

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

11 22 24 31 39
Meganumber: 22
Jackpot: 30 Million

FANTASY 5

3 9 18 34 37

DAILY 3

Daytime: 6 3 4
Evening: 0 5 7

DAILY DERBY

1st: 12 Lucky Charms
2nd: 08 Gorgeous George
3rd: 05 California Classic

RACE TIME: 1:42.47

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ A 27-year-old man, arrested in July after allegedly trying to rob a Bank of America in Enid, Okla., told police he merely intended to help repay the national debt.

■ Thomas Pinckney, 18, charged with trespass in Tomah, Wis., in June after a woman awoke at night to find him holding her arm, told police that he had found the woman's keys in her apartment door and was just trying to return them. (3) Mr. Thubten Dargyel, 53, who was arrested for sexual assault on a mentally disabled woman in Madison, Wis., in June, explained the presence of his semen by claiming that he ejaculates when he sneezes and that, in fact, he was surprised only that his semen doesn't show up on many other patients, too.

■ Two 16-year-old boys were hospitalized after trying to extract gunpowder (for July 4 fireworks) from shotgun shells by using a sledgehammer (Houston). A 19-year-old man used an explosive to blast a fire hydrant cap into the air on July 4 to see how far up it would go, but was hospitalized when the cap landed on his head (Chicago). A 17-year-old boy was killed when he peered down a mortar tube at the wrong time during a July 4 fireworks demonstration (Webster, Wis.).

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Take care of the luxuries and the necessities will take care of themselves."

DOROTHY PARKER (1893 - 1967)

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Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

A Santa Monica Police officer on Monday leaves the scene of a bank robbery at Encino State Bank on Wilshire Boulevard.

Bank robber takes cash from Encino

By Daily Press staff

WILSHIRE BLVD. — A man walked away with an undisclosed amount of cash Monday afternoon after he threatened a bank teller at Encino State Bank.

At 1:26 p.m., a man described as black, 35 years old, six feet tall, with dreadlocks and a slight beard, entered the bank, 720 Wilshire Blvd., and handed the teller a note demanding money, police said. The teller complied and the suspect left on foot with the cash.

Witnesses say the suspect was wearing a blue shirt, jeans and was carrying a construction-type hat. The bank was closed throughout the afternoon while Santa Monica Police detectives investigated the scene.

The last bank robbery in Santa Monica was on July 13 at US Bank, 2221 Santa Monica Blvd. Police closed off four blocks searching for the suspect, who was never found.

Train on the brain: Rail-Volution rolls through SM

Light rail seen as a transit option for commute to the westside

BY GENEVA WHITMARSH

Daily Press Staff Writer

HOLLYWOOD — Santa Monica officials continue to actively campaign for a light rail system that would link downtown LA to the west-

side, Mayor Richard Bloom told an audience of national transportation experts Monday.

Currently, the I-10/405 interchange ranks fifth among the nation's most congested highways, with the highest traffic volume heading west towards Santa Monica in the mornings. Once the rail is completed, Metro anticipates as many as 76,000 passengers a day.

"(We've) been meeting with Metro, and our message is that we want a light rail to come

Local man released from custody after feds take down global ecstasy ring

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

A Santa Monica man has been released from jail after he allegedly delivered 160,000 ecstasy pills to an undercover officer in a local parking lot last week.

Bohumel Chudoba, who lives on California Avenue, was arrested Sept. 13. He was released last week on a \$25,000 bond. Authorities say Chudoba allegedly delivered the drugs in a car, which was left in a parking space in Santa Monica. Inside the trunk were two large trash bags full of ecstasy, authorities allege.

Chudoba was one of 13 people arrested in recent weeks who were allegedly involved in an international drug ring that brought millions of doses of the club drug from Europe into the United States. Dubbed "Operation Money Man," authorities have seized more than 300,000 ecstasy pills, valued on the street at \$7 million.

The two-year investigation involved the DEA, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Santa Monica Police Department, and Austrian and Czech authorities.

Five people were arrested last week and eight others weeks before that. The individuals arrested are accused of being part of an international coalition that trafficked in ecstasy, and laundered the profits through real estate and bank fraud transactions. The investigation began in March of 2002 when agents learned that a group comprised primarily of Israeli nationals were trafficking the drugs into the Los Angeles area. Investigators believe the ring shipped more than 7 million ecstasy tablets from the Czech Republic to the United States, Poland, Australia and Russia.

The investigation quickly turned to Eliyahu Marciano, the alleged head of the

The individuals arrested are accused of being part of an international coalition that trafficked in ecstasy, and laundered the profits through real estate and bank fraud transactions.

organization.

Marciano, 29, of Hollywood, is being held without bail, said United States Attorney spokesman Thom Mrozek.

Through a liaison, Marciano allegedly contracted with a broker to purchase the drugs from the Netherlands, which were then shipped to him from other places in Europe, according an affidavit filed with the U.S. Attorney's Office. The proceeds were used to buy more drug shipments, and then were smuggled out of the United States or laundered through various businesses, according to the affidavit. Marciano and several of his associates were arrested on June 24.

Through wiretaps and sting operations, undercover agents were able to track several individuals throughout the Los Angeles area and Europe who were allegedly connected to Marciano. It appears that Chudoba was allegedly associated with three men — two in Prague and one in Brentwood.

Also arrested on Sept. 13 were Vaclav Pitas, 50, of Prague, and Oskar Benes, 44,

See DRUG RING, page 6



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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

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



♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ Choices might be forced on you that you would prefer not to make at this juncture. Get to work and concentrate. Perhaps you can avoid the situation. Your ability to get a job done well stars. Tonight: Check up on an older relative.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Your ability to be creative and come up with surprising solutions might have many knocking on your door. Add a touch more time into your day for people. Schedule a call to a friend at lunchtime, or visit during lunch. Tonight: Surprises happen for the romantic at heart.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Deal with a domestic matter that can't be put off any longer. Though you might wonder which way the situation will go, the end results will make you smile. A partnership or relationship is key. Use your instincts with a boss. Tonight: Let another make the first move.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ You might have different opinions from many, but through discussions, you'll reach a consensus. Your ability to talk through a problem and communicate is excellent. You find solutions this way. Tonight: Schedule a special weekend away.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★ Work, work and more work — is that all there is? Stop grumbling and look at why you work. If you're not happy in your present job, honestly evaluate a change. You spend way too many hours at the job to not like what you do. Tonight: Discuss this issue with a good friend.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ What you say, how you suggest it and what you might conjure up draw general applause. Use the magic of the day (ignoring all the flak) to enhance a personal or professional situation. Let your ingenuity loose. Tonight: So what if it is Tuesday?

♏ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★ Know when to vanish. By the afternoon, you have a very strong sense about a money matter or a communication issue. Follow through late in the day, and you'll get results. Meanwhile, don't forget work. Tonight: Burn the candle at both ends.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Your ability to be incisive and direct comes through, though you could make an associate or friend uncomfortable this morning. By the afternoon, in a meeting or just at a social get-together, the energy flows. Take off early if you want. Tonight: Be spontaneous.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Use the wee hours for yourself, but be ready to switch gears by the afternoon. Bosses demand your attention, and you need to be ready, willing and able. Don't think that your work performance isn't noticed. A family member wants more attention. Tonight: Juggle your many interests.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Swing into action this afternoon, when the Moon in your sign makes you the main star. Be willing to analyze and examine a hassle from many different angles. Get feedback. Once more, your unique perspective wins the day. Tonight: Catch up on news with a friend.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Use the morning to move along any key projects. An important call that you might have been postponing draws even better reactions than you had anticipated. You and this person have a mind-meld. Together you are resourceful. Tonight: Curl up with a good book.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Others make demands, and you put out. As a result, many follow your lead. Everyone wants to be a winner. A special person in your life does true confessions. You might be a bit taken aback. Tonight: Do only what you want, but just don't be alone.

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LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

The 'force' comes to Santa Monica

By Daily Press staff

On the release date of the much-anticipated DVD release of George Lucas' famed trilogy, the Santa Monica Drive-in tonight will feature the original Star Wars on the Santa Monica Pier, sponsored by HBO.

Admission is free, but tickets will be required for entry. Free tickets can be picked up between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. at any Santa Monica Visitors Center location: Santa Monica Place Mall, on the second floor on the west side; the visitor kiosk at 1400 Ocean Ave.; and the new visitor information cart on the Third Street Promenade between Arizona Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard. Check www.smff.com, or call (310) 458-8900 for additional outlets. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., show starts at sunset.

Except for the occasional special screening, the movie has not been available in large format since 1997, when the special edition was released for a short time. At www.liningup.net, a message site dedicated to helping movie fans connect for special events like premieres, Star Wars fanatics make arrangements to hand out flyers and make a strong showing. On www.theforce.net, fans plan to meet at the show.

In addition to the movie, KLSX 97.1 is offering voter registration facilities all day outside of the event for those who wish to register to vote or learn more about volunteering at polling places on election day.

The remaining Santa Monica Drive-In at the Pier dates are as follows:

Sept. 28: "Super Size Me" and the city of Santa Monica 10fest, celebrating 10 years of Santa Monica's sustainable plan, sponsored by the Sundance Channel.

Oct. 5: Special event, audience choice. Vote for your favorite at www.smff.com.

All proceeds from the event support "Cinema Fighting Cancer" programs and help fund the Cancer Relief Fund. Last year's drive-in helped support 13 families going through treatment. Founded in 1999, Deep Ellum Film, Music, Arts and Noise, Inc., (DEFMAN) is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization working to promote the art of filmmaking while raising funds to improve the quality of life for individuals fighting cancer. For more information on DEFMAN and "Cinema Fighting Cancer," visit www.smff.com for more information.

Thousands turn out for Malibu Triathlon

By Daily Press staff

The 18th Annual Nautica Malibu Triathlon jumped out to an early start Sunday morning with more than 2,000 participants at Zuma Beach.

Thousands of spectators arrived just after sunrise to cheer on celebrities, pro-athletes and weekend warriors, all competing in the challenging three-sport event. More than \$268,000 was raised to benefit the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

A large number of celebrities and Olympians were on hand to compete. Tate Donovan (The OC) was the winner in the Celebrity Individual Race. Dan Metcalfe (Kicking and Screaming) took second, followed by KABC's David Ono in third and David Duchovny (House of D) in fourth. Other notable finishes included Sen. Tom Torlakson in sixth place and Jon Cryer (Two And A Half Men) in 10th. On the women's side, Pamela Conley-Ulich of the Malibu City Council captured the win ,followed by Wendy Braun (Papparazzi), Deena Bennett (Survivor) and Maxine Bahns (She's The One).

The Entertainment Industry Challenge that brings out some of Hollywood's top companies featured 2004 Olympians Amanda Beard (USA) and Larsen Jensen

See BRIEFS, page 7



Wes Thompon is this week's mystery photo winner. Thompson correctly described where this photo was taken: The facade of Trastavere restaurant at the corner of the Third Street Promenade and Santa Monica Boulevard. Thompson has won a gift certificate to Over Under Sports Bar.

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SURF REPORT

Today we will see strong SSW swell (185-200) in the morning slowly wind down by the afternoon. Slightly decreased NW wind swell also will join the mix. For the southerly exposed and good combo beaches, look for easy shoulder- to head-high waves with some bigger sets. Look for the swell to be fading late in the day.

Expect 4 to 5 foot, shoulder- to head-high, occasionally 8 feet and fair to good conditions.

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

**Today the
water is:**

70°



LOW TIDES

HIGH TIDES

	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	5:30	1.7	6:55	0.7	12:01	4.3	11:54	5.7
SUNDAY	5:58	2.2	8:12	0.8	1:06	3.6	12:36	5.6
MONDAY	6:27	2.8	9:51	0.6	2:53	3.2	1:34	5.4
TUESDAY	N/A	N/A	11:23	0.3	N/A	N/A	3:00	5.3
WEDNESDAY	10:23	3.4	N/A	N/A	7:05	3.7	4:39	5.4
THURSDAY	12:29	-0.1	12:02	3.0	7:35	4.1	5:58	5.7
FRIDAY	1:19	-0.4	1:03	2.4	8:03	4.5	7:00	6.0

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The QLine

Since the 1990s, Santa Monica City Hall has been closed to the public every other Friday. It's part of a statewide effort to reduce car trips — to cut down on pollution and traf- fic.

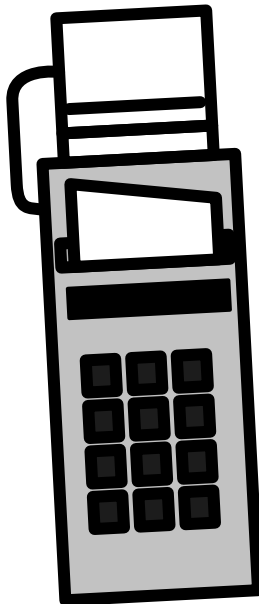
Several other cities also are part of the pro- gram, but practice it in different forms. In Santa Monica, employees are supposed to work 80 hours a week in nine days, with most taking the 10th day off. Other cities just reduce their staff levels and keep their services avail- able on Fridays.

But staff are considering opening some

departments, like building and safety, to the public five days a week. The idea was proposed in a recent study looking at inefficiencies with- in City Hall, which also suggested customer service needs improvement.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you think City Hall should be open five days a week? Why or why not?"

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



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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dems are not what they used to be

Editor:

If Nancy Winograd, of the Pacific Palisades Democratic Club, wants to say the "Democratic Party is listening" then she should have known that Cheryl D. Strong, the reader she criticized (SMDP, Sept. 17, page 4) for writing a letter (SMDP, Sept. 13, page 4) pointing out the proper way for the Democratic Headquarters in Santa Monica to display the flag was not voting for Bush/Cheney, as Ms. Winograd said, but clearly stated she was an independent.

Ms. Winograd, "if you're going to listen" without prejudice then you should first try to read without prejudice. Otherwise, you would seem to be saying anyone who gives directions on how to properly fly the flag must be some Bush/Cheney fanatic.

Also, don't be so sure the Democratic Party hasn't turned the same deaf ear to the middle class that you accuse the Republicans of. The Republican Presidents Reagan and Bush cut middle class taxes. The Democrat, Bill Clinton, promised a middle class tax cut but never delivered.

Also, it was the Democratic President Clinton who championed NAFTA, which has destroyed many of the manufacturing jobs that gave my parents, hard-working Italian immigrants with little education, the ability to be in the middle class.

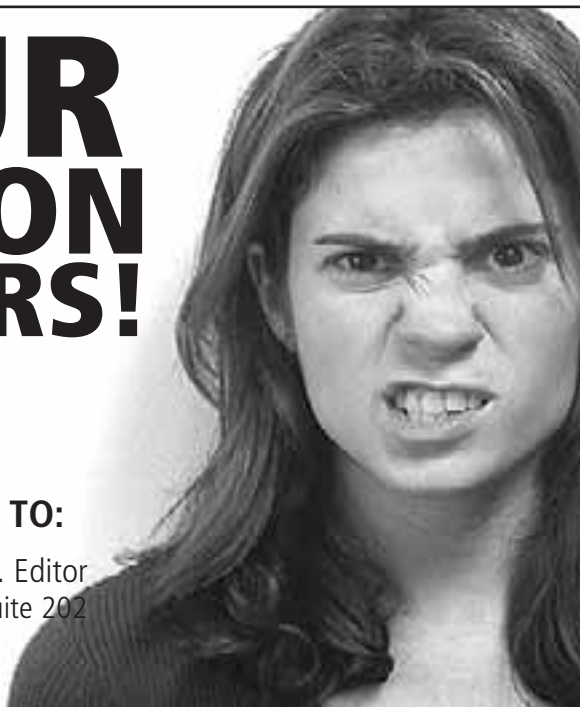
So, perhaps Ms. Winograd the present Democratic Party is not so dissimilar to the Republican Party. You must have been thinking of the old Democratic Party of Walter Mondale, Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern, the one I used to belong to. We've long since gone over to the true champion of the middle class, Ralph Nader. Also, Nader is the candidate of the poor. Your new Democratic Party, led by Mr. Clinton, helped bring us the welfare reform that set up the mechanisms that have left many of the current poor without a safety net.

Carmen Finestra
Santa Monica

YOUR OPINION MATTERS!

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Health insurance: A scam or a saving grace?



WHAT'S THE POINT?

BY DAVID PISSARRA

It's been called the biggest scam after car insurance. It's expensive, you might never use it, and you end up paying for someone else's bad decisions.

It's health insurance. The bane of all employers and the holy grail of employees. Everyone wants it, no one wants to pay for it, everyone agrees the system is a mess, and no one has any good ideas on how to fix it.

The problem is, it's all a matter of perspective. There are four parties involved: There is the patient, the payer (usually an employer), the insurer, and the medical services provider.

There are two primary types of health insurance: Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) and the Preferred Provider Organization (PPO). HMOs are closed systems that only allow a patient to see a doctor that is provided by the HMO.

HMOs are frequently less expensive, and they generally have no, or nominal co-pays. Kaiser Permanente Group is an example of an HMO, the cost for appointments is \$10 or \$15. The reason they can do this is that they keep their costs down. Their doctors are on salary, and their facilities are owned, which allows them to maximize their return on their investment in the buildings.

PPOs let a patient see any doctor they want, and the insurance company will pay the bill, in varying degrees. It is called "Preferred Provider," because the doctors and labs that are part of the network are "preferred" and consequently are paid a higher reimbursement rate than those doctors who are not. This is valuable to the patient because it lowers his co-pays, that amount the doctor is looking to the patient to provide. Patients with PPOs have an annual deductible — the amount of out-of-pocket money the patient must pay for his medical care.

Deductibles vary in amount from as little as \$250 up to \$2,000. In theory, their purpose is to ensure that a patient does not abuse the system. If a patient has to pay for some out of pocket expenses, they are less likely to run to the doctor for every little ache and pain. The problem is that those patients who are most likely to abuse their medical insurance get a low deductible and pay a slightly higher monthly premium, versus those patients who are not likely to abuse the doctor and get a high deductible and a lower monthly premium.

Of the three or four parties involved, the patient is clearly the party that wants to maximize the services provided, and covered by an insurance carrier. They want to pay their premiums, pay their deductible and then get as many services and procedures as possible in the next year, before they have to pay a new deductible. This is rational thinking on their part.

The payer, who is usually an employer, is always looking for ways to provide a

benefit to an employee while minimizing the costs to their bottom line. The employer would much prefer to pay for an HMO which is cheaper — but allows them to say they offer a health plan — than offer the more expensive PPO type of insurance. This too, is rational thinking.

The problem here is access to care. HMOs tend to make it more difficult to get care because that is their way of limiting costs and abuses by patients.

The PPO insurer wants to collect as much money as possible in the form of premiums and pay out as little as possible in claims. The difference between what they collect and what they pay is their profit. It is certainly understandable that they would therefore want to pay claims slowly, deny as many as possible, and limit their costs.

Then there is the doctor, nurse, hospital, or laboratory. They are stuck in the middle between the insurers who are constantly putting pressure on them to limit costs on procedures and treatments, and the patients who always want another test done. The medical professionals are in the most difficult position because they must decide what treatments are truly necessary, and which can wait or be avoided.

As a patient, we want to pay as little as possible in our premiums. But what we must remember is that the costs of treatment are spread across all the insureds. So while an individual may not have actually used his insurance, if the group upon which his coverage is based has used the insurance, the overall costs of the group must be spread out, and that is what causes increases in premiums.

Medical care in our society is like a good news/bad news joke. The good news is that we have more capabilities to cure disease, prevent death, and improve life expectancies and the quality of life. The bad news is that this is all very expensive in terms of the research that is required to find the answers, the required manufacturing to provide and distribute the answers, and those costs must be spread out among all those who have insurance.

The more that we know about how to save life, the more it costs us as a society. The better we become at improving medical care also means we have more people living longer, who are the ones most likely to require greater medical care.

For example, I was speaking the other day with a man who was upset that his insurance premiums had doubled to more than \$400 a month. It turned out that his wife had undergone a radical mastectomy. He estimated that she received \$250,000 worth of medical care. At \$200 a month, it would take 1,250 months to pay back the care she received. That is 104 years. Even at \$400 a month it is 625 months of premiums or 52 years, assuming she never sees a doctor again.

Health insurance is definitely expensive, but when you look at it from a different angle, it makes more sense.

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

OPINION

Celebrity sightings: Who cares about them anyway?

ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL

One of the perks about living in LA is not so much the people that run into you on the freeways, but the people you bump into walking around town. You don't usually see your neighbors as often as if you lived in a town of 10,000, but you do run into some people that can give you a different sort of glow — celebrities.

As much as I say I'm not star-struck, I never turn down the opportunity to tell someone what famous person I saw this week. All in all, you gotta admit it's fun to call your friends and tell them you saw Steven Spielberg eating lunch while they saw your fourth grade teacher at Taco Bell. And the great thing about having so many prominent actors in LA, not to mention the plethora just on the brink of a comeback via reality shows, is that you're always bound to have an interaction with one of them. The fact that the excitement isn't reciprocal is besides the point.

And we all have our list we spout out to people when this specific phrase ensues: "Oh, I bet you see a lot of celebrities living in LA." Yes we do. So here's mine.

In my walks down old Malibu Road when I actually lived in Malibu, I ran into Adam Sandler and John Cusack as Cusack was moving in. I had my headphones on, though, and was wearing a two-piece and jean shorts for tanning purposes. So unfortunately I just ignored them as I thought they were checking me out. It wasn't until the neighbor at the next house stopped me to asked if I knew who I had just past that I finally realized who they were. Needless to say, I was embarrassed I had been rude for no apparent reason.

My sister and I were walking around Westwood one night, and who pops up in front of us but Paul Walker. He thought my sister was cute, and she is, but 20 15-year-olds thought he was cute and rushed after him at the next stoplight. We later deduced from the blinking marquis and big hullabaloo in front of the theater that "Fast and the Furious 2" was premiering that night.

Down at Cross Creek in Malibu I always run into celebs. I saw Martin Sheen eating lunch with a friend and just today saw Dean Kane playing with these blondy kids which I assume are his children. But you also see the more struggling-types down there, like the witchy girl (Jodi Lyn O'Keefe) in "She's All That," and the underwear model (Andrew Keegan) in "Ten Things I hate about You." I don't think O'Keefe had to act very hard as she came across the very same way on screen as off.

The funny thing is that some stars, usually the struggling ones, are dying for you to notice them, and

literally stand out for 10 minutes at a time in a parking lot, while others just want to be left alone. Mark McKinney from "Kids in the Hall" was extremely low-pro when we saw him walking down Montana Avenue. The football jock from "Can't Hardly Wait" was extremely chill when filling up at a 76 station and surprised I even recognized them. And then there are others like Dick Van Dyke who adorably whistle when they're behind you in line at Sav-On. Chim chim charoo.

But the problem with celebrity sightings is I often don't see them the first time around, making me do a conspicuous 360 to get them on my radar. I think I inherited it from my mom who yelled out "Where's Kevin Bacon? Who's Kevin Bacon anyway?" as he sat four tables away from us in Marmalade Cafe.

So needless to say, a scene like that ensued this past Friday as my boyfriend and I attended the opening night of "Movin' Out." Photographers were ready to take pictures not so much of the performers in the production, but the celebrities swarming the event. Jennifer Love-Hewitt I hear was supposedly there, and Billy Joel of course attended and even played two songs at the end of the performance.

The ones that struck me as we saw them mingling in the lobby were Donald Faison, the guy from "Scrubs," "Can't Hardly Wait" and "Clueless," kicking it with his girlfriend; some guy from M.A.S.H. (my boyfriend pointed him out), as well as Henry Winkler, best known as the Fonze. That's when I did a 360 and said "Whait, where's the Fonze." I finally saw him and noticed Winkler rolling his eyes. I think it's sad when they see you before you do.

But what I most noticed with all these celebrities Friday was how normal they were. Their girlfriends weren't outlandish in the newest Etro getup. They didn't make any special effort to be noticed, or necessarily even want to be. They were just doing everyday things like getting snow-caps at the theater's concession stand, and standing there as they knew no one either. So I guess the next time I see a celebrity on Santa Monica Boulevard, I probably will still tell someone, but I'll do my very best to be less conspicuous about it than they are.

(Heidi Manteuffel is a resident of Santa Monica and a freelance writer. To reach her, e-mail to anydayinla@gmail.com).

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LOCAL

Indictments on alleged dealers expected next month

DRUG RING, from page 1

of Prague — who allegedly headed the European organization that shipped the drugs to L.A.

According to the affidavit, Pitas and Benes met with an undercover DEA agent on Aug. 19 to negotiate the purchase of 150,000 ecstasy pills to be shipped into the U.S. Pitas and Benes told the agent that another man, Martin Celner, 40, of Brentwood, had about 125,000 pills available, according to the affidavit.

The deal was made that Celner would deliver the drugs inside the trunk of a Chrysler Vision at a previously agreed upon parking lot in Santa Monica where Celner would park the car and wait for the undercover agent, according to the affi-

davit. Once visual contact was made between Celner and the agent, Celner would place the keys under the car's floor mat and leave the vehicle. The agent would then take the car, remove the drugs and bring the car back to its location in one hour, according to the affidavit.

On Sept. 13 at about 10 a.m., the agent arrived at the location and watched Celner cross the parking lot. Celner called the agent on his cell phone and told him the car would arrive shortly. Within minutes, the car was allegedly delivered by Chudoba where he nodded to Celner and walked away, according to the affidavit. Celner waved and pointed the car out to the agent, and then left the area, authorities said.

Benes and Pitas, who were in Vienna,

Austria to receive payment for the pills from a purported associate of the undercover agent, have been arrested. Celner was arrested about an hour later as he returned to the parking lot to get the car.

Also arrested in the sting operation were:

■ Nimrod Haim, 27, of Prague, who allegedly brokered ecstasy deals between Pitas and Marciano.

■ Hillel Shamam, 38, of Woodland Hills, who allegedly helped Marciano launder drug proceeds through real estate transactions.

■ Sanny Assoulin, 30, of Sherman Oaks, an alleged ecstasy distributor.

■ Vladimyr Frazilus, 35, of Aliso Viejo and West Los Angeles, who allegedly trafficked in ecstasy.

■ Eden Guerrier, 29, of West Hollywood, who allegedly purchased ecstasy from Marciano and acted as a courier.

■ Vince Wilson, 39, of Paramount, who allegedly arranged for the transportation of ecstasy to the U.S. on behalf of Marciano.

■ Tyreisha Lashon Baldwin, 20, of Watts, who allegedly traveled to Belgium to ship ecstasy to the U.S.

■ Yossi Mashiah, 46, an illegal alien, was in state custody on narcotics charges at the time of the takedown.

The federal government has until Oct. 26 to indict all of the defendants. Those who have been arrested abroad will be extradited to the U.S., which could take up to 60 days, Mrozek said.

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Tour highlights Santa Monica 'green' projects

RAIL, from page 1

Runoff Recycling Facility (SMURFF), which reduces storm water pollution that flows into the Santa Monica Bay.

Following Bloom's speech, a group of 45 attendees boarded a bus to tour both those spots and others, including the right-of-way that would be used for light rail.

Metro officials say current plans call for a 9.6-mile line extending along the MTA-owned Exposition right-of-way from the existing metro rail station at 7th/Metro in downtown LA to Venice/Washington in Culver City, with an initial segment constructed at least to Vermont Avenue adjacent to Exposition Park. The rail line would then end near the Civic Center area in Santa Monica, possibly where the Sears building now sits on Colorado Avenue.

But progress is slow: MTA began work on the Mid-City/Westside Transit Corridor Study in 1999, but isn't scheduled to break ground until 2007 with completion of the Venice/Washington station as distant as 2012.

"The westside cities joined together to do a mobility study and found that though we generate 10 percent of income, we get .01 percent of transportation dollars," said Kathryn Vernez, assistant to the city manager for government relations. "The Expo Light Rail is the best hope to get people

out of their cars and into mass transportation. Now it's just a question of getting it built."

In addition to a stop at a Exposition right-of-way, attendees of the sold-out tour learned about Bergamont Station, the downtown housing project and urban design plan, the Third Street Promenade, Colorado Court's "green" affordable housing and the new public safety facility.

"Anyone who's been to Santa Monica knows transportation is the most significant challenge," Bloom said while discussing the city's \$7 million investment into improving the 20 miles of key traffic corridors in Santa Monica through such means as widening curbs and installing flashing cross signals.

Bloom said such achievements "didn't just happen, and didn't just happen overnight." He encouraged attendees hoping to follow the city's example to incorporate the help of residents and businesses, use a holistic approach and remember that vision and perseverance are more important than the starting point.

He then showed the audience a picture of the Santa Monica Pier ferris wheel, which is solar powered through the help of a 50 kilowatt rooftop system.

"What we're doing here is proving you can find opportunity for sustainability in the most unlikely of places," he said.

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Film production embezzler sentenced to probation

By Daily Press staff

Cody Cluff, the former head of Entertainment Industry Development Corp. that promotes film production in Los Angeles County, was sentenced Monday to three years probation and ordered to pay \$80,000 for embezzling public funds, prosecutors announced.

"The lesson of Cody Cluff and the EIDC is a simple one — accountability is indispensable to our system of government," LA District Attorney Steve Cooley said. "City and county elected officials must be vigilant in overseeing any entity empowered by government to collect and spend public fees and taxes."

In May, Cluff pleaded no contest to

embezzlement and admitted the special allegation that the money he stole was public money. As part of the plea, he agreed to repay \$80,000 and was sent to prison for 90 days. The Department of Corrections will assess whether he should remain in prison or be released on probation.

Judge Larry P. Fidler sentenced Cluff after a Department of Corrections report found Cluff was suitable for probation. Cluff was given credit for 136 days of time served in jail and prison.

The Los Angeles County Grand Jury indicted Cluff, 45, of Covina, in August 2003 of embezzling more than \$150,000 between Jan. 1, 1996, and Dec. 31, 2002, while Cluff headed EIDC. He resigned

after the investigation into the activities of EIDC began.

Prosecutors alleged Cluff spent money on strip clubs, vacation trips including a fantasy baseball camp in the Dominican Republic and personal club memberships. The indictment also alleged he donated thousands of dollars to Covina High School, where his children attended school, and sent money to help establish the Pittsburgh Film Office.

The grand jury indictment, returned Aug. 19 after a two-week hearing and a yearlong investigation, also named EIDC general manager Darryl Seiff in two of the

11 counts for improperly obtaining city of Los Angeles badges. The 38-year-old Seiff, of the Mt. Olympus area, pleaded no contest to one misdemeanor count of forgery and was sentenced in June to three years probation and ordered to pay \$1,000 fine.

Investigators conducted a thorough nationwide investigation into the activities of EIDC, including serving search warrants in Pennsylvania with the assistance of Pittsburgh authorities. Throughout the investigation, the D.A.'s office has maintained that EIDC is a public agency and that its funds were public money.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BRIEFS, from page 3

(USA), as well as LA County Sheriff Lee Baca and actors Mark-Paul Gosselaar (NYPD Blue), Felicity Huffman (Desperate Housewives), and Emily Procter (CSI Miami). In the men's relay division, Team NYPD Blue seized first place with Jensen, a 2004 Olympic Silver Medalist, swimming the first leg followed by Gosselaar on the bike and Elton Lewis running to the finish line for the victory. Team Nautica finished second in the men's relay followed by Sheriff Lee Baca's Team in third. In the co-ed relay division, top-finisher Team Less Than Perfect outlasted Team ABC and Team George of The Jungle 2. 2004 Olympic Gold Medalist Amanda Beard's Team Disney, which consisted of Ingo Rademacher (General Hospital) and Disney President Bob Iger, finished seventh.

Some of the best triathletes in the world competed in the Pro Division race. 2000 Olympic Silver Medalist Michellie Jones (San Diego) was victorious for the women with a time of 1:30:30. Jessi Stensland (San Diego) finished second in 1:31:32 and Nicole Newton (San Diego) third in 1:42:26. In the men's pro, Derek Kite (Malibu) took home first place in 1:23:30 with Ted Simpkins (Santa Rosa) second in 1:24:22 and Mark Lees (Los Angeles) third with a time of 1:25:11.

The triathlon course consisted of a half-mile swim in the ocean, an 18-mile bike ride along the Pacific Coast Highway, and ended with a four-mile scenic run to Point Dume and back. Racers were immediately confronted with fierce conditions as they began swimming against high surf and a strong rip current.

As title sponsor, Nautica has now helped raise close to \$800,000 to benefit The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation. The foundation creates a future of hope for children and families worldwide by eradicating pediatric AIDS, providing care and treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS, and accelerating the discovery of new treatments for other serious and life-threatening pediatric illnesses.

The Nautica Malibu Triathlon will be televised on Fox Sports Net on Oct. 16.

Ocean proves to be a killer

By The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG — Randy Fry loved the ocean. On an August afternoon, it killed him when a shark struck suddenly, making Fry the 10th known great white fatality off the California coast.

Fry, who loved fishing and diving for abalone and spent much of his time organizing anglers and lobbying for recreational fishing, was floating on the surface above a kelp bed when he was attacked.

His friend, Cliff Zimmerman, said he thinks Fry didn't know what hit him.

"It was the most dramatic thing I ever

saw in my life," Zimmerman, who was swimming alongside him, told the San Francisco Chronicle. "It's just not real. This monster came so fast, it happened so fast and was over so fast you think, 'How can this happen?'"

The odds of being attacked by a shark are long. Hundreds of thousands of people swim, dive or surf along the California coast. In the 54 years shark attacks have been recorded, there have been 86 attacks.

Zimmerman said Fry would get mad when there was talk about sharks attacking divers and say the odds were a hundred times greater of getting killed driving to the beach.

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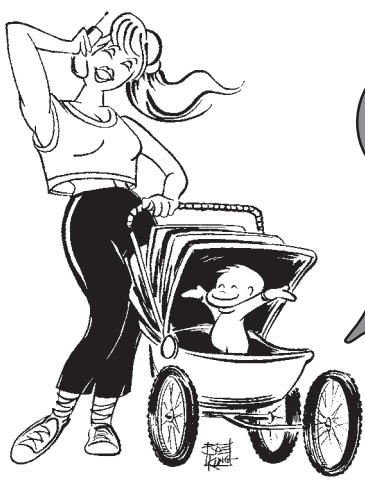
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Santa Monica

A weekly look at events and programs for

Eating right is key to a healthy baby and an easy pregnancy

By Daily Press staff

Have you heard the old saying that pregnant women are "eating for two?" As it turns out, there is a fair amount of truth to it. The trick, however, is to remember that when you are pregnant you aren't eating for any two people, but for two people with highly specific nutritional needs.

Good nutrition while you are pregnant can counteract and even help prevent the risks of low birth weight, susceptibility to infection and birth defects in your baby.

Maintaining a healthy balanced diet and taking the prenatal vitamins prescribed by your doctor can save you from the pain and heartbreak of a premature delivery. Because deficiency in zinc levels is tied to early labor, women who eat a balanced diet and take the recommended daily doses of vitamins and minerals are less likely to deliver early than those who do not, said officials at Saint John's Health Care Center. Premature birth can cause heart, brain and lung problems in your baby.

A healthy diet doesn't only mean knowing what to eat — it also means knowing what to avoid. Some foods have high levels of mercury that can be harmful to your baby's development. Foods with high levels of mercury

include most large fish — swordfish, shark, king mackerel and salmon.

Certain other foods can put you and your baby at risk for bacteria related problems. Those foods include soft cheeses like brie, feta and blue cheese, as well as raw oysters and uncooked eggs.

Good nutrition while you are pregnant can positively impact your comfort level, fatigue, morning sickness, constipation and leg cramps.

Good nutrition also affects postpartum recovery. A well-nourished body can recover from birth more quickly and weight gained at a sensible rate during pregnancy will come off more easily once the baby is delivered.

When you are pregnant, it's very important to think before you drink. Alcohol, of course, should be avoided. The affects to your baby of drinking alcohol when pregnant can include brain damage and other birth defects.

Staying hydrated is important because water carries waste products out of your body, and helps your liver and kidneys to function properly. If you are pregnant during the summer or live in a hot climate, it is important to drink plenty of water. Dehydration can cause premature labor and other physical problems.

As soon as you think you might be pregnant, visit your doctor and ask for a recommended diet.

For women who do have complications due to poor nutrition during pregnancy, hospitals offer dedicated perinatal facilities.

Women facing risk during pregnancy or delivery, because of poor nutrition or for any reason, can be referred by their obstetrician to Saint John's Perinatology Services at approximately 20 weeks of pregnancy. The women's health center, which occupies the entire fourth floor of Saint John's state-of-the-art inpatient facility, features specially equipped exam and fetal-monitoring rooms for women requiring an extra level of supervision during pregnancy.

So, if you are pregnant, start eating right. If you find yourself suffering from poor nutrition during pregnancy, talk to your doctor.

Good nutrition can reverse many adverse symptoms and the perinatal services at hospitals like Saint John's can help you through your pregnancy to the safe delivery of a happy, healthy baby.

Delivering a baby has become a family affair at the hospital

By Daily Press staff

The days when nervous dads paced the waiting room with cigars in hand are long gone.

The overwhelming majority of pregnant women plan to have their husband or partner in the delivery room with them throughout labor and birth. In fact, it is becoming more common for sisters, mothers and best friends to join the party and provide support during labor.

Hospitals around the world actively encourage husbands, partners and loved ones to participate in the birthing process. Many hospitals are working to make delivery rooms more comfortable and accommodating. For example, the birthing suites in the new women's health center at Saint John's Health Center can accommodate one or more enthusiastic birthing coach. The suites also feature 42-inch plasma screen TV monitors and surround sound stereo equipment.

After the birth, dads and birthing coaches often want to stay close to the new baby and mother. Hospitals encourage this new trend and often provide an in-room bed or couch for overnight visitors.

At Saint John's, for example, an extra-long convertible window seat is built into every patient room. During the day, the window seat offers a resting place that complements the 10 standard patient rooms and the 12 birthing suites in the women's health center. At night, the couch converts to a full-length bed.

When a baby is delivered prematurely or is critically ill, new moms need extra support from their loved ones. At times like that, it is important to be close at hand to spend time with and care for the baby.

"After Matthew was born, all I wanted to do was hold him and take care of him," said Alison Alexander, whose son was born eight weeks prematurely. "It would have been so easy for me to completely ignore my husband,

John, and ignore the fact that he also wanted to help Matthew however he could. Fortunately, we were together through everything. John was a tremendous source of support for me and I know I was able to help him. Matthew is doing just fine now, and I think we are a stronger family for all that we went through."

The women's health center features a family stay apartment, which is set up to give parents 24-hour access to the nurseries. The apartment allows parents to cook their own meals and, most importantly, gives them a place where they can be together and spend time with their baby in a home-like environment.

In hospitals everywhere, dads and partners are taking their places in the delivery room.

"Being there for the birth is the most amazing thing in the world," said John Alexander. "I wouldn't have missed it for the world."

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41st ANNUAL OCTOBERFAIR at ST. MONICA'S CHURCH
This wonderful community event features rides, games, music, food and lots of fun for the whole family. 5k Run and Fun Walk is Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. If you have young children up to 3 years old, don't miss out on the Diaper Dash, Saturday at 11:00 a.m. Register on-line or day of race. Father Willie's Chili Cook-off is Friday night. For details visit www.stmonica.net or call 383-9287. Located at 725 California St. Hours: Fri. – 6 – 11 p.m., Sat. – 10 a.m. – 11 p.m., Sun. – 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 26th – 20th ANNUAL ABBOT KINNEY FESTIVAL
This annual festival features music, arts & crafts, Children's Court, food and all-around Venice fun. Located on Abbot Kinney Blvd. between Venice Blvd. and Main St. Hours are 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Visit www.abbotkinney.org or call 396-3772 for more info.

CITY of SANTA MONICA COMMUNITY CLASSES – FALL SESSION
Registration is underway for a variety of classes for infant, pre-school and school age children including sports, dance, arts and crafts, drama and gymnastics. For details check out the latest edition of SeaScape or visit www.santa-monica.org (click "About Santa Monica" banner, then "RecScape/Recreation Guide.") Some classes have already begun, but most begin the first week of October.

SATURDAYS thru SEPT. 25th – 1:00 – 1:30 p.m.
YMCA NUTRITION, HEALTH and WELLNESS FAMILY SEMINARS
Learn how to eat smart and healthy for parents and children. Free!
Santa Monica YMCA, 1332 6th St., Teen Fitness Center, 3rd floor, 393-2721, ex. 137.

MONDAY, SEPT. 27th - FAMILY CONNECTIONS - 10:00 a.m.
This free program from SMMUSD's Infant and Family Support Program, provided by St. John's Health Center, features a different speaker each week. Immediately following Lap Time(story time for ages 0-24 months) at Joslyn Park, Craft Room, 633 Kensington Rd. Call 452-6132 or e-mail ifsp@smmusd.org for more info.

BABY MASSAGE CLASSES at the SM YMCA
Infants 5 months – 1 year: Mondays, Sept. 27th & Oct. 4th, 10:00 a.m. – noon
Register for this two-part workshop at the

YMCA located at 1332 6th St. or call 393-2721 for more info. Fees: Free for YMCA members, \$50 for non-members.

REGISTER NOW! – FAMILY ENRICHMENT and PARENT EDUCATION COURSE – brought to you by the SMMUSD's Infant & Family Support Program.
Tuesdays Oct. 12 – Nov. 16, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Instructor: Marilyn McGrath, M.S., Director of Early Childhood Institute at SMC. The class is FREE, but a \$20 refundable registration fee is required. Classes will be held at Child Development Services, Library, 2802 Fourth St., Santa Monica. Call the IFSP at 452-6132 to register or for more info.

SATURDAYS, OCT. 16th & 23rd – COMMUNITY CPR, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Brought to you by the SMMUSD Infant and Family Support Program, provided by St. John's Health Center. The sessions are FREE, but a \$20 refundable registration deposit is required. Contact the IFSP at 452-6132 to register.
October 16th in Spanish, October 23rd in English.

Special Note – Mommy Care classes at the Dance Factory have moved to 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood. Please see the calendar listings for schedule updates.

TUESDAY

Movies for Moms!
"Silver City" starring Danny Huston, Maria Bello and Billy Zane.
Drama/Mystery; Rated "R."
11:00 a.m., Loews Broadway, 1441 3rd St. Promenade – for Moms and babies newborn – 1 year old. Doors open early for socializing and getting comfortable.
www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms.

Storytelling
Main Library – held at Reed Park, corner of 7th and Wilshire.
Toddler Storytime; 10:00 & 10:30 a.m. For 2 year olds with adult.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
Cuentos Para Pequenos – 10:00 a.m., six-week series in Spanish for 24 – 36 month olds with adult. Thru Oct. 12.
Lap Time – 11:00 a.m, six-week series for babies 0-24 months, co-sponsored by the SMMUSD Infant & Family Support Programs. Thru Oct. 12.
Twilight Story Time -7pm – an ongoing program for 3-5 year olds.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Family Story Time – 7:00 p.m., all ages.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.
Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 24-36 month olds with adult. Next session begins Sept.

21, registration required.
Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis
Themes change weekly; for ages infant to 3. 11:00 a.m. 116 North Robertson, Plaza A, LA. 310-358-2500, www.storyopolis.com
Barnes and Noble at the Grove
Storytime for ages 2 – 6. 10:00 a.m. 189 Grove Drive, LA, 323-525-0270

Yoga & Exercise
Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA
10:00 – 11:00 a.m and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members \$90 for 10 classes. (also Thursday nights 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.
Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

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

WEDNESDAY

Storytelling
The Talking Stick Coffee Lounge – 1630 Ocean Park Blvd., 450-6052
10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4 at this neighborhood coffee shop.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
Preschool Story Time – 10:30 a.m.,; six-week series for 3-5 year olds with adult. Thru Oct. 13.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Lap Time - 10:00 & 10:30 a.m., for ages 0-2.
Toddler Story Time – 11:15 a.m., for 2 year olds.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. –392-3804.
Preschool Twilight Story Time – 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Parents/children ages 3-5.
Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 2 pm – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144
Border's, Westwood – 11am – 310-475-3444.

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

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

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

THURSDAY

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

Yoga & Exercise
Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA
7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members \$90 for 10 classes. (also Tuesdays at 10:00 – 11:00 a.m and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

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

FRIDAY

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

wonderful world of imagination Fridays at the Electric Lodge. 9:45 – 10:45 a.m. ages 14 - 24 months; 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. ages 2 – 4.
6 classes for \$75 or \$14 per class. First class free! 1416 Electric Ave, Venice, 306-1854.

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

SATURDAY

Storytelling
Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – *Kid's Story Time – 10am – 310-260-9110*
Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – *10:30am – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144.*
Children's Book World, 10580 1/2 Pico Blvd, LA - 10:30 a.m., 310-559-B00K.
Village Books, 1049 SwarthmoreAve, Pacific Palisades – 10:30 a.m. – 454-4063.

Yoga & Exercise
Santa Monica Yoga – Pre- & Post-Natal Yoga, Saturdays – 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. 1640 Ocean Park Blvd, 396-4040, www.santamonica yoga.com
Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.(babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Other
Snowwhite, a brand new musical for kids of all ages, at the Santa Monica Playhouse
Saturdays & Sundays at 12:30 & 3:00 p.m. thru Sept. 26, \$12 adults, \$10 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 1 for reservations, www.santamonicaplayhouse.com
Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested
Magicopolis – 2 and 8 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$20 for evening, \$15 for matinee. Call 310-451-2241 for info.
Precious Prints – Ceramic Heirlooms for a Lifetime
Second Saturday every month at The Pump Station, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Contact Kristan

Ritchie at 310-802-8013 or visit www.preciousprintstudios.com for more info.
Sept. 25th - Nature Walk (Children's Nature Institute)
Temescal Canyon, 15601 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades, 10:00 a.m.
Reservations – 998-1151 or www.children-snatureinstitute.org

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

SUNDAY

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

MONDAY

Storytelling
Main Library – Lap Time at Joslyn Park, Craft Room, 9:30 a.m. A series for babies up to two years old.
"Family Connections" - 10:00 a.m. Joslyn Park, Craft Room.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main Street, 310-392-3804.
"Spanish for Little Ones", 11:15 a.m. Thru Oct. 18.
Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – Toddler Story Time – 10am – 310-260-9110

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

Yoga & Exercise
Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, \$15
Yoga Garden, - Restorative yoga for pre/postnatal – 6:30 p.m., 310-450-0133.
www.yogagardenstudios.com



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STATE

Political insider emerges as stem cell's biggest patron

BY PAUL ELIAS

AP Biotechnology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO —Over three decades, Bob Klein amassed a fortune by building and financing low-income housing. After his 14-year-old son was diagnosed with diabetes in 2001, however, he redirected his considerable political clout and business savvy.

The longtime Democrat has since become one of the biggest private patrons of human embryonic stem cell research — medical technology that many scientists believe can someday cure a wide range of ailments, including diabetes.

“As a father you can’t turn your back on something like this,” Klein said. “I’m committed totally to this.”

Stem cells appear in the first days after conception and create all the cells, tissues and organs that make up the human body. Scientists hope to someday cure disease by transplanting healthy stem cells into sick people.

Diabetes researchers say they may someday be able to turn stem cells into insulin-producing cells, which could be implanted in diabetics and eliminate the need for injections.

But stem cell research is contentious, and the issue has become presidential campaign fodder. The Roman Catholic Church, many evangelical Christians and other moral conservatives oppose the research because embryos are destroyed in the process.

With polls showing overwhelming support for stem cell research, Democrat John Kerry has promised to give scientists more freedom than the Bush administration, which has restricted funding of the work, sending stem cell researchers scrambling for financial support wherever they can find it.

Klein, 59, a tan and fit resident of the Portola Valley near Palo Alto, has become one of the most outspoken

advocates of stem cell research.

He’s using his fortune and political connections to create and back Proposition 71, a California ballot measure that would have the state borrow \$3 billion to fund stem cell research over 10 years. That contribution dwarfs all other support combined, including the \$25 million provided by the federal government last year.

Klein drafted the proposition’s language and provided an initial \$1 million last year to launch a petition drive to qualify the measure for the Nov. 2 ballot. He’s kicked in another \$1 million and is the campaign’s chairman and chief fund-raiser for an effort that has raised an additional \$10 million.

By contrast, the opposition campaign has raised only \$150,000.

“He’s a skillful lobbyist in the halls of Sacramento,” California’s capital, said Willie Brown, former San Francisco mayor and speaker of the state Assembly until 1995. “He has set about to use those extraordinary skills in his personal quest to get government to do something.”

Klein is also a board member of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, which committed \$20 million to stem cell scientists and has emerged as one of the research’s most outspoken proponents. It has contributed \$1 million to the California campaign.

To focus on finding a cure for diabetes, Klein gave up his board membership on the California Housing Financing Agency, which he helped create in 1974. The agency, which helps first-time home buyers, lends about \$1.2 billion at below-market rates each year.

“He’s given his heart and soul to the board, and the agency is something he’s extremely proud of,” said Theresa Parker, the agency’s executive director. “But he has to do this now, and to have the passion he has is tremendously impressive.”

Klein still heads Klein Financial Corp., which focuses

on building low-income housing in desirable neighborhoods in projects that make money for their investors. The company is well-respected on both Wall Street and among nonprofit housing organizations — not an easy feat in an industry whose reputation is marred by slumlords.

Besides Klein, well-heeled parents of other sick children, including Hollywood executives Jerry and Janet Zucker and Douglas Wick and his wife Lucy Fisher, have contributed money and time to the “Yes on 71” campaign. Silicon Valley venture capitalists and technology industry billionaires, including Microsoft Corp. chairman Bill Gates, also have made large contributions.

“It has become a cause celebre,” said state Sen. Deborah Ortiz, a Democrat who sponsored a law passed last year endorsing stem cell research in the state. “Stem cell research has emerged as a new hot-button, national issue.”

Though Klein and his supporters have outraised the opposition campaign, the vote could be a cliffhanger. A state poll conducted in early August showed 45 percent of the 534 likely voters in support of Proposition 71, and 42 percent in opposition. That’s within the margin of sampling error of 4.5 percentage points. The rest were undecided.

The main opposition funders are the Catholic Church and the wealthy evangelical Christian Howard Ahmanson. Opponents say the measure will put the woefully indebted California further in arrears.

“We understand the personal motivation of people like Bob Klein,” said Wayne Johnson, manager of the opposition campaign. “But there’s something about great wealth that people have an expectation of entitlement that average Americans and average California’s don’t share.”

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NATIONAL



Tucson Diocese files for bankruptcy protection

BY ARTHUR H. ROTSTEIN
Associated Press Writer

TUCSON, Ariz. — The Roman Catholic Diocese of Tucson filed for bankruptcy protection Monday under the weight of debt and pending litigation from clerical sex abuse cases.

The diocese is only the second in the nation to seek the protection of a bankruptcy court in the wake of extensive and continuing legal action stemming from sexual abuse of children by parish priests.

The Portland (Ore.) Archdiocese was the first when it filed July 6. The Archdiocese of Boston and the Diocese of Dallas both considered filing for bankruptcy protection but avoided doing so.

The Tucson diocese’s decision to file will subject its financial operations to court scrutiny for the first time, and potentially open the way for non-church interference.

Tucson Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas had signaled his intent in June, telling parishioners in a letter that bankruptcy protection appeared to be the only option remaining for the diocese, which serves some 350,000 Catholics in 75 parishes.

In 2002, the Tucson diocese settled 11 lawsuits filed by 16 plaintiffs, including 10 victims who claimed abuse by four of its priests. Most of the abuse was alleged to have occurred from the 1960s through the 1990s. The settlement amount wasn’t disclosed.

By the latest count, 22 more lawsuits with 34 plaintiffs have been brought against the diocese, all involving abuse allegations.

According to its financial statement, the diocese had

\$4.65 million in long-term debt and a \$7 million deficit in unrestricted net assets as of June 30.

Kicanas said in a letter Monday to parishioners that the filing of a voluntary petition for a Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization represents “the best opportunity for healing and for the just and fair compensation of those who suffered sexual abuse by workers for the church in our diocese.”

He said the diocese has tried its best to settle the lawsuits against it.

"I could not have agreed to a settlement if it would have meant stripping the diocese of everything and thus limiting our ability to respond to the needs of others who have been hurt who may come forward in the future," the bishop said, adding that the diocese would keep trying to resolve the lawsuits during the reorganization.

The reorganization plan calls for most creditors to be paid through the diocese’s regular operation. Plaintiffs in sex abuse cases, however, would be paid through a special pool, said Susan Boswell, the diocese bankruptcy attorney.

The pool would include \$3.2 million from the diocese in addition to money contributed by insurance companies and others the diocese believes should share responsibility, she said. It is not clear how large the total pool would be.

Abuse victims could either seek a jury trial or a judgment from a court-appointed official on their claims.

Lynne Cadigan, an attorney for numerous people who settled with the diocese as well as others with pending cases, said the diocese had no choice but to file for protection because there are many more potential claims.

Kicanas “is using this bankruptcy as a public relations tool to make the victims appear to be the predators of the

diocese,” she added.

In Chicago, Barbara Blaine, president of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, said the filing is an attempt by the diocese to deflect responsibility.

“Hundreds of cases have been settled (elsewhere) by bishops who decided to put healing first,” she said. “And we think that’s what’s really important.”

Attorneys for plaintiffs suing the diocese believe it has enough money to settle the cases now pending. They filed a motion recently in Yuma County Superior Court seeking to block the diocese from transferring properties to affiliated Catholic bodies before a trial scheduled later this month.

Cadigan and law partner Kim Williamson said plaintiffs discovered that the diocese had transferred five properties between March and June.

“Such transfers may be designed to remove assets from the diocese in advance of a trial ... in an attempt to shield such assets from collection efforts” if the plaintiffs were to win damages, the motion said.

Kicanas denied that the transfer of properties earlier this year was an effort to shield assets in preparation for the bankruptcy. He said the transfer was a long-planned move to help finance new school buildings.

In addition to the bankruptcy petition, the Tucson diocese plans to file a full plan to restructure, meet creditors’ demands, including payment to abuse victims, while continuing normal business operations and providing its employees with salaries and benefits.

The diocese hopes to have the bankruptcy discharged very soon, within a matter of months if possible, Boswell said.

Archaeologists begin new survey of Little Bighorn battlefield

By The Associated Press

CROW AGENCY, Mont. — Archaeologists have been surveying the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument area, looking for artifacts before crews and heavy equipment rebuild a road, possibly in 2007.

No one thought to conduct an archaeological survey before the 1938 construction of the tour road between Little Bighorn and Reno-Benteen Battlefield, 4 1/2 miles away, said John Doerner, Little Bighorn chief historian.

The battlefield memorializes the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn, in which Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and his troops of the 7th Cavalry died in fighting a vastly greater number of Lakota Sioux, Cheyenne and

Arapaho warriors. The battle also is known as Custer’s Last Stand.

The dozens of battle-related finds in the survey last week were mostly bullets and cartridge cases.

In a shallow hole near Medicine Tail Coulee, crew volunteer Dave Thorn of Bozeman found a rusted, Army-issue horseshoe and examined the nails for clues about its history.

Thorn was one of 18 volunteers and professionals working on the survey, led by archaeologist Doug Scott of the National Park Service’s Midwest Regional Archaeological Center in Lincoln, Neb.

Scott pioneered the use of metal detectors in battlefield archaeology during his first major project at Little Bighorn, in 1984, and has been back several times.

The archaeological search last Monday through Friday covered 60 feet on each side of the roadbed. There may be more surveying when the road’s pavement is removed.

Scott hand-picked his crew.

“These people have worked with us before,” he said. “Everyone is very experienced and knows exactly what to do.”

Volunteers with metal detectors walked 2 to 3 feet apart and used flags to mark “hits” signaled by the detectors. Then the crew members dug.

Artifacts found included an iron arrow point.

“Through the years, they’ve been picked up,” Scott said. “I know there are two in the Smithsonian that were collected from the battlefield in 1887. I’m sure there were hundreds here.”



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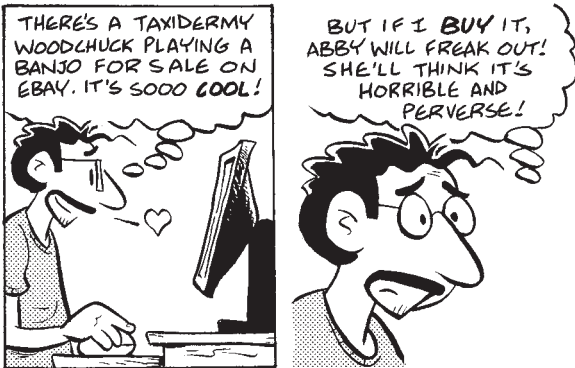


COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



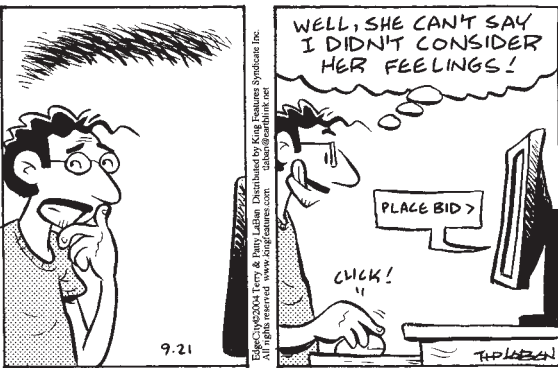
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

A traditional Russian blend: Vodka and AK-47s?

By The Associated Press

LONDON — A new product introduced in London brings together two of Russia's most famous exports: vodka and the AK-47 assault rifle.

What ties them together? Both are named after Gen. Mikhail Kalashnikov.

Kalashnikov, 84, who invented the AK-47, was in London Monday for the official release of Kalashnikov vodka, which is distilled in St. Petersburg, Russia, and imported to England.

The vodka retails for about \$24 for a 22.5-fluid ounce bottle. It is available at several clubs throughout London with a U.S. release planned for next year.

"We're marketing this as a premium brand," said Kalashnikov vodka spokeswoman Sophy Geering.

It is the brainchild of entrepreneur John Florey, a graduate of London University, Cambridge University and London's Imperial College.

Florey found the Russian general in the town of Izhevsk in Siberia, where he works as a mechanical engineer at the Izhmash Mechanical Engineering Plant. Kalashnikov agreed to lend his name to the brand and was named honorary chairman of the new vodka company.

Though Kalashnikov vodka has yet to reach the United States, some U.S. anti-gun-violence organizations are wary of the vodka's association with the assault rifle, particularly at a time when the U.S. national assault weapon ban has expired.

"We'd hope the general would agree that his weapon was never intended for civilian use, just as he'd agree that his vodka should be consumed responsibly," said Peter Hamm, communications director for the Washington-based Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.

"And obviously, we'd hope he'd agree that the people enjoying his vodka should not have anything to do with his weapons."

Kalashnikov, a former tank commander, designed the AK-47 assault rifle after being wounded in World War II, out of fear that the Germans were better equipped than their Allied foes. The Red Army adopted his design in 1947, with the weapon's short name meaning "Automatic gun of Kalashnikov, 1947."

The weapon went on to become the weapon of choice for both communist armies and many criminal and guerrilla groups worldwide. Some estimates say there are now 100 million AK-47s in existence.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Roy Disney said he had heard the myths at Walt Disney Co. for a long time — that Salvador Dali's artworks from a long-forgotten project were somewhere in the studio's archives.

It turned out not to be a myth.

The surrealist master had worked with Disney's uncle, Walt Disney, from 1945-46, producing seven paintings and hundreds of ink drawings for an animated film that never got made, Disney said.

The artwork — which Disney valued at \$5 million to \$10 million — sat in the studio unseen by the public for 58 years. That is, until now.

Disney said the company loaned about a dozen Dali pieces to a traveling exhibit in Europe, one of several celebrating the 100th anniversary of Dali's birth on May 11, 1904. Dali died in 1989.

"It is truly the only Dali stuff in the world that was never seen up until this year," Disney said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Disney, 74, nephew of Walt Disney, spoke of his discovery while in Albuquerque, where he attended a gala opening of the Roy E. Disney Center for Performing Arts at the National Hispanic Cultural Center over the weekend.

On Sunday, Disney attended a showing of the animated short film "Destino" at one of three new theaters in the complex. The film was the product of the artwork

Dali completed at the Disney studios over nine months. The film was nominated for an Academy Award this spring.

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain — The world premiere of Oliver Stone's follow-up documentary on Cuban President Fidel Castro met timid applause from a half-full house at the San Sebastian International Film Festival.

Titled "Looking for Fidel," the documentary presents a more balanced portrait of the Communist leader and life on the Caribbean island than Stone's 2002 film "Comandante."

Despite ample publicity, the Saturday premiere attracted less than 200 viewers on the second day of the nine-day festival, where 19 films from Iran to Argentina are vying for the top prize, the Golden Shell. The film, by the director of blockbusters such as "Platoon" and "JFK," was not competing.

"It's a very spontaneous movie," Stone said at a news conference after the screening. "It's not a left-wing documentary and I hope Americans will see it that way."

Lukewarm applause marked the end of the hourlong piece, which attempts to give voice to all the major players in Cuba through interviews with prisoners, dissidents and rights advocates as well as Castro and his supporters.

SHANGHAI, China — A word of advice from Elton John to up-and-coming musicians: Pay your dues.

"Bands today have to learn their craft by putting the hard work in that we did when we were young performers," said John, who was in Shanghai on Saturday for the first China shows of his four-decade-old career.

"We didn't just make a video, then go out on the road. We were on the road before we had gotten a record contract," said the singer and pianist, who started out in the early 1960s toiling on the British pub circuit with the soul act Bluesology.

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