesman Mike Heatwole.

"We just have a lot of people in the company who wanted to do something," he said. "A lot of employees have friends and family there and like everyone else it's hard not to be moved by what we're seeing there."

On Saturday, Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich announced a plan to identify potential housing for displaced Gulf residents, in response to a nationwide call by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In Fairbanks, a more personal search for shelter has been launched by Karen Garrity, a businesswoman, and Melodie Byrd, editor of the Northstar Weekly, a local publication. They're looking for households willing to take in hurricane victims and have posted a sign-up form on the weekly's Web site.

"This is just an obvious way to help,"

Garrity said. "I think newspapers throughout the U.S. have a perfect opportunity to offer a link on their Web sites to a form that interested host families can fill out."

The list is seemingly endless as far as other efforts taking shape around the state. They're not huge endeavors like those launched by the government, such as an Alaska Air National Guard rescue group from Kodiak Island, a Coast Guard C-130 crew from Anchorage and a statewide team of emergency response experts trained in dealing with disasters who are heading to afflicted areas.

But for many, even the tiniest action is better than doing nothing at all.

"My husband is from there, so there are roots there," said Cheryl Metiva, executive director of the Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce, which is collecting money, pillows, blankets, canned foods and other goods to be distributed by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce.

"This is a long-term commitment," Metiva said. "The victims are not going to bounce back right away."

At the Alaska State Fair in Palmer, booth operators are setting up their own Red Cross donation bins.

Cheryl Harkey, who runs the "Strictly Strawberries" stand, challenged food vendors at the fair to donate all tips collected on Saturday. Employees of the booth donating the most money will get free strawberry sundaes from her, said Harkey, whose thoughts these days are turning to her experience of the 9.2 magnitude Good Friday earthquake that struck Alaska in 1964.

"I know how devastating a natural disaster can be," she said about her response to Katrina. "I just felt that as fellow Americans it's the least we can do."

## A weary New Orleans team prepares for nomadic season

BY JANIE MCCAULEY

AP Sports Writer

**OAKLAND, Calif.** — The New Orleans Saints accept the fact they're in for a season unlike any other, one that will test their emotions, patience and resolve daily.

They realize they could be leading a vagabond existence all year, going from one hotel room to the next. But they're not about to start feeling sorry for themselves now considering the death and devastation thousands of their neighbors have faced this week.

With their city in shambles after one of the country's worst natural disasters, it will take months, if ever, for New Orleans to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina.

The Saints left the Bay Area after Thursday night's 13-6 loss to the Raiders in the teams' preseason finale and flew all night to San Antonio. It is there, at the Marriott Riverwalk, where the organization will locate for the foreseeable future.

Quarterback Aaron Brooks was hardly complaining. He was well aware how much worse it was for those back in New Orleans.

"This just a nightmare for anyone," he said. "You never want to wish this on anyone. This is ludicrous, it's crazy. You have to overcome it. It's tough because there are going to be a lot of lives lost. There are going to be a lot of hard feelings from it all, but you've got to have faith and you've got to be strong."

The Saints got the weekend off to

reunite with family members all over the country before returning to work Monday, when they will begin a normal in-season practice schedule and preparations for their season opener Sept. 11 at Carolina.

But their season will be anything but normal. On Friday, NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue said the Saints will play their home opener the following week against the New York Giants at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. It still hasn't been decided when the game would be played.

They almost certainly won't play a game in New Orleans this season.

Receiver Joe Horn vowed to spend Friday in Houston helping a refugee family with everything from new clothes, to basic personal supplies, to a hot meal. Other members of the Saints clearly needed a mental break from it all, which seemed impossible.

"First hand, it's tragic," safety Steve Gleason said. "I think a lot of guys wanted to go back a couple days ago and just help, all we wanted to do was help somehow. Our opportunity is going to come when we can help New Orleans. Our job is to bring some joy to our city now that it is dispersed across the country."

Gleason's girlfriend's family lost its restaurant supply company that had been around for almost a century. Now, the future is bleak.

And Gleason hasn't heard from seven teenagers who are part of his foundation. His organization takes students from

inner-city high schools and teaches them to interview, write and take photos in order to produce a book about their neighborhood and all the people who make it run.

He hopes it's just because of the trouble everyone is having getting through by phone.

"This is going to be a hard year," coach Jim Haslett said. "We're going to be gypsies. We don't know where we're going to live, where we're going to stay, where we're going to be playing. We'll deal with everything. We'll be fine."

Team support staff looked forward to the arrival of a truck to the team hotel in San Antonio carrying as many supplies as could be salvaged from franchise headquarters in what was the Big Easy: computers, media guides, pens, and other equipment. Not to mention scouting reports on upcoming opponents, as well as on players who could become available.

The Saints accomplished one thing Thursday on the field: they limited the Raiders to 61 yards rushing, even if Oakland's starters only played one series.

"As a football team, we're not looking for any handouts," said Brooks, who was among several regulars who got the night off. "We know it's going to be difficult, we know it's going to be hard. We're going to be fine and we're not going to use this as a crutch and say, 'Feel sorry for us and let us win this football game.' We're going to remain true to ourselves, stay as one as a football team."

The Saints know that's what the fans want. About 25,000 people turned out Thursday to watch the Saints on TV in the Houston Astrodome, which is expected to be the temporary home to thousands of refugees for months.

"The key thing is they need to know we're behind them, and I truly believe they feel that," Brooks said. "Second of all, we want to go out there and shed a lot of blood, sweat and tears. We feel like that is our civic duty."

Even the Raiders had a hard time staying focused as they prepared to open the season with a nationally televised game at Super Bowl champion New England next Thursday.

"It's just crazy," Oakland's Chris Carr said. "This is worse than 9-11, with everything that's going on with that."

The Saints, meanwhile, are bracing for uncertainty.

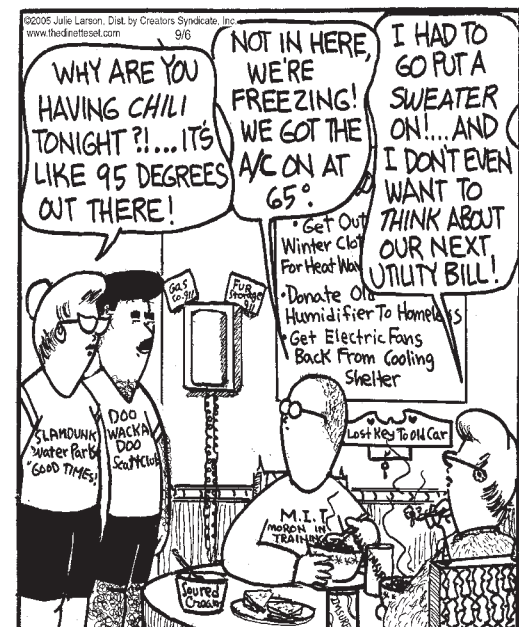
"I think we pretty much know it's going to be a long road," Gleason said. "Obviously, we don't really have a home. We're one part of New Orleans that is able to continue to do the things we can do. If there's any hope we can bring, any enjoyment we can bring to the people of New Orleans, that's what we want to be."

"There are going to be ups and downs all year. No matter how tough and frustrating it is for us ... it doesn't even compare to what these New Orleans natives are going through. It's our city. We see this as our opportunity to shine on New Orleans."

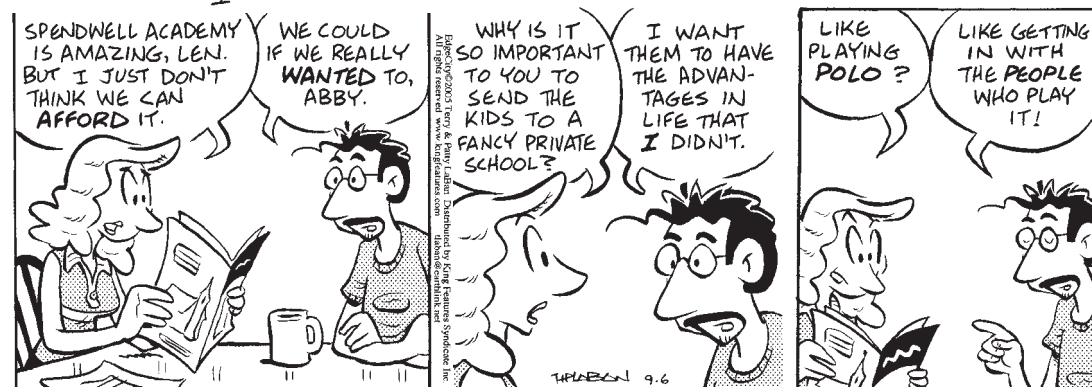


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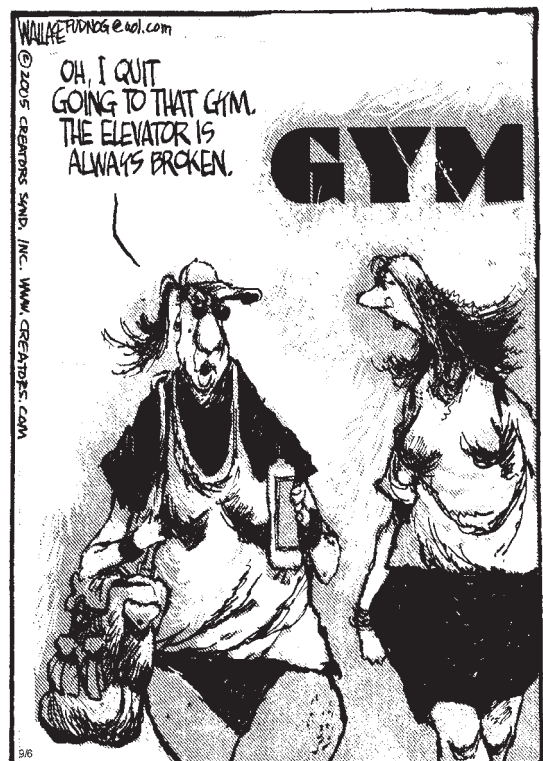


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7 Polk's successor  
8 Burger topper  
9 Threw a party  
11 Horde  
14 "It's a Wonderful Life" co-star  
19 Gives off  
20 Heaps  
24 Gets smarter  
25 Home for le roi  
26 Threat words  
27 Suppress  
29 Weak  
30 Shirt part  
33 Tennis star  
35 Household critters  
38 Agent, for short  
39 Clumsy one

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