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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

Volume 8 Issue 262

Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

TOUGH TIMES AT TRACK
SEE PAGE 16

THE END OF SUMMER ISSUE



GOOD HANDS

Morgan Genser *news@smdp.com*

Santa Monica College's James Banks hauls in a pass against Orange Coast College at Corsair Field on Saturday night. The SMC Corsairs lost the season opener, 28-44. The team is 0-1 on the season.

City Hall gets new parking manager

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

DOWNTOWN The cars are still going in and out, the attendants are collecting fares from drivers as usual, but there's something different about the 29 public parking facilities in Santa Monica.

That's because of a recent change in the management of all the city-owned garages, which are now run by Nashville-based Central Parking System after City Hall's contract with its operator of five years, Parking Concepts Inc., ended this summer.

While little appears to be different on surface, the new management company said it's looking to institute a few changes meant to increase efficiency.

These changes include introducing more credit card usage from the pay stations, simplifying the payment process and providing more extensive training for all employees in order to improve customer service. Jerry Skillett, the vice president of Central Parking, said that the equipment upgrading has already commenced.

"Those garages are real important to all the residents and everybody who visit the city of Santa Monica and so making sure that they're clean and secure and people can get in and out of the facilities quickly is real important because they help support all the area businesses," he said.

Skillett said he is also working on relations with the Bayside District Corp., a private/public management company in Downtown, where it concerns the maintenance of the garages. Bayside recently began heavy duty cleaning of the parking garages, starting with Structure 4, using revenue from a property-based assessment.

City Hall opened the bidding process to find a manager for its network of parking garages late last year, receiving responses from five different firms, including PCI. Three firms were interviewed in the spring and one was later approved by the City Council.

Central Parking System's contract will run for three years with two one-year

SEE **PARKING** PAGE 10

Bluffs project to finally begin

Editor's note: This story is part of an ongoing series that tracks the city's expenditures appearing on upcoming Santa Monica City Council consent agendas. Consent agenda items are routinely passed by the City Council with little or no discussion from elected officials or the public. However, many of the items have been part of public discussion in the past.

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL The long-awaited reinforcement of the Palisades Bluff could soon begin.

The City Council tonight is expected to approve two construction services contracts for the Palisades Bluffs Stabilization Project, which will involve installing a series of horizontal drains to remove groundwater that accumulates behind the bluffs, hoping to minimize landslides as a result.

The contracts are part of an estimated $5.8 million spending package that will come before the council.

The pair of deals for the bluffs project will go to Jensen Drilling Company for $1.9 million and Vanir Construction Management for approximately $428,000. About 80 percent of the project will be federally funded with the remainder coming from a local match of Redevelopment Agency money.

An estimated 82 horizontal drains will be constructed and installed near the base of the bluffs adjacent to Pacific Coast Highway and north of the California Incline.

ICE SKATING BACK FOR ANOTHER SEASON

A local holiday favorite will return next month when the Bayside District Corp. (BDC) plans to open its outdoor skating rink for a third straight season.

The City Council tonight is expected to authorize City Manager Lamont Ewell to negotiate a license agreement with Bayside for both 1324 and 1326 Fifth St., which has been the site of the skating rink since its inaugural season in 2007.

The proposed lease agreement will run from Oct. 1 through Feb. 15, 2010, during which the time the rink will be open to the public from Oct. 30 to Jan. 18.

Approximately 56,000 paid skaters came to the rink last season. The paid attendance

SEE **CONSENT** PAGE 11



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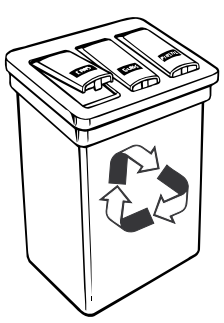
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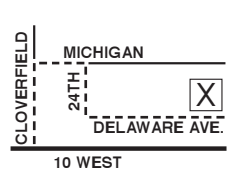
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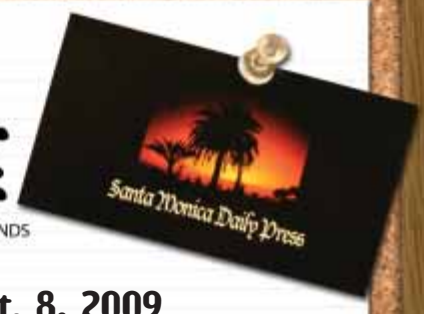
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WHAT'S UP
WESTSIDE
OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2009

Pier in pictures
First United Methodist Church
1008 11th St., 9 a.m. — 11:30 a.m.
The First United Methodist Church presents a beautiful, free photo exhibit by church member Allan Walker to coincide with the Santa Monica Pier's 100th anniversary. The exhibit features contemporary images of the famous structure. This exhibit will be open daily through Sept. 9. For more information, call (310) 393-8258.

Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2009

100 years of the pier
Santa Monica Pier, 6 p.m. — 9:15 p.m.
Come celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Santa Monica Pier. Enjoy the grand re-opening complete with live music, ribbon-cutting festivities and a breathtaking fire-works show. Visit www.santamonicapier.org for more information.

Changes with age
Santa Monica Family YMCA
1332 Sixth St., noon — 1 p.m.
Discuss normal physiological and mental changes in the body as one ages and get suggestions on how to live to your optimal level of functioning. The speaker is Estee Beinstock. Cost and parking underground are free. Picture ID is required for entrance. Call (310) 393-2721 ext. 129 for more information.

Ballroom by the bay
Santa Monica Bay Women's Club
1210 Fourth Street., 7 p.m. — 11 p.m.
Enjoy free dance lessons, followed by dancing on the club's 3,000-square-foot floor. Waltz, foxtrot, swing, hustle and more — no partner necessary. Admission is $10. Call (310) 487-0911 for more information.

LeTip Business Referral Club
Best Western Hotel meeting rooms
Santa Monica Blvd. and 19th St., 7 a.m. — 8:30 a.m.
Business owners and professionals meet each Wednesday morning to share tips or referrals to help one another grow their businesses. Come at 7 a.m. for breakfast. First visit is free. Call (310) 920-9649 for more information.

Back to the fair
Pomona Fairplex
1101 W. McKinley Ave., 10 a.m. — 11:30 p.m.
The L.A. County Fair opens Labor Day weekend and offers visitors an endless assortment of new exhibits and entertainment possibilities. With the state of the economy the fair is a great value with admission that includes a ton of fun activities such as animated dinosaurs, the Extreme Canine Stunt Dog Show at Bark Park, pig races and learning about rainforests and how to adopt a more eco-friendly lifestyle. Families can also visit magical FairView Farms to see animals, taste organic foods, try their hands at cow and goat milking, as well as witness the birth of baby animals and enjoy fire-works. Call (909) 623-3111 for more information or visit www.lacountyfair.com.

Thursday, Sept. 10, 2009

Santa Monica Laughter Club
Shakti's Elements
717 Broadway, 11 a.m. — noon
Come join the laughter club every Thursday and laugh your socks off. This form of body-mind exercise is for all ages and fitness levels. Kim Selbert leads the laughter club and is a certified laughter yoga leader. Cost is $10. Call (310) 849-4642 for more information or visit www.kimselbert.com.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.





CHEESE!

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Mikhail Baryshnikov poses for pictures after his performance at The Broad Stage on Friday.

What will stand at WTC site?

JENNIFER PELTZ,
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK The five skyscrapers were all supposed to rise by early next decade to replace the ravaged World Trade Center, with the city's tallest towers set in a spiral evoking the Statue of Liberty's torch.

They would frame a massive memorial in a tree-filled park, plus a theater and a transportation hub with uplifted wings — one of several symbols intended to defy the terrorists who destroyed the 16-acre site in under two hours.

Standing on the site now — a multi-level labyrinth of concrete and steel, from the entrance resembling the rooftops of an underground city — the sweeping design unveiled 6Ω years ago still hasn't materialized.

And while the most symbolic pieces of the puzzle at ground zero are taking shape, it's become increasingly clear that the grand scheme will take decades to be fully completed, if it ever is at all.

Vickie Cooper had mixed feelings as she peered through a fence at the site's stark northeast corner, a spot reserved for a skyscraper now mired in arbitration over its financing.

Its history is "too sad to even really think about progress," said the 48-year-old Austin, Texas, insurance worker. But "I am a little surprised — I thought there'd be something built there."

When will there be? As the eighth anniversary of the 2001 terrorist attacks approaches, there's no firm due date for that office tower or two others supposed to help line the eastern side of the site; only one is under construction.

Developer Larry Silverstein has gone to an arbitrator to renegotiate his lease with the site's government owner after months of fruitless negotiations. An analysis done for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey this spring projected there might be no market for Silverstein's third tower until 2030.

The fifth tower in the spiral is rarely discussed as viable. The spot reserved for it is still covered by a skyscraper contaminated with toxic debris from the attacks, its dismantling slowed after a 2007 blaze killed two firefighters. There's no finished design or money and little public pressure for the performing arts center.

A poll last month found that more than half of New York City voters believe the rebuilding is going badly. More than 60 percent don't believe the highest-priority projects — the 1,776-foot Freedom Tower and the Sept. 11 memorial — will be finished by announced deadlines. The Quinnipiac University poll of 1,290 voters had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2.7 percentage points.

The doubts don't surprise Port Authority Executive Director Chris Ward.

"The only way you could cure that skepticism is to deliver on the things we are now delivering on," he said this week as roughly 1,000 workers labored on the site.

The Freedom Tower's frame is several stories above street level. Work has begun on one Silverstein tower and continues on underground elements of the $3.2 billion transit hub. The memorial pools' outline and plaza — some built from a pit 70 feet below ground to street level — have filled in a swath of the site.

"It's not a pit," Ward said. "Now, it's a sense of rebirth."

Daniel Libeskind's master design was chosen in early 2003 amid an atmosphere of unfettered possibility. Officials praised the plan's bold symbolism and its vision of a bustling business district enhanced by shops, restaurants and arts that repair the broken skyline.

Public health care option a blurry proposition

RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON The Obama administration's bottom line on a government health insurance option blurred Sunday as White House officials stressed support but stopped short of calling it a must-have part of an overhaul.

As President Barack Obama prepares for a Wednesday night speech to Congress in a risky bid to salvage his top domestic priority, no other issue is so highly charged. Obama's liberal supporters consider the proposal for a public plan to compete with private insurers do-or-die. Republicans say it's unacceptable. It's doubtful the public plan can pass the Senate.

White House political adviser David Axelrod said Obama is "not walking away" from a public plan. But asked if the president would veto a bill that came to him without the option, Axelrod declined to answer.

The president "believes it should be in the plan, and he expects to be in the plan, and that's our position," Axelrod told The Associated Press.

Asked if that means a public plan has to be in the bill for Obama to sign it, Axelrod responded: "I'm not going to deal in hypotheticals. ... He believes it's important."

The biggest challenge Obama faces in his prime-time address is to take ownership of health care legislation that until now has been shaped by political conflicts in Congress. Lawmakers return this week from a summer break that saw eroding public support for an overhaul and contentious town hall meetings in their districts.

The idea of a public plan has become a symbol for the reach of government in a revamped health care system. Supporters say it would give workers and their families similarly secure benefits as older people now get through Medicare.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Born out of necessity?

Editor :

What I'm wondering is this: The Exposition Light Rail Line Phase 1 between USC and Culver City will open years before the line is ready in Santa Monica. In the meantime, where will those trains be maintained? Why can't the Expo Line, once it reaches Santa Monica six or seven years after the first phase opens, continue using their original maintenance yard?

Or will the Expo Line trains run for those first-phase years without being washed or repaired? (Of course not.)

In other words, is the Metro plan for the Santa Monica maintenance yard – which will cause all sorts of problems for nearby residents – a "want" rather than a "need?"

Mark Shepherd
Santa Monica

121: one to one ADN: any day now AFAIK: as far as I know AFK: away from keyboard **A/S/L: age, sex, location** B4: before B4N: bye for now BAK: back at the keyboard BBIAB: be back in a bit BBL: be back later BBN: bye bye now BBS: be back soon BEG: big evil grin **BF: boyfriend** BFN: bye for now BG: big grin BL: belly laughing BMTIPG: brilliant minds think in parallel gutters BRB: be right back BTA: but then again BTW: by the way BWL: bursting with laughter BWTHDIK: but what the heck do I know C&G: chuckle & grin CID: crying in disgrace CNP: continued (in my) next post CP: chat post CRBT: crying real big tears CSG: chuckle, snicker, grin CU: see you CUL: see you later CYO: see you online DBAU: doing business as usual DIKU: do I know you? DL: dead link DLTBBB: don't let the bed bugs bite DQMOT: don't quote me on this EG: evil grin EMFBI: excuse me for butting in EMSG: email message EOT: end of thread F2F: face to face FC: fingers crossed FISH: first in, still here FMTYEWTK: far more than you ever wanted to know FOMCL: falling off my chair laughing FTBOMH: from the bottom of my heart FUD: fear, uncertainty, and doubt FWIW: for what it's worth G2G: got to go G: grin GA: go ahead GAL: get a life GD&R: grinning, ducking, and running GF: girlfriend GFN: gone for now GIWIST: gee, I wish I'd said that GMBO: giggling my butt off GMTA: great minds think alike GOL: giggling out loud GTRM: going to read mail GTSY: glad to see you H&K: hug and kiss HAGN: have a good night **HDOP: help delete online predators** HHIS: hanging head in shame HTH: hope this helps HUB: head up butt IAC: in any case IANAL: I am not a lawyer (but) IC: I see IDK: I don't know IHA: I hate acronyms IIRC: if I remember correctly ILU: I love you IM: instant message IMHO: in my humble opinion IMNSHO: in my not so humble opinion IMO: in my opinion IOW: in other words IPN: I'm posting naked IRL: in real life IWALU: I will always love you IYSWIM: if you see what I mean JIC: just in case JK: just kidding JMO: just my opinion JTLYK: just to let you know K: okay KIT: keep in touch KOC: kiss on cheek KOL: kiss on lips KOTC: kiss on the cheek KWIM: know what I mean? L8R: later LD: later, dude LDR: long distance relationship LLTA: lots and lots of thunderous applause **LMIRL: let's meet in real life** LMSO: laughing my socks off LOL: laughing out loud LSHMBB: laughing so hard my belly is bouncing LTM: laugh to myself LTNS: long time, no see LTR: long-term relationship LULAB: love you like a brother **LULAS: love you like a sister** LUWAMH: love you with all my heart LY: love you M/F: male or female MOSS: member of same sex MOTOS: member of the opposite sex MSG: message MTF: more to follow MUSM: miss you so much NADT: not a darn thing NIFOC: naked in front of computer NP: no problem NRN: no reply necessary OIC: oh I see **OLL: online love** OM: old man OTF: off the floor OTOH: on the other hand OTTOMH: off the top of my head P2P: peer to peer PDA: public display of affection PEBCAK: problem exists between chair and keyboard PLZ: please PM: private message PMFJIB: pardon me for jumping in but POAHF: put on a happy face **POS: parent over shoulder** PU: that stinks QT: cutie RL: real life ROTFL: rolling on the floor laughing RPG: role playing games RSN: real soon now S4L: spam for life SETE: smiling ear to ear SHCOON: shoot hot coffee out of nose SHID: slaps head in disgust SF: surfer friendly SNERT: snot nosed egotistical rude teenager SO: significant other SOMY: sick of me yet? SOT: short of time STW: search the web SWAK: sealed with a kiss SWL: screaming with laughter SYS: see you soon TA: thanks again TCOB: taking care of business TCOY: take care of yourself TIA: thanks in advance TILII: tell it like it is TMI: too much information TOY: thinking of you TTYL: talk to you later UW: you're welcome WB: welcome back WFM: works for me WIBNI: wouldn't it be nice if **WTGP: want to go private?** WTG: way to go WU: what's up WUF: where are you from? YBS: you'll be sorry YL: young lady YM: young man

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Back to Nature

Reese Halter

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Protecting the American chestnut

A CENTURY AGO THE MOST DOMINANT TREE in the U.S., the American chestnut, towered over the land and ruled the East Coast forests from Georgia to Maine. Yet in as short a time as the span of a human life this majestic tree has not only disappeared, it has in many cases been forgotten.

Once upon a time, chestnuts grew all over North America and Eurasia, which was then joined to a supercontinent called Laurasia. Once Laurasia broke apart, seven species of chestnuts developed: Chinese, European, Japanese, dwarf Chinese, Chinese chinquapin, American chestnut and Allengheny chinquapin.

The trees belong to the genus Castanea and are a member of the beech family, which flourishes in the temperate zones across the northern hemisphere.

All species bear nuts that are high in fiber, protein, vitamin C and carbohydrates, while low in calories and fat.

All chestnuts have root systems that are able to regenerate new trunks; coppicing, as it is called, is a potent form of resilience against natural disturbances including landslides and flooding.

The native range of tall American chestnuts once spanned over 220 million acres as far west as Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee. Their dominance lead to 1,094 places in the U.S. with chestnut in their name.

The American chestnut's fruit was the sweetest of all of the species. The nuts are produced prodigiously, annually, with a single tree easily producing as many as 6,000 nuts. Those nuts fed bears, elk, squirrels, deer, raccoons, mice, wild turkeys — perhaps as many as 10 million, and supported enormous flocks of passenger pigeons.

Native Americans relished the chestnuts, using them for food as well as medicine, while families in the Southern Appalachians the 18th and 19th centuries depended heavily upon the chestnut crop for food and used it as a resource to trade for all other necessities.

The wood was even-grained, sandy colored and strong. By 1909, 600 million board feet of chestnut was cut annually. And by 1915, two-thirds of the tannic acid produced in the U.S. came from chestnut wood and bark.

Yet in the summer of 1904 the stately chestnuts at the New York Zoological Park began mysteriously to die.

The trees exhibited peppering of sun-colored spots, sunken patches of bark high over-head, handfuls of pale or withered leaves and lots of dying branches.

By the spring of 1905 every chestnut tree in the New York Zoological Park was infected.

Dr. William Murrill, a mycologist from Cornell University, discovered the life cycle of the fungus Cryphonectria parasitica or the chestnut blight. The fungus encircles the limbs or trunk and girdles or cuts-off the food and water supply. Within two or three years it kills a mature tree.

The blight likely came from a Japanese chestnut imported in the late 19th century, as the U.S. did not have a national quarantine system until 1912. While both Japanese and Chinese chestnuts were immune to the fungus, it was lethal for the American tree.

By 1911, Pennsylvania had mounted an all out campaign to eradicate the blight, but it was futile as the spores spread far and wide with even the slightest breeze.

In 1915 another imported destructive fungus Phytophethora cinnamomi attacked the roots of the American chestnuts.

By 1925 the chestnut blight had advanced deep into North Carolina, moving at as fast as 42 miles per year—lightening speed for a fungus.

At the height of the pandemic the U.S. Forest Service urged lumberman and landowners to cut down all of chestnut trees, dead or alive. How many resilient American chestnut trees were lost this way is anyone's guess.

By 1943 some four billion American chestnut trees were dead, roughly enough to cover Yellowstone National Park 1,800 times over.

Today only about 300 resilient mature American chestnut trees remain as the species teeters on the edge of extinction.

Since the 1920s scientists have been attempting to breed Chinese and American chestnuts utilizing the Chinese genetic resistance to the fungus, while others are trying to develop a strain of fungus that attacks itself but not the tree. A third strategy that has been considered is using biotechnology to recombine the American chestnut genetics to provide resistance against the blight.

Even if these intrepid tree scientists succeed, reintroducing a species back into the wild is not without its challenges or its risks. Much of the basic ecology of the American chestnut is unrecorded and how it might cope with wildfire is speculative.

Yet in an era where humans are destroying 50,000 species a year—one every 10 minutes—re-establishing the American chestnut offers hope for making a difference as well as the opportunity to restore a magnificent ecosystem.

DR. REESE HALTER is a public speaker, conservation biologist and founder of the international conservation institute Global Forest Science. His latest book is "The Incomparable Honey Bee," Rocky Mountain Books. He can be contacted through www.DrReese.com.

MUSM: miss you so much
BF: boyfriend
OLL: online love
POS: parent over shoulder
WTGP: want to go private?
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California's solid colleges

BY JOHN ZMIRAK
Special to the Daily Press

Each year, the *U.S. News and World Report* guide to U.S. schools gives a few days of glamour to academia. PR departments of colleges note with pride that their college is "moving up" in the rankings. What too few parents and prospective college students understand is how distant these rankings are from reality.

The largest single factor in ranking a college at *U.S. News* is how well it does on surveys completed by the staff at other schools. A full 25 percent of each college's score comes from a popularity contest.

The next largest criterion is how much each school spends per student. The ability to attract big-name professors would matter much more if they were mostly required to teach — but it's precisely at big-name schools that tenure is awarded mostly on the basis of academic publishing, not classroom time. In the humanities, this means that an English professor makes his bones by completing this year's 4,000th essay on Faulkner — probably through some quirky ideological lens, since he has to find something original to say. (The average scholarly book published in the humanities, according to a recent report by Emory Professor Mark Bauerlain, sells a total of 300 copies.) At Stanford University, ranked no. 4 in its category by *U.S. News* this year, the "discussion sections" where students actually get to discuss the works they're reading are led almost exclusively by graduate students who do the grading (instead of professors). It's the same at most elite universities in America; professors get up and lecture, then spend most of their time doing research, far from students.

The higher a teacher at many high-ranked colleges rises — which theoretically means, the better he is — the fewer classes he typically has to teach, to free him up more time for (you guessed it) research. Lighter course loads are the reward for rising in the ranks. This makes academia unlike any other profession; partners at law practices, accounting firms, you name it, typically work harder and longer at the core mission of their business than lower-level employees. It's only in academia where teaching — the heart of the enterprise — is treated almost as a punishment, or a hurdle one needs to clear.

Students are given far too much latitude by most leading schools to choose their courses, with little guidance requiring them to take foundational classes in Western history and civilization, classical philosophy, great works of English literature, and even U.S. history. The solid core curricula that lay a common groundwork which every student, regardless of major, had to master, are sadly gone at most colleges. For instance, at Occidental College, President Obama's alma mater, students can fulfill their "distributional requirements" in humanities with any of approximately 340 courses (1,360 units) in the humanities, social sciences, and fine arts; recent options ranged from "Cervantes and the Renaissance" and "Early Christian and Medieval Art" to "Critical Race Theory" and "Rastafari, Reggae and the African Diaspora." A student could easily avoid any classes covering Europe or even the United States. Is that really helpful for graduates, regardless of their cultural origins?

Politicized courses and politicizing professors also proliferate. At UC Berkeley, some choice offerings in recent years have included "Geographies of Race and Gender," "Transnational Feminisms," "Identities across Difference," "Alternate Sexualities in a Transnational World," and "Queer Visual Culture." What isn't political is often trivial. Other courses at the school have included "Italian Cooking," "Superman as American Mythology," "The Simpsons and Philosophy," "Exploring the Realm of Flirting," "History of Fencing," and "Profiling Serial Killers in the U.S."

There are very solid colleges in California that rise above the trendy and the tendentious. Deep Springs College, in Bishop, Ca., is a small, politically progressive academy located near Death Valley. Its tiny (all-male) student body engages in intensive seminars on serious subjects chosen by high-minded, ambitious undergrads — who work the school's cattle farm in return for free tuition. Caltech in Pasadena offers one of the most solid preparations for future scientists anywhere in the world. Biola University, an Evangelical Christian school in Los Angeles, offers a solid liberal arts preparation, and lively programs in the arts; a recent graduate was Scott Derrickson, who co-wrote and directed the sophisticated 2005 thriller The Exorcism of Emily Rose. Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula has one of the most rigorous and complete college curricula in America — leading students through the Great Books from the ancient world up through the present.

The key to finding the right school is to look up what foundational classes it mandates, check its student/faculty ratio (the lower the better), ask a professor how much teaching is relegated to graduate students, and do some digging to make sure that it offers an atmosphere of free, open debate. Given the skyrocketing cost of tuition, you should demand nothing less.

JOHN ZMIRAK, Ph.D., is editor of "Choosing the Right College: The Whole Truth About America's Top Schools" (ISI Books) and Collegeguide.org.

The Q Line

Rockets red glare

The Santa Monica Pier will celebrate its centennial this week with a fireworks display that some studies indicate may be harmful to the water quality of Santa Monica Bay.

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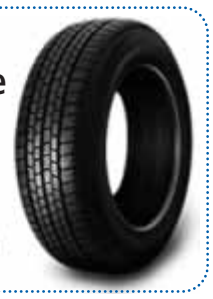
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Child-support reduction requests on the rise

MEGAN K. SCOTT
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK As the owner of a successful acupuncture clinic in a wealthy Washington suburb, David Vandenberg never had any problems making a $433 monthly child support payment.

Until last year, when his business faltered and he went on unemployment. Unable to find another job, the 50-year-old Vandenberg moved to Arkansas to live with his parents. Now they're paying the child support for him.

"I felt I didn't have any recourse," said Vandenberg, who has a 12-year-old daughter and tried unsuccessfully for a court-approved reduction in his child support payments. After child support, "I get $100 a month in unemployment."

With the economic downturn hitting men harder than women — 9.8 versus 7.5 percent unemployment — and men comprising most noncustodial parents, many dads are finding themselves struggling to make child support payments that were based on incomes they no longer earn.

In a survey of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers earlier this year, 39 percent of the members reported an increase in modifications being made to child support payments, and 42 percent cited a rise in the number of changes made to alimony.

"You have all these guys losing their jobs, having to take lower paying jobs or part-time work and they are flooding the courts to get downward modifications," said Glenn Sacks, executive director of Fathers & Families, which advocates for reform of the family court system. "The courts have improved to a degree, but they move much too slowly."

The Maryland Child Support Enforcement Administration has seen an 18 percent increase over the last year in requests for child support modifications, said Paula Tolson, spokeswoman for the state Department of Human Resources.

In Prince George's County, requests have tripled over the past 1 1/2 years. While historically requests have come from custodial parents who need an increase in support, many are now coming from noncustodial parents seeking a reduction, according to Joan Kennedy, director of the county's Office of Child Support Enforcement.

Many times the custodial parent feels the hit from a downward modification. Sometimes she has experienced her own income loss.

Delaine Moore, a separated stay-at-home mom of three in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, said there have been fewer trips to the movies and McDonald's and more activities at home since her ex's oil field drilling work came to a halt in March. Her child support and spousal payments dropped from $6,500 a month to nothing. He has since picked up a part-time job earning minimum wage but is only paying $450 a month.

Moore, who blogs about motherhood, divorce and infidelity, said her parents are paying her mortgage and she had money saved, but she is considering turning her home into a day care to earn money. If things haven't improved by Christmas, she may move in with her parents.

"I think my children are still feeling very loved and most importantly I'm here for them," she said. But it's been stressful. "I don't know what's going to happen."

Child support laws vary from state to state, but the amount is primarily based on the noncustodial parent's income. Other factors include how many children there are, how much time the children spend with each parent and the custodial parent's income.

In New York, a noncustodial parent making less than $80,000 pays 17 percent — less taxes — for one child, 25 percent for two children and 29 percent for three children, plus add-ons such as child care, medical expenses and extracurricular activities. But a reduction in income is not automatic grounds for a modification, said Eyal Talassazan, a divorce attorney in Great Neck, N.Y. Courts are often reluctant to disrupt children's lives.

Family court judge Patricia Macias of El Paso, Texas, said she considers whether the parent is unemployed or underemployed by choice, is actively seeking another job and can retain a job commensurate with their education and skills. Perhaps the person has assets that can be liquidated, she said.

"I believe that family court judges as a general rule are very empathetic to the economic situation," said Macias, immediate past president of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. "But our primary focus is what the kids need. So that it's not good enough to say, 'Judge, you understand. We're in hard economic times.' We all understand but what extra effort are you making now?"

In some ways, the economy has made ex-spouses more willing to work things out on their own, said Ike Vanden Eykel of Koons, Fuller, Vanden Eykel & Robertson, a law firm with four locations in North Texas. Parents who go that route still need to get the court order changed, he said.

Samantha Land, 39, of Huntington Beach, Calif., agreed to a 50 percent reduction in $3,700 a month for her 8-year-old son.

"I don't need that much money and his income was getting reduced," said Land, who works as an esthetician, a nonmedical skin care specialist, and a transcriptionist. "The funny thing is because I did that, and because I have been more agreeable he has been more willing to help me when I need help."

Jeremy Lavine, 29, of Tampa, Fla., is keeping his two kids half the time so he is not paying the full support amount. He said he inquired about a modification more than a year ago, but the Florida Department of Children and Families told him his industry was going to bounce back.

Lavine's child support payment is still $1,100 a month based on a $4,500 a month income, though he now makes only $1,500 a month repairing jet skis. He and his ex-wife are going to mediation to get the changes to custody and child support on the books.

But as everyone knows, divorce can be contentious. Many people don't believe what their ex-spouses tell them when it comes to finances. Specialists recommend that parents work in the best interest of the children.

"Always keep talking," said Vanden Eykel. "Reach an accord. These are unprecedented times. It takes a real level of cooperation to get through it."

Tweens need their own time

ANNE WALLACE ALLEN
For The Associated Press

When we chose our house after moving to Boise in 2005, we definitely didn't go on curb appeal. Built in 1893, the house was clad in fleshtone cedar shingles, and the bathroom was so small that even the dog could hardly turn around in it.

Yet the house had one feature we loved: It was set in a neighborhood full of scooters, bicycles, swingsets, and other signs that children lived all around.

We were looking for a place where the kids could roam freely, as so many parenting books, blogs, and experts assure us kids don't get to do nowadays. And in our block, we found it.

The kids, now 11 and 9, swing on a tree swing three doors down. They disappear for hours into another neighbor's house, emerging with strange crafts they've created from scraps of wood in the basement.

This week, my daughter and four neighborhood friends spent days in our living room sewing stuffed animals out of mismatched socks, filling them with rice and beans, and selling them to raise money for the Make-A-Wish foundation.

It seems that whenever I talk to experts on childhood — be they psychologists, school principals or other parents — they bemoan the way that childhood has been taken up by structured activities. They talk about our children's over-scheduled, high-pressure lives.

Yet I know — or see — many people making a conscious effort to resist that trend. And despite the pressure we feel to help our kids succeed at sports, at music, and at school, many people manage to make room for play in their kids' lives.

"We have a swing next door, we have scooters, we have bikes, we have skateboards," said Shaun Hammersmark, a Boise landscape designer who works at home and has made a conscious effort to create an environment where her kids, ages 5 and 11, and others can play.

The experts tell us that letting kids play, instead of organizing things for them to do, helps them socially, physically and even academically. Play supposedly promotes creativity and enhances problem-solving skills.

The American Academy of Pediatrics says unstructured playtime helps children learn to share, to conquer their fears, to adjust to new situations, and to stick up for themselves. In a 2007 report, the Academy said free playtime and recess are slipping away as schools focus on meeting new academic achievement demands brought about by laws like No Child Left Behind.

Hammersmark said the freestyle play in her yard helps kids from ages one year to 12 learn to get along with others.

"They learn to work with each other, and what better education can you give your kids?" she said. The academics who study children and childhood tell us kids need to figure out playtime on their own. They don't need to be directed.

"They say, 'I'm bored, I'm bored,' but guess what, five minutes later you peek in and they're playing away," said Brandy Vanderlee, a mother of three in Macedon, N.Y.

There are scolds in the blogosphere who tell us that parents who let their children take risks by being on their own are neglectful. Plenty on the other side say parents overschedule their kids and hinder their development.

I don't know which side is right. But the kids I know seem happier when we just leave them alone to play.

"In most cultures and through most of history, people did know that kids needed time to play, but they didn't feel that adults should play with kids," said Stephanie Coontz, who teaches history and family studies at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash.

Until recent decades, "there wasn't this idea that parents should be intervening constantly to make things a teachable moment and expand their minds," said Coontz. "Their minds expand a lot better when they pursue things they're interested in for themselves."

And when they're playing on their own, their parents get a lot more stuff done. Sure, the sewing circle of kids in my living room ended up accidentally using someone's mother's $12 socks that weren't actually mismatched in the course of their stuffed animal creation. A small price to pay for the full day of uninterrupted working time that I enjoyed in my office about 8 feet away.

Then again, they weren't my socks.

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U.S. general admits to deaths in Afghanistan

JASON STRAZIUSO
Associated Press Writer

KUNDUZ, Afghanistan The top NATO commander confirmed that civilians were wounded by a devastating airstrike targeting insurgents in northern Afghanistan, a major test of his policy to curb airpower to reduce civilian casualties and win over Afghans to the war against the Taliban.

Meanwhile, a U.S. service member was killed Sunday in an insurgent attack in the east, U.S. forces said. The military did not provide further details.

Gen. Stanley McChrystal waded Saturday through a knee-deep river to inspect the charred remains of two fuel tankers destroyed in the attack, which Afghan officials say killed about 70 people. It was unclear how many were Taliban and how many were villagers who rushed to the scene to siphon fuel from the stolen trucks. The villagers' yellow fuel cans still littered the river bank.

McChrystal visited the site about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of Kabul as European leaders already nervous about the escalating war demanded answers. Some called the Friday airstrike — requested by the Germans and carried out by U.S. jets — "a tragedy" and "a big mistake" that must be investigated.

The bombing also sent shock waves through Germany ahead of national elections Sept. 27. Opposition politicians called for a thorough investigation, even as the defense minister insisted all the dead were militants.

McChrystal then paid a somber visit to the Kunduz hospital, where he stooped low to talk with a 10-year-old boy whose arms and legs were swathed in gauze.

"While I was going to get the fuel, on the way I heard a big bang, and after that I don't know what happened," said the boy, Mohammad Shafi.

McChrystal whispered "tashakor," — thank you in the Afghan language of Dari — to the boy and left the room.

"Anytime anybody is hurt it is something that gives pause to everybody, particularly when they're young people, still children. And so you take it very seriously," McChrystal said. "So I take this entire effort as something that is a responsibility of our command, and a responsibility of mine, to try to protect Afghans."

Civilian casualties have dogged the U.S. and NATO mission in Afghanistan since the 2001 invasion. When McChrystal took command in June, he immediately issued orders aimed at reducing such deaths, and asked his troops to concentrate on protecting and understanding Afghan villagers.

The new approach appeared to help, but Friday's bombing threatened a major setback to McChrystal's goals.

"From what I have seen today and going to the hospital, it's clear to me that there were some civilians that were harmed at the site," McChrystal told reporters. He did not say if any civilians were killed.

"I think it's a serious event that is going to be a test of whether we are willing to be transparent and whether we are willing to show that we are here to protect the Afghan people," McChrystal added. "And I think that it's very important to me that we follow through on that."

Other NATO officials have conceded that civilians likely died.

"There is no reliable information on numbers, but there's a good sort of a gut sense that there had to have been civilians that made their way just based on the anecdotal conversations we've been hearing," said U.S. Rear Adm. Gregory J. Smith, McChrystal's top spokesman.

During his visit to the site, McChrystal asked Smith how many people could be seen on the riverbank through the video feed from U.S. F-15E fighter jets that carried out the attack.

"We could see from the downlink about 120 people?" McChrystal asked.

"It was ebbing and flowing," Smith said.

Afghan officials at first said as many as 90 people died in the bombing, though the Kunduz governor lowered his estimated toll on Saturday to about 70.

Smith said a preliminary review of surveillance video showed that 56 people died in the blast. But no U.S. or NATO official would say how many might have been civilians. McChrystal's reference to 120 people at the site suggests that officials believe civilians died because militants rarely congregate in such numbers.

NATO officials said a B-1 bomber first spotted the two stolen trucks and the dozens of people around them. The B-1 was low on fuel and had to return to base, but the two F-15Es arrived 20 minutes later. The jets transmitted video back to officials at the German base. About 30 minutes after the F-15s appeared, the bombs were dropped, at about 2 a.m.

The nighttime video would have been grainy. Smith described it as showing dark spots on the screen. "You can see shapes," he said.

McChrystal said it's hard to tell who is an insurgent solely by dress.

"They are not obvious by actions until they are doing the hostile act," McChrystal said. "This particular activity occurred about 2 o'clock in the morning, so you have the natural confusion of dark and a rural environment as well. So it's a challenge, but it's a challenge that we have to take very seriously and try to take as much care as we can."

Smith said the upcoming investigation would show if any language barriers between the Germans and the American pilots played a role. It hadn't yet been decided which NATO nation would lead the investigation, he said. Afghan officials were expected to take part.

Before traveling to the site of the bombing, McChrystal met local Afghan leaders and expressed sympathy for any civilian losses. He said the fight against the Taliban should not come at the expense of civilian lives.

At least one local official supported the allied bombing, saying it would help drive the insurgents from the area.

"If we did three more operations like we did yesterday morning, the Kunduz situation would be peaceful and stable," said Ahmadullah Wardak, a provincial council chief.

That was not a view shared by many European leaders, who called Saturday for a speedy investigation. French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said the airstrike was "a big mistake." EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner called the incident "a great, great tragedy."

German Defense Minister Franz Josef Jung insisted in comments to the Bild am Sonntag weekly that officials had no information indicating any civilians died in the airstrike.

Russia's one-factory towns struggle to stay practical

KARINA IOFFEE
Associated Press Writer

YASNOGORSK, RUSSIA Three decades ago, the Yasnogorsk Machine-Building Factory stamped out thousands of pounds of steel and iron into parts for wagons, pumps and locomotives for Russia's mining industry.

Now two-thirds of its stamping and welding machines have been shut down. The old Soviet-era equipment is rusting, and fewer than 280 employees clock in every day — from a peak of 7,000. The factory that kept this town alive since the days of the czar is on its last breath, the victim of a global recession that has shaken Russia to the core.

Yasnogorsk is one of about 500 communities across Russia built around a single company, whose very existence hangs by a delicate thread. The challenges such "monocities" face are compounded by the legacy of the Soviet era, as well as deep-rooted Russian traditions that make it hard to start over somewhere else.

"What's happening in our town is not capitalism," said Alexander Gorbachev, a 59-year-old mechanic previously employed at the factory, who now works at a small machine shop.

To help keep food on the table, Gorbachev (unrelated to the former Soviet leader) does what millions of Russians did during earlier times of trouble: He grows his own potatoes, beets and other vegetables and sells the rest at the market. "It's like we're in medieval times again."

Russia's unemployment has risen to 8.3 percent, and industrial output declined by more than 14 percent in the first seven months of the year compared with 2008.

In Gus Khrustalny, 100 miles north of Moscow, workers at the local decorative glass factory were paid with the crystal vases they made because the company had no money.

In April, workers in a tungsten fabrication plant in the Primorye region staged a hunger strike after they weren't paid for months. And in Yasnogorsk, factory employees estimate they are collectively owed about 6 million rubles ($200,000) in back wages.

These towns all saw their peak in the Soviet era, when a few plants would produce, say, all the Soviet Union's tires. The whole system lurched along guided by a massive bureaucracy of central planners rather than market forces.

But in 1991, after 70 years of Soviet rule, the huge, clanking structure collapsed. Some factories simply closed their doors. Others were purchased for a pittance by a generation of future young billionaires, now called oligarchs, who milked them for profits rather than investing in them.

"We've seen that all those factories that were privatized eventually went bankrupt," said Nikolai Medvedev, 55, who has worked at the Yasnogorsk plant for more than 30 years, sharpening metal parts. "The management is bad, because the owners who buy the factories don't really care about Russia. Their souls are in the West."

Many Russian industries have benefited from the privatizations, with more efficient companies that offer employees competitive wages. But others have been unprofitable for decades and are still simply limping along.

In Yasnogorsk, the factory opened in 1895 and expanded over the years in this town of 18,000 people. Along with jobs, the factory provided social services — everything from medical treatment and child care to family holidays at a local resort.

In 1991, factory owners gradually cut back on these services. In the past six years, the factory has changed owners at least twice, and recently went bankrupt for the second time.

Now children sit at home, alone, and parents worry they will turn to drugs or petty crime. Doctors and other professionals have fled the town, so residents are forced to travel close to an hour to see a pediatrician or an optometrist.

The park in the center of town, with its once-proud Romanesque Palace of Culture, is a seedy wasteland, its cultural center in shambles, its fountains broken and trash and bottles littering the paths.

Residents say their town is slowly dying.

"There is no future for my kids here," said Sergei Ovsyanikov, a father of two and a plumber at the factory. "They will probably have to leave once they grow up."

Ovsyanikov knows it's only a matter of time before his own job is eliminated.

He could take part in government retraining programs or look for work in Tula, a medium-sized city 40 minutes away by train. Some of his laid-off co-workers already commute daily to Moscow, three hours each way. Although he is only 35, he says he is too old and too tired to retrain, relocate or make a long journey to work every day.

"It's just too hard," he said. "If I get fired, then I'll do what I have to do. Now I'm just waiting."

Nikolai Petrov, an expert on regional issues at the Carnegie Moscow Center, said being unemployed is different for workers in Russia than in many other industrialized nations.

"In Western Europe, if you lose your job, you just move somewhere else, but in Russia that's not an option for most people," he said.

Many people who moved to Siberia and the Far East during the Soviet era, when they were paid premium wages, found themselves unable to return west to what is sometimes called "mainland" Russia after the Soviet collapse.

"Just selling your apartment in a town that is economically depressed is impossible. And even if you do manage to sell it, the money you receive is not enough to buy housing in a larger city where there might be work," Petrov said.

Economists say some monocities would be in better shape if Russia had made the massive investment needed to phase out antiquated industries and create a modern capitalist economy. Too much of Russian industry, some say, is still state-owned and managed.

Yevgeny Yasin, a former economics minister and director of the New Economics School in Moscow, said Russia's government uses protectionist and other measures to keep a strong grip on the country's privately owned industries. Company managers, he said, haven't learned how to survive in the open market. "The social mechanism must change," he said.

Management at the Yasnogorsk Machine-Building Factory, which took over from previous owners just three years ago, said it is trying hard to attract new business, even taking orders it would have rejected in the past.

"The crisis dictates its own rules," Nikolai Dupak, general director of the factory, said in a written statement.

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Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

LETTING THE PUBLIC KNOW: **A sign inside a Downtown parking structure notifies visitors that Central Parking System is the operator of the facility.**

Contract covers parking facilities

FROM **PARKING** PAGE 1

extensions, all averaging about $5.5 million per year. The cost is expected to be offset by the parking structure revenues, Don Patterson, the business and revenue operations manager for City Hall, said.

The contract covers parking facilities and lots in Downtown, the Civic Center Parking Structure, Santa Monica Public Library, Annenberg Community Beach House, Santa Monica Pier and all the beaches. Also included is the new bike valet program.

They altogether total about 15,000 parking spaces that generate a combined $15 million in annual revenue, according to Central Parking System.

Patterson said Central Parking was selected because of similar experience in managing garages for the city of Long Beach. The company manages about 2,400 garages coast to coast, including at Burbank Airport and LAX.

He added that the customer service training program, close involvement in local operations by the company's management team and the financial soundness of Central Parking made it an attractive candidate.

In addition to the day-to-day operations of the garages, the firm will be responsible for mechanical maintenance, including the elevators and all of the equipment.

"They are responsible for being able to implement and manage cash handling policies and procedures," Patterson said. "We look to them to proactively provide recommendations to improve cost effectiveness and efficiencies of operations."

"THOSE GARAGES ARE REAL IMPORTANT TO ALL THE RESIDENTS AND EVERYBODY WHO VISITS THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA AND SO MAKING SURE THAT THEY'RE CLEAN AND SECURE AND PEOPLE CAN GET IN AND OUT OF THE FACILITIES QUICKLY IS REAL IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY HELP SUPPORT ALL THE AREA BUSINESSES."

Jerry Skillett
vice president,
Central Parking System

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Streets to be resurfaced

FROM CONSENT PAGE 1

figure is expected to increase to more than 60,000 this year.

Bayside officials said their goal is to produce a program that is as energy efficient as possible, purchasing renewable energy from City Hall. The public/private management company, which oversees Downtown, said it will add a smaller 400 square-foot ice rink for children this year that will test a more energy efficient technology.

"If this technology proves workable, BDC may use it in next year's rink," a city staff report said.

SMOOTHING OUT STREETS

A series of streets will soon get much needed attention thanks to some stimulus funds.

All American Asphalt and construction management company Tetra Tech are expected to receive contracts — $2 million for the former and $207,972 for the latter — for a citywide street resurfacing project that will cover 15 locations in Santa Monica, including 26th Street from Carlyle Avenue to Montana Avenue, and Ocean Park Boulevard from 14th Street to 25th Street.

The project will involve cold milling, grinding, rubberized asphalt overlay, restriping, sidewalk removal and construction, and curb and gutter removal and reconstruction. The street locations were chosen for their deteriorated conditions.

City Hall received about $2.6 million through stimulus funding. While the majority of the project will be covered through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which was signed by President Barack Obama in February, a small portion will come from Proposition C and general funds.

MAINTAINING THE 'GREEN' REPUTATION

In continuing with City Hall's status as an environmentally conscious city, the council is expected to approve a contract with EcoMotion to provide project development and implementation for the popular Solar Santa Monica program.

In an effort to make the city self sustaining by 2020, the program was established three years ago to pair residents with approved solar panel suppliers who offer competitive prices.

The initiative has been successful. In fiscal 2008-09, Solar Santa Monica assisted 25 residents and 135 businesses.

Solar systems today produce more than 1,000 kilowatts of peak-time electric power in Santa Monica, offsetting over 1.8 million kilowatt hours and 1.2 million pounds of greenhouse gases every year, city staff said.

The program will now focus more on energy efficiency, solar electric and solar thermal systems for multifamily housing, including affordable housing, and larger commercial developments.

With a $250,000 contract, EcoMotion will be asked to provide support on various policy initiatives previously supported by the council, including developing an energy efficiency and solar loan program for property owners that's based on state legislation.

The council is also expected to approve a $245,500 contract with Community Partners, which serves as the fiscal manager for Sustainable Works, an environmental awareness organization known for its greening programs for residents and businesses. City Hall has allocated money for outreach programs to engage the community in its Sustainable City Plan since 1998. Sustainable Works is the organization that provides these programs.

NEW ENGINES FOR BUSES

The Big Blue Bus will get new engines for its transit coaches.

The council is expected to approve a $400,000 contract with Ironman Renewal and Harbor Diesel and Equipment to overhaul the engines for the Big Blue Bus' Detroit Diesel Series, and another $200,000 contract to Cummins Cal Pacific and Ironman Renewal for the public transportation agency's natural gas and diesel engines.

"Engine overhaul services are necessary as a normal part of wear and tear throughout the useful life of a transit coach," a city staff report said.

While the Big Blue Bus does not currently perform engine overhaul on its vehicles, it is considering bringing the service in-house once its new maintenance facility opens.

ANOTHER DECADE FOR THE JONATHAN CLUB

After more than 75 years in Santa Monica, an oceanfront social club will get to keep its beach space for another 10 years.

The council is expected to approve a resolution making official its findings last month that there has been no material change in the public's need for roughly 39,000 square feet of beach parcels that the Jonathan Club has leased since 1984.

Such a finding is required for the council to extend the lease for the three parcels.

During the next 10 years, the club is proposing to pay an annual rent of $125,000, contribute another $75,000 yearly for beach improvements, and release claims that it overpaid rent by about $212,000.

"While additional beach improvements and beach recreational opportunities are needed, such improvements and opportunities need not be sited on the leased parcels during the next 10 years," the city staff report said.

A REALTOR FOR CITY HALL

The council is expected to approve an additional $50,000 to a contract with Allan D. Kotin & Associates, which advises city officials on real estate economic matters.

The firm has provided financial feasibility services on acquisitions related to the Downtown Parking Strategy and also reviewed bids for the development of a mixed-use cinema project at the current site of Parking Structure 3.

"An amendment to the existing contract is proposed to allow the firm to continue its economic advisory and financial feasibility services to the city," a staff report said. "The consultant's services are needed for upcoming real estate transactions and public projects."

FINES TO INCREASE

Violating the municipal code could soon burn a bigger hole in the wallet.

The council will be asked to update the administrative citation schedule of fines for violations of the Santa Monica Municipal Code, which covers offenses from littering in a public place — $250 — to smoking in an elevator or public restroom — $500.

The schedule of fines has not been updated since 2004. Fines range from $75 to $1,000. The floor will not change.

City staff said it has identified areas where the current citation amount is "insufficient to bring about compliance."

"Staff has determined that the existing fine amount for many of the listed violations is below the average of what other cities impose," the city staff report said.

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Dr. Oz decides to leave Winfrey for new show

DAVID BAUDER,
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK A young production staffer at "The Dr. Oz Show" wasn't buttering up her boss when she took a bite out of a carrot as he approached in an elevator lobby recently.

Vegetables were on the menu. So were fruit, yogurt, whole-grain breads and natural peanut butter. True to a mission of making Americans healthier one at a time, Dr. Mehmet Oz banned all junk food backstage at his new talk show.

"The Dr. Oz Show," starring the heart surgeon and health evangelist, debuts Sept. 14. It's perhaps the most eagerly anticipated syndicated talk show since another Oprah Winfrey associate, Dr. Phil McGraw, went solo in 2002, said Bill Carroll, a market expert for Katz Television.

Oz has a sleek new studio at New York's 30 Rockefeller Plaza in the same room where Conan O'Brien worked before heading West. Its most fearsome element is the "truth tube," a platform that can display a person's weight, body fat and other health indicators, much like "The Biggest Loser" scale.

His goal is to make health information interesting and entertaining without trivializing it.

"There is no question we can save lives every day if we can motivate people to do what we're talking about," Oz said in a backstage conversation over lunch (salads, of course). "The challenge isn't what to say — because we know that — the challenge is how to say it so people are motivated."

He expects few celebrity guests, and no Winfrey visit is on the schedule. The show will typically open with a health "hot topic" like swine flu or immunization, and will end with audience questions. In between, Oz will try different ways to make health advice personal, recognizing that lectures don't work as well as stories viewers can relate to.

In one pre-taped episode, a woman brings her beer-bellied husband for a surprise "intervention." He listens to Oz describe how an unhealthy lifestyle was likely taking years off his life.

A woman who scrimps on sleep to take care of her family gets on a driving simulator while tired. She's reduced to tears and recognizes how sleeplessness affects more than herself when she "kills" six people, including a family of three, in accidents caused by dulled senses.

Besides controlling what his own staff eats, Oz has been secretly monitoring the food brought in to Jimmy Fallon's studio down the hall. Expect an unflattering public comparison.

"The crew is an experiment for us," Oz said. "If all I offer you is healthy food, you're either going to eat that stuff or you're not going to eat. And most people will eat. After a while, it becomes what you're used to eating. It's a little bit every day that makes a difference."

Oz envisions a "Let's Make a Deal" type game with four contestants to illustrate ways of curing vitamin D deficiency. One contestant opens a box with a "prize" of cod liver oil. Another reveals a picture of the sun, and wins a tropical vacation.

That's the tightrope Oz walks — fall off and he makes the serious seem silly. He's convinced this is the best way for people to remember what they've learned.

Carroll suggested Oz has the personality to make it work. The new show faces competition from "The Doctors," another health hour that premiered to modest success last season, but Carroll said there's room for both.

"The audiences can tell when you are real, and he is real," he said. "He's very likable. He's the person you wish was your doctor."

Oz had a decent enough career before television beckoned. He's a prominent surgeon with expertise is repairing heart valves. (Disclosure: His partner, Dr. Craig Smith, performed a quintuple bypass on this reporter two years ago.) He will continue to perform surgery one day a week.

Yet Oz noticed that he was getting more jazzed up persuading people they didn't need surgery than operating on them.

He landed a show, "Second Opinion," on the Discovery Channel and persuaded Winfrey to appear. "Before Oz went on Oprah, Oprah went on Oz," he said. That opened the door to Winfrey's media kingdom, resulting in 55 appearances on her talk show in five years, and eventually his own show. It's co-produced by Winfrey's Harpo Productions and Sony Pictures Television. He's contractually prohibited from airing in direct competition with her.

Oz likes to point out how real-life versions of Dr. Marcus Welby, the fictional doctor from a hit ABC series in the 1970s, are dying out — the ranks of general practitioners thinned by specialists, and the desire for high-tech solutions profound. The missing human touch is now often supplied by real-life TV doctors like ABC's Tim Johnson and CNN's Sanjay Gupta.

"I found myself going to work and taking care of people who wanted to get better who believed that their only path to salvation was through my scalpel," he said. "I can heal with steel. I know how to do that. But it's very disenfranchising when you realize the true solutions are outside the operating room."

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Former drug dealer serves up hot dogs

DON BABWIN
Associated Press Writer

MARKHAM, Ill. Two decades after customers clamored to buy cocaine from a teenager named John Cappas, they're lined up again to buy what he has to sell: hot dogs.

The one-time "drug kingpin," as the newspapers called him in the late 1980s, this summer became an owner of a hot dog stand called Johnny's WeeNee Wagon.

It's a few Chicago suburbs and a world away from where he ran the drug empire that made him $25,000 a week — enough to buy a house, fast cars and a necklace that spelled "Spoiled Brat" in diamonds to drape around his Playboy bunny girlfriend.

In a bright red building that looks like a barn with a man-sized statue of a hot dog wearing an American flag out front, he sells hot dogs, gyros, burgers, and now for the first time since the place opened in 1955, french fries.

"I'm doing the right thing now," said the 43-year-old Cappas, who was released in 2004 after serving 15 years in prison.

That doesn't mean Cappas is shying away from his past.

He obviously enjoys telling stories about what life was like before he was arrested. Like the time he made headlines when, knowing federal agents were looking to arrest him, he and a local television reporter took a spin on Lake Michigan on a friend's speedboat ("The feds had already seized mine," he said.) before he turned himself in.

Nor did he keep it a secret that for his grand opening last weekend — an event that included a magician and a tiger he says belonged to former boxing champ Mike Tyson — he'd asked two friends who were Chicago police officers before they were convicted of selling cocaine to judge his auto show.

But Cappas knows that his reign as a drug kingpin includes more than funny stories about his lavish lifestyle. He's linked to the deaths of two 19-year-old sons of Chicago police officers, both of whom killed themselves with their fathers' service revolvers after, authorities said at the time, at least one of them bought drugs from one of Cappas' accomplices.

And he knows that for all the "toys" he had, there was a time members of his family wanted nothing to do with him.

"I was banished from my (family) house," he said, his father, Louis Cappas, nodding in agreement.

Then he was banished from society, with a judge who sentenced him to 45 years in prison, angrily telling him that he had "lost his soul."

"I am what I am," he said simply. "I'm never going to live that down."

That helps explain why he said it is important to let people know he is no longer the same young man he was when he was sentenced to prison — something he says he deserved. And that he wants to make amends.

"I do not want kids to follow in my same footpaths ..." he said. "I'm paying some penance for what I did in the past."

That means his plan is not just to own a successful hot dog stand in a community, but to play a role in that community. He talks about plans to sponsor Little League teams and build a baseball diamond, as well as continue talking to at-risk kids, as he's done for the last few years.

He said a big part of his message is that it's possible to turn your life around, to come out of prison and make an honest living.

"This is my way of giving back," said Cappas, who also plans to publish a book about his life.

It all has impressed Scott Ladany, the owner of Red Hot Chicago, Inc. to sell Cappas his hot dogs.

"I did hesitate but ... it's a gut feeling that he deserved a second chance in life," Ladany said.

Ladany said that what Cappas did after he got to prison helped convince him that Cappas had changed.

Obama adviser resigns over statements

WILL LESTER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON The White House environmental adviser under fire for inflammatory statements made before he joined the administration resigned after what he called a "vicious smear campaign against me."

Van Jones "understood that he was going to get in the way" of President Barack Obama's agenda, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said Sunday.

The resignation was disclosed without advance notice by the White House in a dead-of-the-night e-mail on a holiday weekend. It came as Obama is working to regain his footing in the contentious health care debate.

Jones, who specialized in environmentally friendly "green jobs" with the White House Council on Environmental Quality, was linked to efforts suggesting a government role in the Sept. 11 attacks and to derogatory comments about Republicans.

Gibbs said Obama did not endorse Van Jones' comments but thanked him for his service.

"What Van Jones decided was that the agenda of this president was bigger than any one individual," Gibbs said on ABC's "This Week."

Recent news reports cited a derogatory comment Jones made in the past about Republicans, and separately, of Jones' name appearing on a petition connected to the events surrounding the Sept. 11 attacks. That 2004 petition had asked for congressional hearings and other investigations into whether high-level government officials had allowed the attacks to occur.

"On the eve of historic fights for health care and clean energy, opponents of reform have mounted a vicious smear campaign against me," Jones said in his resignation statement. "They are using lies and distortions to distract and divide."

Obama's top political adviser, David Axelrod, said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that Jones "showed his commitment to the cause of creating green jobs in this country by removing himself as an issue."

Howard Dean, former head of the Democratic National Committee, told "Fox News Sunday" that he thought Jones "was brought down and I think it's too bad. Washington's a tough place that way, and I think it's a loss for the country."

Dean, a former Vermont government and Democratic presidential candidate, added: "All of us campaigning for office have had people throw clipboards in front of our face and ask us to sign. And he learned the hard way you ought not to do that. But I don't think he really thinks the government had anything to do with causing 9/11."

Jones said he has been "inundated with calls from across the political spectrum urging me to stay and fight." But he said he could not in good conscience ask his colleagues to spend time and energy defending or explaining his past.

Jones said in an earlier statement that he did not agree with the petition's stand on the Sept. 11 attacks and that "it certainly does not reflect my views, now or ever."


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Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 70°

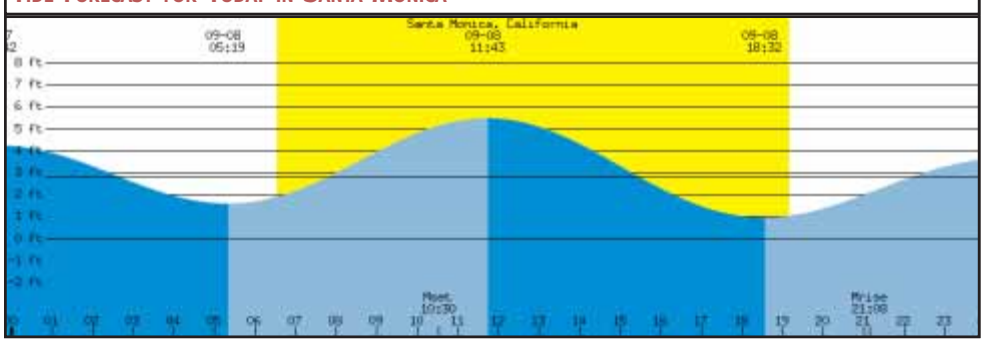
Swell Forecast

Waist high surf around west facing breaks (possibly chest high at times at standouts when the tide is right), and knee to waist around south facing breaks.

Long Range Synopsis

Perhaps knee high most everywhere, with maybe some waist high pluses at south facing breaks..

Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica



BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **September 2, 2009**

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

QUICK STATS (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 8
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 44 / ns
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 2 / ns

The Beach Report Card is made possible by simplehuman, The Goldhirsh Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, Ford

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

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Los Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Seguit Creek mouth	A+	ns
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechuse and Las Alisa creeks	A+	ns
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	ns
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	ns
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	ns
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A	ns
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	A+	ns
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
Solstice Canyon at Don Blocker County Beach	A+	ns
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth	A+	ns
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	A	ns
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A	ns
Surfrider Beach (breach location) - daily	A	ns
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A	ns
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	ns
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (paint zero)	A+	ns
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	A+	ns
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	ns
Tuna Canyon	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	A	ns
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	ns

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

LEGEND

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

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

Heal the Bay

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

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

HORSE RACING

More than 1,200 horses killed at tracks in 2008

JEFFREY MCMURRAY
Associated Press Writer

LEXINGTON, Ky. The rush to improve safety since Eight Belles was euthanized at last year's Kentucky Derby did little to curb the number of horses dying at American racetracks in 2008, The Associated Press found in a national count.

Although many tracks were already implementing safety reforms when the popular filly pulled up lame with two broken legs after finishing second at the Derby in May 2008, her death on racing's biggest stage gave the effort a national face and new momentum.

However, the AP's count found only a slight change in the number of fatalities in 2008 (1,217) compared with 2007 (1,247). That's around 3 percent fewer deaths.

"If it were that easy to change, we would have flipped that switch a long time ago," said Mary Scollay, Kentucky's equine medical director, who is assembling an industry-wide database on horse breakdowns, the findings of which haven't been released. "We've learned injuries are very complex in their causes, and there are a number of things that need to be critically evaluated."

Racing officials and equine experts are unsure exactly why the total remains so stubbornly high, though they point out racetrack deaths can happen for a variety of reasons. Also, no single change is likely to produce overnight results and many states implemented reforms after the Derby, so their impact would only be felt for part of 2008.

Last year, using open records requests sent to all thoroughbred racing states, the AP counted more than 5,000 horses that were reported killed at tracks between 2003 and 2007. The number was highest in the 2007 count because some states didn't keep track before that.

The same request was sent again this year to cover 2008. Responses from the states varied slightly because the minor racing states of South Dakota and Wyoming provided totals for 2008 but not 2007, and Kansas, which reported seven deaths in 2007, had none to report last year because its major track, The Woodlands, closed for economic reasons. Also, some states may have slightly altered their record-keeping methods.

By this year's Derby, nearly every major racing state had banned anabolic steroids, even though a necropsy showed Eight Belles was not on them. Tracks also scrambled to enhance the testing of their racing surfaces, apply padding to starting gates, replace whips with noisy but less painful riding crops and outlaw a certain kind of horseshoe known to cause injuries.

"I believe, and I think our fans believe, thoroughbreds are competing in a safer environment today than they were one year ago," said Alex Waldrop, president of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association.

Although some of the reforms, such as the steroid ban, took longer to implement and in some states may have only affected a few races later in the year, a comparison between 2007 and 2008 reveals a troubling trend at some of the nation's biggest racetracks.

Of the 26 states that provided statistics for both years, 12 reported more deaths last year than the year before. Thirteen others reported fewer, with Virginia listing eight both years.

California, which hosts by far the most races due to its numerous tracks and ideal climate for the sport, again recorded more than twice as many fatalities as any other state. The AP counted 251 racing and training-related deaths there in 2008, up from 240 the year before.

Louisiana reported the biggest improvement, dropping from 68 deaths in 2007 to 40 last year.

Tom David, the state's equine medical director, attributed the change to a new pre-race exam program that was launched last year following the staggering number of deaths from 2007 — nearly half of which occurred at Evangeline Downs.

"That really threw up a flag we have a serious problem," David said.

Luis Marquez, director of racing in Arizona, where there were 81 horse deaths in 2008 and 80 in 2007, said state budget shortfalls could be hampering safety. His state wants to issue pre-race exams too, but there are 11 unfilled vacancies in the racing office that have made it difficult to keep the same level of injury monitoring, let alone add a new layer.

"An animal may be perfectly fine today, but then tomorrow it doesn't feel good and you're making it race," Marquez said. "When you do a pre-race evaluation, you have a better chance of detecting injury."

Even some tracks with pre-race exams saw their fatality numbers increase for other reasons.

When Turfway Park in Florence, Ky., replaced its dirt surface with synthetic in 2006, there was no fatal breakdown for the first 69 days of racing. Then in the holiday meet last December, eight horses died within a month — twice as many as an even longer holiday meet in 2007.

While Turfway officials are still examining what may have caused the increase, among the theories is that its ban on rear "toe grabs" — shoes that contain metal spikes to aid in traction — might have backfired.

Since the death of Eight Belles, NTRA issued a checklist of proposed safety changes and appointed a panel led by former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson to investigate tracks.



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MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(323) 466-FILM

Los Angeles Plays itself (NR) 2hr 49min
7:30

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

Funny People (R) 2hr 16min
11:35 a.m., 2:45, 6:45, 9:50

The Hangover (R) 1hr 36min
11:15 a.m., 1:55, 4:40, 7:15, 10:05

Taking Woodstock (R) 1hr 50min
11:00 a.m., 1:45, 4:30, 7:25, 10:15

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (PG) 2hrs 33min
11:30 a.m., 3:00, 6:30, 9:55

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

Shorts (PG) 1hr 29min
11:30am, 1:50, 4:20, 6:50

Ponyo (Gake no ue no Ponyo) (G)
1hr 40min
11:05am, 1:30, 4:05, 7:05, 9:40

The Time Traveler's Wife (PG-13) 1hr 48min
10:50am, 1:25, 4:10, 7:15, 10:00

Julie and Julia (PG-13) 2hrs 3min
10:45am, 1:35, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

Halloween II (2009) (R) 1hr 41min
12:00, 2:30, 5:20, 7:55, 9:30, 10:45

My One and Only (PG-13) 1hr 25min
11:00am, 1:45, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45

Gamer (R) 1hr 35min
11:50am, 2:40, 5:05, 7:45, 10:15

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

Extract (R) 1hr 30min
1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:15

(500) Days of Summer (PG-13) 1hr 35min
1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:45

The Hurt Locker (R) 2hr 10min
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:55

In the Loop (NR) 1hr 46min
1:40, 4:20, 7:10, 9:50

Valentino: The Last Emperor (NR) 1hr 36min
11:00 a.m.

Play the Game (PG-13) 1 hr 45min
11:00 a.m.

Irene in Time (PG-13) 1hr 34min
11:00 a.m.

Mann's Criterion Theatre
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

The Final Destination 3D (R) 1hr 22min
12:30, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

Inglourious Basterds (R) 2hrs 32min
12:00, 1:30, 3:30, 5:00, 7:00, 8:30, 10:20

G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra (PG-13) 1hr 58min
12:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:50

District 9 (R) 1hr 53min
11:30am, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10

All About Steve (PG-13) 1hr 39min
11:40am, 2:00, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40

For more information, e-mail news@smdp.com

Gather bills, Aries

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ What seems absolutely logical can work in an interesting manner. You wonder why it took so long to see this path. Tonight: Gather your bills.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ You perk up and take a different point of view. Reach out for more information. The more complete your studies, the more likely success will follow. Tonight: Whatever knocks your socks off.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ A partner or associate plays a significant role in a decision. What you lack, this person can claim as an asset, and vice versa. You discover how important your judgment is to your long-term security. Tonight: Think less about your issues; walk in someone else's shoes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ Recognize your professional allies. If you mobilize your energy properly, you could hit a home run. Your sense of direction might make you a bit more brusque than usual. Others might react. Tonight: Where the people are.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★ Accept your natural role as leader. You might wonder where to begin. How you handle a situation could change dramatically with a realization. Someone might share a piece of information that needs to be kept hush-hush. Tonight: A must appearance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ Others push in a certain direction, and you might visualize more than one way to the same results. You wonder why you are on this certain path. Your creativity flows. What would be sad is not letting this enormous resource feed into your professional and/or personal life. Tonight: Hop on the computer.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Others benefit from your strong leadership and high energy. Don't hesitate to ask for more support and feedback from a key associate. Having this person own part of a project is important to whether you succeed or fail. Tonight: Accept someone's invitation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ You see life from a renewed, more vibrant perspective. You want to make a move, but the timing is off. Investigate alternatives within a select group of friends. If need be, find an expert -- a good choice for now and in the long run. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Your drive and willingness to push for resolution could be multiplied by a certain assertive associate or friend. Still, you cannot skip routine details or take a shortcut. How you do your work makes a difference. Tonight: Put your feet up. You deserve a rest.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Another person might be too assertive for your taste. You understand how to get this monkey off your back. You will find a resourceful key associate or friend. Tonight: Take a leap of faith. You have nothing to lose.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Many might not see you as rigid, but moving you off your position could take talent. Look within for answers when questioning why you lock into a certain type of thinking. Tonight: Soul searching in your favorite chair.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Communication flows, whether at work or home. You come up with some wild ideas. You do need to pull back and decide whether they are applicable. Ask someone you trust for clear feedback. You will be able to regroup and improve any idea. Tonight: A chat around the dinner table.

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

Happy birthday

This year, learn to stop and listen if you're unsure of yourself. Get past the "little" story. Detach and understand your role in different situations. Accountability behooves you. If you are single, you have a lot of choices. You might respond to the squeaky wheel. If you are attached, decide on a mutual commitment together. This activity draws the two of you closer. TAURUS encourages you to get out of yourself.

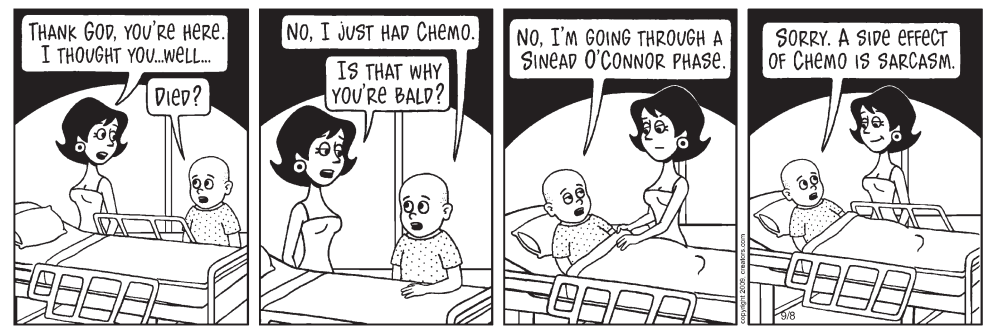
Girls and Sports

By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



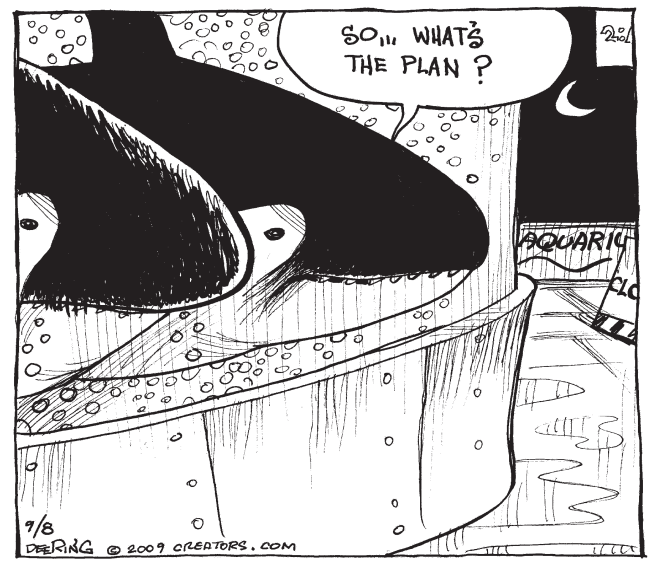
Garfield

By Jim Davis



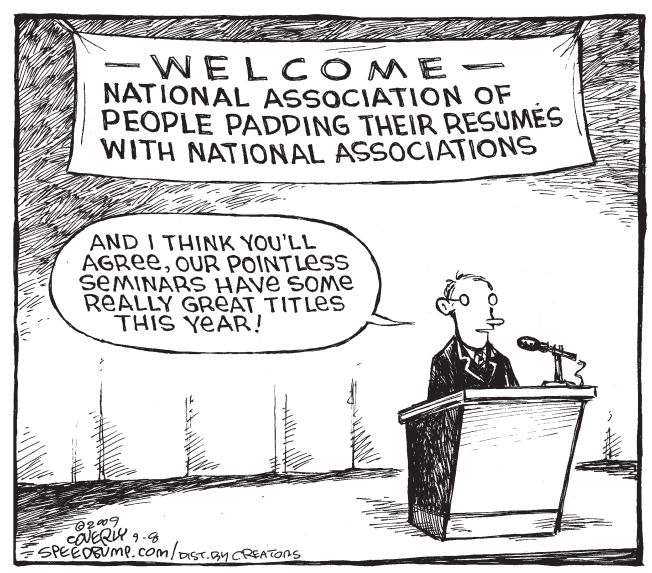
Strange Brew

By John Deering



Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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Sudoku

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

Difficulty Level ★★

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

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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MYSTERY PHOTO

Maya Sugarman *news@smdp.com*

The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to *editor@smdp.com*.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Kindle
7 Hoodwink
11 Hit on the noggin
12 Yemen neighbor
13 Impetus supplier
15 Trifled
16 Prepare for a bout
18 Expansive
21 Pod contents
22 Man's hat
24 McKellen of "X-Men"
25 Everything
26 Catchy music
27 Ostentatious
29 Adorable
30 Edinburgh native
31 Hip-hop songs
32 Praline nut
34 Operator's place
40 Indy event
41 European peninsula
42 Yoked beasts
43 Car engine part

DOWN

1 Crunch targets
2 Agent, for short
3 Rower's need
4 Football's Johnny
5 Man of Madrid
6 Daring
7 Gizmo
8 Thurman of "Kill Bill"
9 Golf goal
10 Finish
14 Angled edge
16 Closes up
17 Irrational fear
19 Absorb
20 Easy runs
21 Oinker
22 Jeans feature
23 Gorilla or gibbon
25 Early Mexican
28 Hit list
29 Kayaks, for example
31 Temple leader
33 Computer part
34 Hit show letters
35 Crayon material
36 Rink surface
37 Museum subject
38 Carnival city
39 Football's Marino

S	A	N	T	A	■	M	A	R	I	A
A	L	A	R	M	■	A	C	I	D	S
T	E	P	E	E	■	R	E	S	E	T
■	■	■	A	N	T	S	■	K	A	A
H	E	L	D	D	E	A	R	■	■	■
E	X	A	M	■	A	L	U	M	N	I
M	I	M	I	C	■	A	M	A	I	N
S	T	E	L	L	A	■	O	I	N	K
■	■	■	L	A	B	O	R	D	A	Y
S	A	G	■	S	E	A	M	■	■	■
P	L	U	M	P	■	S	I	T	U	P
A	T	R	E	E	■	I	L	I	K	E
S	O	U	N	D	■	S	L	E	E	P

Yesterday's answer

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	■	7	8	9	10
11						■	12			
13						14				
■	■	■	15					■	■	■
■	16	17			■	18		19	20	■
21				■	22					23
24			■	25			■	26		
27			28			■	29			
■	30				■	31				■
■	■	■	32		33			■	■	■
34	35	36						37	38	39
40				■	41					
42				■	43					

9-8

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 1 17 31 37 54 Meganumber: 31 Jackpot: $12M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 6 13 14 36 37 Meganumber: 12 Jackpot: $18M

FANTASY 5: 3 4 8 24 37

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 9 4 9 EVENING: 2 8 3

DAILY DERBY: 1st: 01 Gold Rush 2nd: 11 Money Bags 3rd: 09 Winning Spirit RACE TIME: 1.42.55

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ The August issue of Gourmet magazine highlighted the apparently high quality of sushi prepared and sold at a BP gas station near the intersection of Ridgeway and Poplar in Memphis, Tenn. A sushi chef works on-site and reportedly sells 300 orders a day.

■ Uganda's independent national newspaper, The Daily Monitor, reported in May the arrest of hunter Nathan Awoloi, who was accused of forcing his wife to breastfeed his five puppies after their mothers, who were essential to his occupation, were killed. When Awoloi was released on bond, Caroline Odoi, Ugandan coordinator for the ActionAid International anti-poverty agency, led protests demanding his rearrest because of evidence that one of Mrs. Awoloi's own babies, who was nursing at the same time as the puppies, died of symptoms that resembled rabies. Police said the investigation was continuing.

■ Admitted gang member Alex Fowler, 26, of Jasper, Texas, was arrested in July and charged with an attempted home-invasion robbery that went bad. Tough-guy Fowler, who has the words "Crip for Life" tattooed on his neck, was chased from the house by the 87-year-old female "victim" pointing a can of Raid insect repellant at him, threatening to spray.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1888 In London, the body of Jack the Ripper's second murder victim, Annie Chapman, is found.

1888 In England the first six Football League matches ever are played.

1900 Galveston Hurricane of 1900: a powerful hurricane hits Galveston, Texas killing about 8,000 people.

1914 World War I: Private Thomas Highgate becomes the first British soldier to be executed for desertion during the war.

1921 16-year-old Margaret Gorman wins the Atlantic City Pageant's Golden Mermaid trophy; pageant officials later dubbed her the first Miss America.

WORD UP!

acquiesce \ak-wee-ES\ , intransitive verb:

1.To accept or consent passively or without objection -- usually used with 'in' or 'to'.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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Wanted

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For Rent

12309 CULVER Blvd unit 12, 1bdrm/1bath $975/mo. stove, fridge, carpets, blind, laundry, utilities included, gated parking, intercom entry, no pets. $500 off move-in (310) 578-7512, jkwproperties.com

2478 Corinth Ave. $1595 front unit 1+1 stove, fridge, carpet, ceiling fan, onsite laundry, small gated front yard 2 parking spaces, 20 lb. pet OK w/ deposit $300 off move-in (888)414-7778

3623 KEYSTONE Ave.unit 5, $675 bachelor, lower, fridge, microwave, carpet, blinds, utilities included laundry, no parking, no pets $300 off move-in (310)578-7512 jkwproperties.com

501 N. Venice 1+1, #25 $1225/mo stove, fridge, carpet, utilities included, laundry, parking, no pets. $750 off move-in (310)574-6767 www.jkwproperties.com

501 N. Venice unit 40 single, $1075/mo $500 off move-in stove, fridge, carpet, utilities included, laundry, parking, no pets. (310)574-6767 www.jkwproperties.com

833 5TH St. SM unit 101 2+2 $2350 stove, carpet, blinds, swimming pool, laundry, granite countertops, wood/tile floors, intercom entry, gated parking, no pets. (310)393-2547 www.jkwproperties.com

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1120 6th St #5 2+1
Pergo floors, 2 parking spaces
$2095

1011 Pico Blvd. #8 2+2, Loft, 3 levels modern building, available after 9/1
$2695

Please visit our website for complete listings and information on vacancies in Santa Monica and the Westside
www.howardmanagement.com
rentals@howardmanagement.com

MAR VISTA near Marina. $1050/mo 1bd+den 1ba, carpet, blinds, stove, refrigerator, laundry, parking, no pets. 310-456-5659.

ADVERTISE! CALL US (310) 458-7737

For Rent

MAR VISTA: 12434 CULVER Blvd. units 3 1+1 stove, fridge, AC, carpets blinds, laundry room, intercom entry, gated parking, no pets.$1100/mo $500 off move-in (888)414-7778 www.jkwproperties.com

MARVISTA-LA $1995.00 2bdrms, 2 baths, no pets, balcony, stove, refrig, dshwshr, washr/dryr, loft, parking 4077 Inglewood Blvd #7 To view this apartment, Please call for appt: (310)780-3354

PALMS 2+1 3633 Keystone ave #1 stove, blinds, tile flooring, carpets, ceiling fan, laundry,parking, AC, no pets. $1400/mo $500 off move-in (310)578-7512 www.jkwproperties.com

PALMS 3346 S. Canfiled #104 $850 Single, stove, fridge, blinds, on-site laundry, garage parking, intercom entry no pets. (310)578-7512 jkwproperties.com

PALMS 3346 S. Canfiled #205 $995 1+1 upper, stove, fridge, blinds, bamboo & vinyl floors, on-site laundry, garage parking, intercom entry no pets.$500 off move-in (310)578-7512 jkwproperties.com

PALMS 3540 Overland units 2 & 5 $950 Stove, fridge, carpet, blinds, laundry, street parking, no pets. $700 off move-in special. (310)578-7512 www.jkwproperties.com

Santa Monica $1195.00 1 Bdrms, 1Bath NO pets, gas, paid stove, refrigerator, parking 2535 Kansas Ave., #210 Open daily 8am-8pm. Additional info in unit. .

SANTA MONICA $1225.00 1 bdrm, 1 bath, no pets, stove, refrig, patio, parking 2533 Kansas Ave., #109 Open daily for viewing 8am to 7pm. Additional info in apt Mgr: apt #101

TRI-LEVEL TOWNHOUSE in Culver City. 4044 Jackson Ave. 3 bdrm/2.5bath, $2600. non-smokers. Stove, fridge, microwave, dishwasher, carpet, hardwood floors, fireplace, balcony, garage, no pets.(310)578-7512 www.jkwproperties.com

Venice 25 19th Ave.unit A 1+1 $1295/mo. stove, fridge, wood/tile flooring, laundry, cieling fan garage parking, no pets. $700 off move-in (310)578-7512 jkwproperties.com

WESTCHESTER 7087 1/2 Manchester Ave.Single stove, fridge, hardwood floors, on-site laundry, street parking, no pets, $995/mo $300 off move-in (310) 578-7512 jkwproperties.com

WESTWOOD: 617 1/2 Midvale unit 2.& 3 Bachelor, no kitchen, sink, fridge,hot plate, microwave, ceiling fan, carpet, street parking, no pets $850/mo (310)578-7512 wwwjkwproperties.com

WLA $1750/MO. Large bright 2 bdrm upper, on Barrington near National. Very spacious. Large closets, crown moldings, stove/refrigerator. Closed garage. Well maintained, charming, older building. FREE MONTH WITH ONE YEAR LEASE (310)828-4481 or (310)993-0414 after 6pm.

Your ad could run here!
Call us today at (310) 458-7737

For Rent

WLA 1457 Westgate #D 1+1 upper stove, fridge, blinds, wood/tile floors, carport parking no pets $1225/mo $750 off move-in special (310) 578-7512 jkwproperties.com

WLA OCEAN VIEW, large 1 bedroom on private driveway, Hilltop, large sundeck 2 parking, newly redecor, $1395 (310)390-4610

BOLD IT! MAKE YOUR AD STAND OUT

Houses For Rent



1833 18TH St #B, 90404

$2,200.00 - 1833 18th St #B - Santa Monica - 2 bedrooms

SUPER CUTE, 2 BEDROOM 2 BATH COTTAGE, Unfurnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 Baths, Available Now...
Email: nikki@peprinting.com
Fax: 310-314-6900 Phone:
Nicole VonRiesen at (310) 266-0629

2547 S. WESTGATE 2+1 HOUSE in West LA, garage, hdwd floors, nice landscaping, fenced yard, DWP & gardener included. $2600/mo. Call Martha (818) 366-5997.

3824 BLEDSOE Ave Los Angeles unfurnished 3bdrm/1 1/2bath stove dishwasher microwave granite countertops hardwood floors carpet central AC/heat 2 car garage front & backyard $2750 (310)578-7512 www.jkwproperties.com

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Notices

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE
BRIAN FOSTER, ET AL VS
JOSEPH M. HARTLEY, ET AL
CASE NO: 02CC16898 R

Under a writ of Execution issued on 12/03/08. Out of the SUPERIOR COURT, of the SANTA ANA DISTRICT, County of Orange, State of California, on a judgment entered on 07/18/03.

In favor of BRIAN FOSTER, an individual and against HARTLEY, JOSEPH M. and HARTLEY, MARY KATHLEEN showing a net balance of $ 1,044,749.50 actually due on said judgment. (Amount subject to revision)

I have levied upon all the right, title and interest of said judgment debtor(s) in the property in the County of Los Angeles, State of California, described as follows:

REAL PROPERTY IN THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA: LOT 21 IN BLOCK ``B`` OF TRACT 11821, AS PER MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 240, PAGES 20 AND 21 OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY.

Commonly known as: 1517 GRANT STREET, SANTA MONICA, CA 90405

Public notice is hereby given that I will sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash in lawful money of the United States all the right, title and interest of the debtor(s) in the above described property or so much as will be sufficient to satisfy said writ or warrant with interest and all costs on THURSDAY, 10/08/09, 10:00 AM at the following location.

STANLEY MOSK COUNTY COURT-HOUSE
111 N. HILL STREET, ROOM 125B
LOS ANGELES, CA90012

(X) This sale is subject to a minimum bid that must exceed $194,245.58 CCP 704.800(a); and a minimum bid of $855,000.00 CCP 704.800(b). (Subject to revision)

Prospective bidders should refer to sections 701.510 to 701.680, inclusive, of the Code of Civil Procedure for provisions governing the terms, conditions and effect of the sale and the liability of defaulting bidders.

Creditor's Attorney
ROBERT J. SHERMAN, ESQ.
RJS LAW
13347 VENTURA BLVD.
SHERMAN OAKS, CA 91423
Dated: 08/27/09
Branch: Los Angeles
LEROY D. BACA, Sheriff
By: ELLEN M. CASTILLO, Deputy
Operator Id: E014397

Para obtener esta informacion-traduccion en Espanol llame a este numero: (213) 974-6613

NOTE: IT IS A MISDEMEANOR TO TAKE DOWN OR DEFACE A POSTED NOTICE BEFORE THE DATE OF SALE. (Penal Code section 616)

Santa Monica Daily Press
CN824569 08CC16898 R Sep 1,8,15, 2009

DBAS

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 20091185200 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as COMPUTECH CONSULTANTS, 68 E. BAY STATE ST, #1E, ALHAMBRA, CA 91801, COUNTY OF LA. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : GUSTAVO COLLAZO, 68 E. BAY STATE ST, #1E, ALHAMBRA, CA 91801 This Business is being conducted by, an individual. Signed: Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious name or names listed herein.. /s/: GUSTAVO COLLAZO
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 8/3/2009. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 9/1/2009, 9/8/2009, 9/15/2009, 9/22/2009



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NEW LISTING! OPEN TUESDAY Sept 8th 11-2

2254 21st Street
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$1,250,000
Great Sunset Park Home



NEW LISTING! OPEN TUESDAY Sept 8th 11-2

1037 16th Street #8
3 Bed, 3 Bath
$899,000
Beautiful N. of Wilshire Townhome



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1175 Amherst Avenue #3
2 Bed, 3 Bath
$659,000
Fabulous Value in Heart of Brentwood!



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Call for Appointment
123 Georgina Avenue #2
2 Bed, 2.5 Bath
$1,349,000
North of Montana Updated Townhouse



Easy to Show
Call for Appointment
201 Ocean Avenue #1009P
2 Bed, 2.5 Bath
$1,499,000
Condo w/ Ocean/Mountain Views



Easy to Show
Call for Appointment
1209 Arizona Avenue #2
2 Bed, 2 Bath
$979,000
Dramatic, Remodeled Penthouse



Easy to Show
Call for Appointment
3247 Mountain View Avenue
3 Bed, 1 Bath
$818,000
Wonderful Mar Vista Location!



Easy to Show
Call for Appointment
16730 Calle de Catalina
5 Bed, 3.75 Bath
$1,777,000
SFH w/ High Ceilings & Views



Easy to Show
Call for Appointment
275 Monte Grigio Drive
4 Bed, 2.5 Bath
$1,488,000
Palisades, SFH w/ Ocean/Canyon Views

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Median Price of ALL Santa Monica Properties Listed for Sale As of Early September 2009

	Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
Santa Monica Canyon	$2,499,000	$4,810,000
North of Montana	$2,800,000	$1,549,000
Between Wilshire & Montana	$1,973,500	$922,000
South of Wilshire	$874,500	$749,000
Sunset Park	$1,297,000	$644,250
Ocean Park	$1,598,500	$835,000

Statistics Updated Every Monday

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