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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

Volume 8 Issue 281



Santa Monica Daily Press

FOR SHAME
SEE PAGE 5

We have you covered

THE FALL IS HERE ISSUE

Arts Commission wants workers to stay and play

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN All work and no play can make for a long and boring commute home.

So why not stay a few hours?

The Santa Monica Arts Commission and Performing Arts Committee is encouraging the estimated 50,000 daily commuters to stick around a few hours after work, enjoying a light meal and catching a live performance through a new program that offers local workers discounted meals and entertainment.

"Come to Work, Stay to Play" was conceived by the commission last year to promote the local arts scene by targeting a population that usually doesn't stay in the city beyond work hours, giving them an enjoyable alternative to sitting in traffic.

"The truth is if you leave Santa Monica at 5 (p.m.), you might as well leave at 7," said Justin Yoffe, the cultural affairs supervisor with City Hall's Cultural Affairs Division. "You might as well come and enjoy some great discounts."

The program in its pilot phase has six participating restaurants — Buddha's Belly, Johnnie's New York Pizzeria, Locanda del Lago, Spitfire Grill, Typhoon and Wokcano — and four theaters — Highways Performance Space, Miles Memorial Playhouse, Ruskin Group Theater and Santa Monica Playhouse.

Starting next week, all will offer special discounts on each Thursday of October from 4-8 p.m., whether it's 15 percent off the menu at Johnnie's or $5 admission to a musical at the Santa Monica Playhouse. All the commuter needs to say is "stay to play" when making reservations.

"For some of the commuters over at the Water Garden, outside of going to their local cafe, they've never been into Santa Monica and come Downtown," Yoffe said.

Yoffe added that he is reaching out to some of the major employers in the city to get the word out about the program, including MTV, Google and Santa Monica College.

Locanda del Lago, which is located on the

SEE STAY PAGE 9



FLY GUYS

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Actor Harrison Ford (right) stands with his successors from EAA Young Eagles Program US Airways Flt. 1549, pilots Jeff Skiles (center) and Chesley 'Sully' Sullenberger at a news conference at Hanger Eight at the Santa Monica Airport on Tuesday afternoon. The EAA program gives inspirational and educational flights to 80,000 plus youth annually.

Report details suspected abuse cases

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

SMMUSD HDQTRS Santa Monica and Malibu public school employees reported 123 suspected cases of child abuse to law enforcement and youth welfare authorities during the 2008-09 academic year, according to a new report that breaks down the number of alleged incidents involving students.

The Board of Education on Thursday is expected to receive the first Child Abuse Report that is now annually mandated under an administrative regulation that was revised in 2008, showing that the number of cases referred to the Santa Monica Police Department and Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services increased 66 percent last year over the 2007-08 school year.

The reason for the increase could be a heightened awareness by district employees who have all undergone training in reporting practices, Mike Matthews, the assistant superintendent for human resources said. State law categorizes district employees as mandated reporters for such cases.

"This (report) is not intended to spur any new actions," Matthews said. "Our responsibilities is to report these possible cases of child abuse and the authorities investigate that."

The report breaks down the number of cases by school level and type of abuse, the latter of which was lead by physical abuse with 77 cases, followed by emotional abuse (20), general neglect (15), and sexual abuse (11).

The elementary schools had the highest number of overall reported cases with 52, followed by the middle schools with 37 and the high schools with 34.

One case involved a district employee. Matthews could not comment on the investigation of the employee or whether any action was taken. The rest

SEE ABUSE PAGE 11


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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS

Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2009

Fair Fish Campaign kick-off meeting

First United Methodist Church
Corner of 11th Street and Washington, 7 p.m.
Find out how you can get involved in the Fair Fish campaign to support family fisherman. The campaign aims to support coastal communities, protect marine ecosystems and produce the best possible seafood for consumers. The event is free. Contact Miller Nuttle at (607) 592-9500 for more details.

Talking books

Santa Monica Public Library
601 Santa Monica Blvd., 7 p.m.
Author Deirdre Shaw will be discussing her debut novel, "Love or Something Like It" and offering advice about how to start in the book business. A sale and book signing will follow the program. Admission is free, call (310) 458-8600 for more information.

Thursday, Oct. 1, 2009

Pause

First United Methodist Church
Corner of 11th Street and Washington, 6 p.m.
Anyone is invited to this new worship experience on Thursday nights in the chapel. Experience quiet reflection, peace, meditation, prayer and an overall retreat from the work week. Admission is free. Call (310) 393-8258 for more information.

Stories for kiddies

Montanta Branch Library
1704 Montana Ave., 11:15 a.m. — 11:45 a.m.
Bring your 3-5-year-olds every Thursday morning for preschool story time. Call (310) 829-7081 for more information.

Friday, Oct. 2, 2009

Alt your lifestyle

Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
1885 Main St., 10 a.m. — 5 p.m.
The fourth annual Alternative Energy and Transportation Expo returns this year, offering a number of unprecedented presentations and cutting-edge vehicles for consumers to drive. The expo, which is free with $8 for parking, features top speakers and noted exhibitors within the green and transportation industries. The expo showcases over 100 alt-fuel and ultra-efficient vehicles. Scooters, Segways, electric motorcycles, bicycles and more will be on hand. Low-speed and freeway-capable vehicles will be available for public "ride-and-drives" and for immediate purchase. Call (310) 390-2930 for more information.

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.

CORRECTION:
In "Shelling out a fortune for a home" (Tuesday, Sept, 29, 2009), Coldwell Banker broker Charles Pence's name was misspelled.



Photo courtesy Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium

SCENE OF THE CRIME: **Banners promoting Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium were recently stolen from the front of the building.**

Saint John's to develop neuroscience institute

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

MID-CITY The former chair of neurological surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center will lead the development of a Neuroscience Institute at Saint John's Health Center, it was announced Monday.

Dr. Amin Kassam will also be a faculty member at the John Wayne Cancer Institute at Saint John's.

The Neuroscience Institute at the Santa Monica hospital will offer a minimally invasive neurosurgery center, as well as neuro-oncology, neuro-vascular surgery and other neuroscience services.

The institute will build on the foundation established over the last two years by Dr. Daniel F. Kelly, medical director of Saint John's Brain Tumor Center.

Kassam joined the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh in 1997. Over the next 12 years, he held several positions and pioneered a number of novel procedures and techniques, according to Saint John's.

Kassam developed the multidisciplinary Minimally Invasive endoNeurosurgery Center, which deals with the complex skull base pathology, and was director of the Center for Cranial Nerve Disorders at UPMC.

Kassam also was a pioneer in the development of the Expanded Endonasal Approach, which uses the nostrils as natural portals to remove brain and skull based tumors rather than using a traditional craniotomy, in which the surgical opening is made through the top of the skull.

Saint John's began developing its neuroscience program with the arrival of Kelly from UCLA and establishment of the Saint John's Brain Tumor Center in 2007.

Kassam has performed more than 3,000 neurosurgical procedures, including more than 1,000 minimally invasive endoscopic endonasal procedures with his team.

He specializes in minimally invasive endoscopic brain tumor surgery, skull base and pituitary tumor surgery, vascular surgery, as well as trigeminal neuralgia and hemifacial spasm.

His recent focus has been on the development of a surgical tube, called a "brain cannula," combined with detailed fiber tract mapping of the brain to allow maximal and safe endoscopic removal of deeply situated brain tumors.

The board-certified neurosurgeon received his medical and undergraduate education at the University of Toronto. He completed his residency and fellowship training at the University of Ottawa.

news@smdp.com

Banner bummer at aquarium

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

SM PIER Wanting to raise awareness, Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium installed two, nearly 30-foot blue signs with bold white lettering above its entrance, alerting visitors to its presence.

No longer would people say, "I didn't know there was an aquarium at the pier."

Now those banners, valued at close to $2,000 each, have disappeared and the aquarium is asking for the public's help in finding them.

Workers noticed the banners were missing Sept. 23. The banners were removed from the aquarium entrance for roughly an hour so that some touch-up painting and hardware repair could be completed. The aquarium closes in September for an annual, thorough cleaning and revamping of exhibits.

Workers placed the banners — 28-by-4 feet, each weighing at least 40 pounds — on the pier deck above the aquarium against the eastern railing. When they returned an hour later, they were gone.

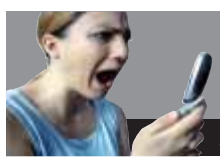
"I don't know why someone would take the banners that are branded with our name on them," said Vicki Wawerchak, director of the aquarium. "Hopefully that will make them easier to find, or else we will have to raise funds to replace them."

The theft was reported to the Santa Monica Police Department, and members of the aquarium staff spent part of the afternoon of the theft cruising the bike path and adjacent beach parking lots in an attempt to find the missing banners. The community of pier employees, including pier maintenance and beach maintenance staffs and Santa Monica's Harbor Patrol joined in the search as well. So far, the banners are still missing, Wawerchak said.

With or without the signs in place, the aquarium will reopen to the public and for school programs on Oct. 1. Winter public hours are Tuesday through Friday, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and weekends from 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The aquarium is Heal the Bay's marine education facility located beach-level, just below the carousel, at the pier. It attracts more than 85,000 visitors each year.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

A pair of ruby slippers

Editor:

On behalf of us bicyclists, I would like to thank the Santa Monica Police Department for catching the bike thieves. It was in Crime Watch last week. I had written previously and complained about bike theft here in the people's paradise; now I'm writing to tell everybody that bicycling in Santa Monica is getting better all the time – with a little help from our friends.

It can't get worse. After my previous letter, I went to the library and learned that in California every bicycle must have a license. I sent the SMPD my three hard-earned greenbacks, along with the info they have just got to have. I printed it from the Internet, filled out the form, in a letter I mailed at the post office. I got the license by return mail. We are required to attach it to the bicycle frame set, which I did. Ugly legal. It's the new black, I reckon. Is it true that if a thief tries to steal a bike with one of these licenses, sparks will fly, like the ruby slippers did to the evil witch in "Wizard of Oz?"

My bike is my own private version of those magic slippers.

B. D. Madden
Santa Monica

Beck's dangerous game

Editor:

Please, if you do any reporting on Glenn Beck in the future, would you address the actual words he says and the trouble they cause us here in the USA? Yes, he gets big ratings, but he says untrue things that inflame a dangerous sentiment in small but dangerous populations of the right wing. In short, he is a rabble-rouser. He blatantly scares people, and on purpose. His stated agenda is to cause Obama to fail. We should be alarmed. Why? Because Beck's claims about President Obama's motives (Nazi, Commie, hates white people, etc.) are so far fetched that he may incite violence against our beloved president. The fact that many companies have pulled their ads proves that something is wrong here. He is not a valid "voice" of this nation on either ideological side of the sane world. I urge you to give this story the real scrutiny it deserves. Perhaps he is "sensational," but he is also a journalistic charlatan

Nadia Reed
Santa Monica

Pruning or butchering?

Editor:

During the past week, City Hall has been "pruning" the trees on Second and Fourth streets. The operation should be called "butchery" instead. The canopy has been severely destroyed and the trees are half bare. Is this a continuation of last year's debacle? City Hall continues to treat the living ecology with these acts of savagery and devil-may-care attitude. Destroy the trees, kill the squirrels and birds and what is next? There is money wasted everywhere except where it's needed most. Wake up, Santa Monica, your city is going to pot.

Herb Silverstein
Santa Monica





Going Postal

Steve "the Mailman" Breen — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Petty little Parlor games

I WAS INTRIGUED BY THE LEAD STORY IN THE Sept. 21 edition of the Daily Press entitled, "Sports bar forced to scale back." I read with growing disgust that the Planning Commission had economically carpet-bombed a popular Santa Monica sports restaurant, The Parlor, based upon the regurgitated urgings from a feverish few north o' Wilshire neighbors. The restaurant's owners, Ike Pyun and Silas Gaither, were ordered by the SM Planning Commie-Czars to cut their business venue by 52 percent as well as lower their valet fees to "compete with the city-owned parking lot" behind the restaurant.

Two questions should become grotesquely obvious to anyone with the relative intelligence of a paramecium: Isn't it comforting to know that some city apparatchik can summarily cut a business's potential income by 52 percent over an arcane technicality of a decades old expired parking variance? Please note that The Parlor now has the same bills to pay but with half the income. City Hall is capable of nuking tax-paying business owners by decree but still somehow seems incapable of sterilizing its streets of its more favored hobo population.

And since when is City Hall in the business of regulating competition against a private business to the city's advantage?

To be completely unfair and unbalanced, please allow me to address the complaints about The Parlor's operation. From the personal e-mails of the complainants that I've surreptitiously obtained, it is only a scant half baker's dozen that have been economically truthful about "the noise" from the "frat rats" that patronize The Parlor.

Let me get this straight, the local hope-and-change Hottentots are complaining about the ambient noise from one bar? Citizens, I live on Main Street. I can step outside of my front door and walk (or crawl) 100 paces or less, to and from O'Brien's, Library Ale House, Rick's Tavern, The Fish Co., World Cafe and Circle Bar. Yes, it does get noisy sometimes. It's called this stupid thing called "life." Some of you north o' Wilshire crybabies need to get one, too.

If you are looking for "sympathy," you can find it in the dictionary somewhere between "suicide" and "syphilis."

Is it an inconvenient truth that anyone clueless enough to live within a half block of one of the busiest boulevards since God said "Let there be a Miracle Mile" is a demonstrable dimwit? I have some enlightening advice, though. Get in your silly little pretentious Prius, drive to Walgreen's at 20th and Wilshire and purchase earplugs. Duh. There's this thing called "taking personal responsibility for one's own choices, how bad they may be." Check your morning mirror frequently for updates.

The "frat rats" that frequent The Parlor? My wife and I went in for dinner last Friday and the "frat rats" that I saw that night included Head Coach Black from the Santa Monica High School wrestling team as well as several Samohi employees and, gasp, teachers even! There was a fair smattering of the 50-something crowd, too. The local alumni from the University of Missouri were in attendance as well.

Funny, the patrons seemed more like college-educated, well-heeled professionals to me and not the "Animal House" as The Parlor has been portrayed by its neighbors. Sorry, but I just can't visualize Coach Black competing with the 15th Street Full Monty Synchronized Urination Team as has been alleged by The Parlor's pernicious persecutors.

Folks, the California unemployment rate is currently 12.2 percent. Meanwhile, the mere handful of north o' Wilshire Puritans are in need of a serious soap opera ego-check to see if the faux-morality of their rent-controlled nighty-night time can be balanced against the sleeplessness of The Parlor's staff who are faced with being improvidently parked in the unemployment line.

Ladies and gentlemen, The Parlor is a family-financed "mom-and-pop" operation and not some bank-funded chain store. Who would you rather support?

I've interviewed the owners. They are old enough to be my sons. Like my own son, Silas and Ike are enterprising, astute, energetic and all are on very important missions. My son Nathan's mission is fighting the War on Terror against radical jihadis while Ike and Silas are fighting the War on the Recession against the Santa Monica Taliban yuppies of Apartment-istan.

It takes granite cojones the size of Mt. Rushmore to sally forth into the worst economic recession in American history and open a family business with investments solely based from their friends and family as Ike and Silas have done. Folks, pack their restaurant every night and join their fight against the recession!

I believe in their dream. It's what makes America great.

STEVE BREEN believes in the evil rewards of beer, uh, bear market capitalism and is still "the best looking mailman at the U.S. Post Office." He can be reached at dulcamarax@yahoo.com.

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Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

No sympathy for Polanski

IT WAS HERE IN SANTA MONICA THAT director Roman Polanski told the state of California what he thought of our criminal justice system. Despite the fact that he pled guilty to a felony, he decided it wasn't worth living here if his address was going to be the state prison in Chino instead of the Chateau Marmont. So he ran away. He would've been a fugitive from American justice since 1978, but Swiss authorities picked him up over the weekend and are holding him for possible extradition. I hope he'll return to our humble local courthouse to finish the process that was started 30 years ago and be sentenced to 20 years in prison for what he's done.

Before we get to his crimes, let's address the things his defenders always bring up. First, because of improper contact with a prosecutor, the judge in his case reneged on a secret deal to sentence Polanski to probation. Second, Polanksi survived the Holocaust and his wife and unborn child were brutally murdered by the Manson family. The Polanski camp brings up the first point as a reason to justify his fleeing the country and staying on the run for three decades and they bring up the second point as a way to encourage pity. That garbage doesn't work with me because I don't think the fact that he was an acclaimed director means he should have final cut privilege when it comes to his prison sentence, and because I've read the transcripts of the grand jury testimony, Polanski's guilty plea, and his motion for dismissal — and I have no sympathy for the devil.

In 1977, Roman Polanski the film director was going to shoot photos for Vogue and was introduced to an aspiring young actress who was willing to pose for him. Polanski knew the girl was only 13, but when they went down the street from her Sherman Oaks home to take some pictures, he asked her to pose for topless photos because there was "no embarrassment" when she changed in front of him. He said topless photos of 13 year olds are "acceptable in Europe" and he didn't realize they were "objectionable here."

For their next photo shoot, he took her to a house on Mulholland Drive, but the light was supposedly no good (and the house was crowded). So he took her down the street to Jack Nicholson's house where the light was the same, but the place was empty. He had her pose with full champagne glasses, which she then drank. He had the drunken teenager remove most of her clothing and get in the Jacuzzi. He gave her a piece of a 300mg Quaalude and told her to go lie down in a bedroom where he had his way with her. According to Polanski, "I told her to rest in the bedroom. I went to the bedroom. She never objected. … I withdrew before climax."

Of course, that's not how the survivor of this sexual assault remembers it. She says she told Polanski to stop, though she didn't fight him because "there was no one else there" and she "had no place to go." Also because he was her only way to get home and she was "dizzy" and "having trouble with my coordination, like walking and stuff." In the room with that drunken, heavily sedated teenager was a 44-year-old predator who raped her and then dropped her back at her mother's house like nothing happened.

He was arrested and charged with rape by use of drugs, lewd and lascivious act upon a child under 14, perversion, sodomy, and furnishing a controlled substance to a minor — and it was an open-and-shut case. But the girl's family (with the help of a large settlement) wanted it to go away and Hollywood wanted Polanski back behind a camera; so the judge agreed to a secret plea deal (probation in exchange for pleading guilty to the lesser charge of unlawful sex with a minor) before changing his mind and informing Polanski's lawyers that he would be sentenced to prison, then deported. Realizing he was going to spend the next decade being treated the way he treated his victim, but without the Jacuzzi, booze, and pills, Polanski fled.

As the home of America's skin trade (modeling, stripping, and porn), L.A. is the front line of a war in which no little girl is safe. On one side there are the people who defend, protect, and enable sexual predators like Polanski, Officer Ian King from the LAUSD police department and Thomas Beltran from our own Lincoln Middle School. On the other side are those of us who have sisters, daughters and nieces we want to protect. There is no middle ground — you're either on the side of innocent children or you're on the side of the predators. So I don't care how good his movies are, Hollywood needs to stop defending a man who used his status in the business to drug and rape an eighth grader, then used his wealth and French citizenship to avoid paying for his crimes.

KENNY MACK is a multi-platform content provider with four-quadrant crossover appeal living in Santa Monica. His past columns are archived at www.ifyoumissedit.com and he can be reached at kennymack@gmail.com.

The Q Line

Clipping declawing practice

The City Council recently directed staff to draft an ordinance that would ban the veterinary practice of declawing cats.

So this week's Q-Line question asks:

Do you think declawing should be made illegal and why?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press.

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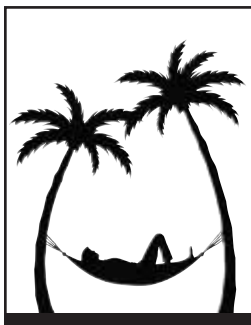
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Santa Monica College

Santa Monica College
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- Identifies options for SMC campus sites with regard to land use, transportation, and sustainability
- Reduces the planned density and increases the planned open space for the Main campus; and provides for a replacement Physical Education building, a replacement Math and new Science wing building, seismic repair, and improvements for the Pico Boulevard frontage
- Provides for expansion at the Academy campus to accommodate programs in digital arts, media, communication, journalism, and broadcasting, and incorporated parking; and the relocation of the College's radio station
- Provides for long-range development planning at the Olympic Shuttle site
- Provides for program expansion at the Performing Arts campus in music, art, and public programs, related parking, and seismic repair
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Additional community meetings will be held October 7 (at SMC's AET Campus) and October 14 (in Business 111 on the Main Campus), 7 pm. The October 14 meeting is also a scoping meeting for purposes of participating in the Notice of Preparation of a Program and Project-Level Environmental Impact Report consultation and CEQA review process.

Project documents and notices available at www.smc.edu/facilities_masterplan

WALL STREET

Falling consumer confidence hampers domestic market

SARA LEPRO
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK A surprise drop in consumer confidence tripped up investors Tuesday, a day after two corporate takeovers set off a steep market rally.

Stocks fell after the Conference Board said its consumer confidence index fell to 53.1 in September. That was down from 54.5 in August and much lower than the reading of 57 that economists had been expecting.

The private research group attributed the drop to concerns about the labor market, saying consumers are still worried about losing their jobs. Consumer confidence has been a focus for the stock market in recent months, and many analysts warn a turnaround in the economy won't hold if consumers don't start picking up spending and employers add jobs.

The report offset early enthusiasm over a third straight monthly increase in home prices.

Stocks broke a three-day losing streak Monday after news of several big acquisitions signaled to investors that corporate America is feeling more confident about the economy and willing to take on more risk. The disappointing decline in consumer confidence Tuesday was a stark reminder that American consumers aren't as upbeat, meaning they're likely to keep their spending in check.

"You had these M&A deals make people feel better about growth prospects and valuations," said Nick Kalivas, vice president of financial research and senior equity index analyst at MF Global. "We don't have any followthrough M&A today and the market really lacks a forward catalyst."

With economic data still largely mixed, investors can't seem to find enough reasons to extend the market's nearly seven-month long advance, or at least keep it going at the same fervid pace. The benchmark Standard & Poor's 500 index has gained 57.1 percent since hitting a 12-year low in March.

"Stock have been moving aggressively up," said Lawrence Creatura, portfolio manager at Federated Clover Investment Advisors. "It's natural for investors to want to lock in some of those gains as we end the quarter."

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow Jones industrials fell 47.16, or 0.5 percent, to 9,742.20, chipping away part of Monday's 124-point gain. The S&P 500 index slipped 2.37, or 0.2 percent, to 1,060.61, and the Nasdaq composite index fell 6.70, or 0.3 percent, to 2,124.04.

Falling stocks narrowly outpaced those that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 1.2 billion shares, compared with 979 million shares Monday. Trading was light at the start of the week because of the Jewish holiday Yom Kippur.

In other trading, the Russell 2000 index of smaller companies fell 2.77, or 0.5 percent, to 610.45.

Stocks jumped Monday as news of large takeovers by Xerox Corp. and Abbott Laboratories brought hope that corporate dealmaking could be making a comeback. That would be a big positive not only for the economy but also for the stock market as investors try to figure out which companies could become acquisition targets. But the disappointing consumer confidence report was a stark reminder that the consumer isn't as upbeat about the recovery.

Analysts have been saying that some pullback in stocks is healthy considering how far and how fast the market has risen. But so far, any breaks in the advance have been fairly mild and brief, as investors who don't want to miss an opportunity to join in the market's climb higher keep the momentum going.

"There hasn't been any followthrough on those down days," said Howard Ward, portfolio manager at GAMCO Growth Fund, whose portfolio is concentrated in areas most sensitive to the economy, including technology, energy and financial stocks.

The market could slide further if other economic reports fall short of expectations. Despite better signs on manufacturing and home sales, the labor market remains beaten down. Investors will get the latest news on employment on Friday when the Labor Department releases its monthly jobs report, one of the most closely watched economic reports. Earnings reports from companies in the coming weeks could also move the market.

The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller home price index of 20 major cities provided the latest encouraging sign for the troubled housing market. The index rose 1.2 percent in July from June. Home prices are still 13.3 percent below July a year ago, but the annual drops have slowed in all 20 cities for the past six months.

Oil prices continued their fall on the growing belief that the economy won't be strong enough to lift demand as much as expected. Oil had been steadily rising in recent months on expectations that the economy was going to be stronger, therefore pushing demand higher.

Crude fell 13 cents to settle at $66.71 on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Meanwhile, bond prices mostly fell after five days of gains. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, rose to 3.30 percent from 3.28 percent late Monday.

The dollar was mixed against other major currencies, while gold prices slipped.

Overseas, Britain's FTSE 100 fell 0.1 percent, Germany's DAX index fell 0.4 percent, and France's CAC-40 slipped 0.3 percent. Japan's Nikkei stock average rose 0.9 percent.

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MEDIA

Newspaper stocks rebounding

MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Business Writer

SAN FRANCISCO Newspapers may have finally stopped — or at least slowed — their harrowing descent into a financial abyss after three years of plunging revenues, crumbling stock prices and shrinking staffs.

The latest glimmer of hope came Tuesday when Gannett Co., the largest U.S. newspaper publisher, announced that its third-quarter earnings will be substantially above analysts' forecasts.

Although Gannett's revenue for the period, which ended Sunday, fell slightly below analysts' projections, executives said newspaper advertising sales didn't fall as badly as they did in the first and second quarters.

That's not saying much. Gannett's ad revenue from USA Today and its other print publications dived 33 percent during the first half of the year.

And newspapers have yet to come up with a cure for the perilous problem they faced before the recession even struck — what to do about the massive shift of readers and advertisers to the Internet.

But Gannett's modest progress suggests newspapers might at least be able to recover some of the revenue lost since 2006. Analysts suspect a rebound could begin soon and accelerate next year, particularly if advertising for homes, cars and jobs picks up.

If that happens, newspaper profits should surge because publishers have lowered their costs dramatically by jettisoning thousands of workers, slashing wages and closing offices. Less advertising also means smaller print editions, reducing the need for newsprint — the industry's second-highest expense after labor.

Gannett, for instance, has shed nearly 5,500 workers since 2007 and imposed other cost-cutting measures that already appear to be saving more money than people outside the McLean, Va.-based company expected.

That explains why Gannett's third-quarter profit will be so much higher than analysts estimated even though revenue continued to disappoint, said Ken Doctor, a media analyst with Outsell Inc.

Excluding one-time charges, Gannett said it will earn 39 cents to 42 cents per share when it reports the results Oct. 19. The average analyst estimate on the same basis had been 29 cents per share, according to Thomson Reuters.

Gannett said its revenue for the period will be $1.31 billion or $1.32 billion — below the average analyst target of $1.38 billion and 20 percent less than what Gannett reported at the same time last year.

Investors scrambled to adjust for the profit miscalculation Tuesday as the stocks of Gannett and its industry peers soared. In many cases, investors who had been selling newspaper stocks "short" — betting that the shares would fall even further — were pressured to buy to minimize their losses, said analyst Edward Atorino of the Benchmark Co.

Gannett shares rose $1.76, or 18 percent, to close Tuesday at $11.74. The New York Times Co. climbed 40 cents, or 5 percent, to $8.39; Lee Enterprises Inc. soared 89 cents, or 42 percent, to $3.03; Media General Inc. gained $1.07, or 14 percent, to $8.97; and McClatchy Co. was up 25 cents, or 6 percent, to $2.65.

All those stocks now go for several times what they did in the depths of the recession. In February and March, "newspaper stocks were being priced as if they were all going to go out of business," Doctor said. Things looked so bleak that Gannett shares plummeted below $2 in early March while McClatchy cratered at 35 cents.

Despite the recent rally, newspaper stocks are 60 percent to 90 percent below where they stood three years ago, before the advertising slide began to siphon away publishers' main source of revenue. At the end of September 2006, for instance, Gannett traded at $56.83, and McClatchy stood at $42.19.

Since then, newspapers in Seattle, Denver and Tucson, Ariz., have stopped publication, and several publishers have filed for bankruptcy protection. The bellwether Standard & Poor's 500 index is down only about 20 percent.

The main reason for the huge disparity: Newspaper ad revenue this year is on pace to total about $27 billion, down roughly 45 percent from $49 billion in 2006.

Not all of that revenue is likely to return to newspapers, even if the U.S. economy is finally out of the recession. While the economy exacerbated newspapers' misery, it's only part of the problem.

Even before the downturn, readers and advertisers were shifting to the Internet. Newspapers have been trying to sell more online ads, but those efforts have yet to offset the losses because Internet advertising rates are so much lower than print.

Some Web sites like Craigslist don't even charge for most classified ads, drying up one of newspapers' biggest sources of cash.

Newspapers are bringing in a little more money by asking their readers to pay more. Some newspapers, like Gannett's USA Today, are now charging $1 for a weekday edition.

But circulation figures indicate many readers are giving up the print edition rather than accept the price increases — probably because they can read the paper online for free. Some publishers are drawing up plans to charge for parts of their Web sites.

At least it now appears newspaper publishers have more breathing room to figure out their next move — as long as advertising revenue doesn't drop any further.

Doctor likens newspapers' past few years to a disastrous earthquake followed by a devastating tornado.

"The earth isn't shaking as much any more and now it looks like there isn't another tornado on the horizon," he said, "so it actually feels pretty good not to have anything cataclysmic in front of you any more."

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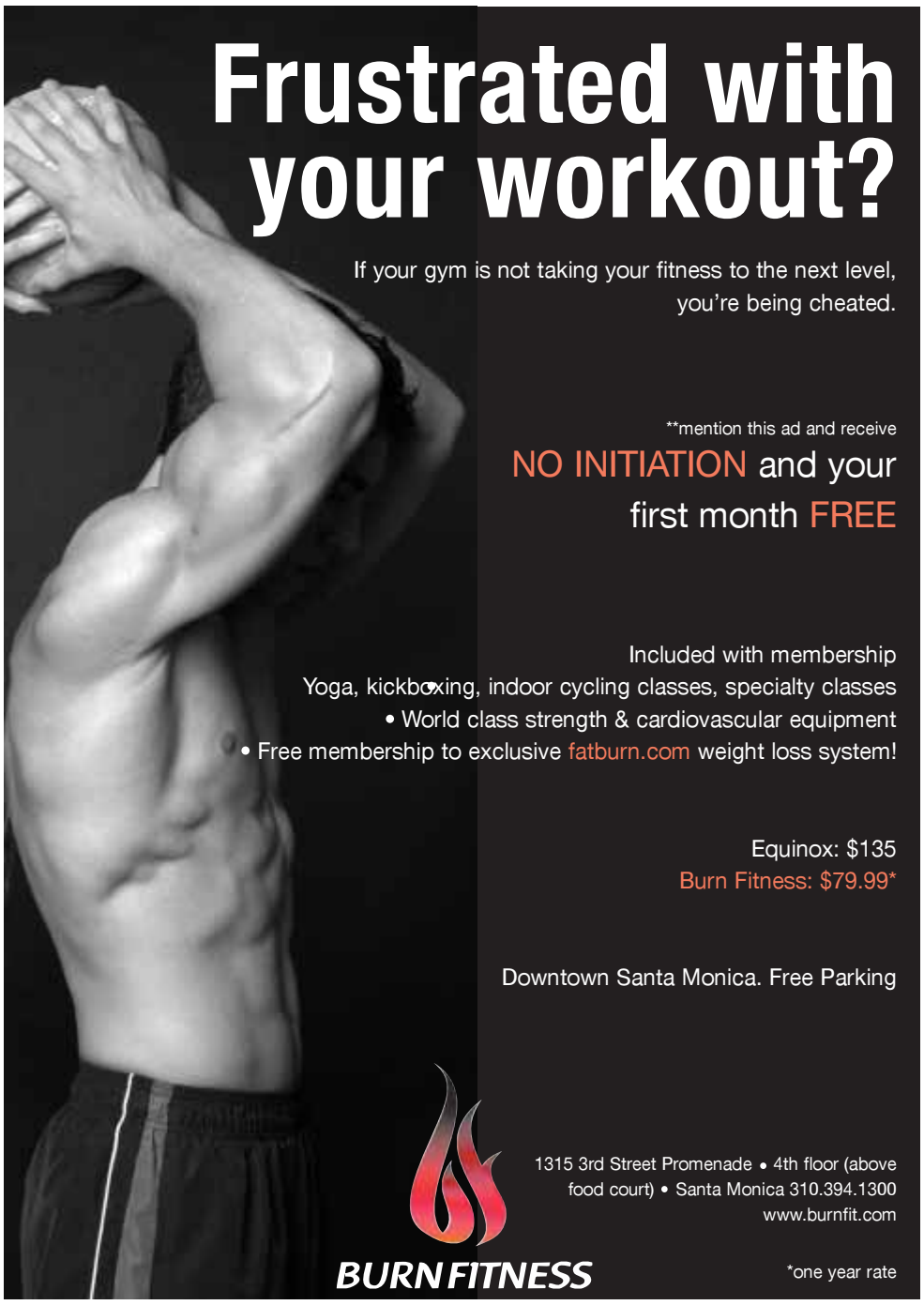
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ECONOMY

U.S. consumer confidence makes surprise downturn

ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK Concerns that consumers won't help drive a speedy and strong economic recovery only escalated Tuesday after an influential barometer of confidence fell unexpectedly in September.

The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence survey showed worries about job security seem to be offsetting any enthusiasm about rising home values and stocks.

"Last year, consumers were shellshocked as they worried about what might happen to the economy," said Mark Vitner, senior economist at Wells Fargo. "Today, shoppers ... don't have the means to step up spending."

The Conference Board, a private research group, said its confidence index dipped to 53.1 in September, down from a revised 54.5 in August. Economists surveyed by Thomson Reuters had expected a reading of 57.

The report followed rosier data on housing released Tuesday that showed home prices rose for the third month in a row in July. Investors fixated on the confidence report, giving back early gains. The Dow Jones industrials fell 47.16, or 0.5 percent, to 9,742.20.

Among the worrisome signs in the Conference Board's release were that shoppers' spending intentions declined for big-ticket purchases: cars, homes and major appliances. The report confirmed that "the consumer sector will not be much of a driver of the recovery beyond the third quarter, when auto sales spiked in response to the temporary Cash for Clunkers program," according to IHS Global Insight Chief U.S. Financial Economist Brian Bethune.

The index, which hit a historic low of 25.3 in February, had enjoyed a three-month climb from March through May fueled by signs that the economy might be stabilizing. The road has been bumpier since June as rising unemployment has caught up with shoppers. Many economists expect confidence to be stuck at the current levels during the critical holiday shopping season.

A reading above 90 means the economy is on solid footing. Above 100 signals strong growth.

While the confidence index has doubled from the February low, it's still about half of the historic average and below the 61.4 level right before the collapse of Lehman Brothers last fall.

Economists watch consumer sentiment because spending on goods and services for consumers accounts for about 70 percent of U.S. economic activity by federal measures. While the reading doesn't always predict short-term spending, it does serve as a barometer of spending levels over time, specifically for big-ticket items.

Recent economic data, from housing to manufacturing, has offered mixed signals but some evidence that an economic recovery might be slow.

According to a report issued Tuesday, the Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller home price index of 20 major cities rose 1.2 percent from June to a reading of 143.05. Though home prices are still 13.3 percent below July a year ago, the annual declines have slowed in all 20 cities for the sixth straight month.

MEDIA

CBS wins ratings battle

FRAZIER MOORE
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK CBS began the fall season with a bang, winning the first week overall, scoring the top-rated program and premiering the most-watched new show, according to Nielsen ratings figures released Tuesday.

CBS' veteran hit "NCIS" took the No. 1 spot, with its spinoff, "NCIS: Los Angeles," debuting in the runner-up position. Another new CBS drama, "The Good Wife," got a warm viewer welcome with a 15th-place ranking.

ABC's new Wednesday comedies "Modern Family" and "Cougar Town" did well, ranking 20th and 23rd, respectively, while that network's new thriller "FlashForward" nabbed 21st place with its premiere.

Other than football, NBC's top performers were its new hospital drama "Mercy" and long-running cop drama "Law & Order: SVU," which shared 38th place in viewer rankings.

Meanwhile, the infant season claimed its first victim among the new fall crop: The neglected melodrama "The Beautiful Life: TBL" was axed by the CW after just two airings.

For the week in prime time, CBS led with 11.77 million viewers (7.3 household rating, 12 share), with runner-up ABC averaging 11.04 million viewers (7.1 rating, 12 share). NBC was a distant third place with 7.56 million viewers (4.8 rating, 8 share), just ahead of Fox with 7.35 million viewers (4.3 rating, 7 share).

The CW had 2.17 million viewers (1.5 rating, 2 share), My Network TV had 1.36 million (0.9 rating, 1 share), and ION Television had 630,000 (0.4 rating, 1 share).

Among the Spanish-language networks, Univision led with 3.66 million (1.9 rating, 3 share), Telemundo had 880,000 (0.5 rating, 1 share), and Azteca had 200,000 (0.1 rating, 0 share).

Among the evening newscasts, NBC's "Nightly News" held its customary lead with 7.72 million viewers (5.2 household rating, 11 share), followed by ABC's "World News" with 7.27 million viewers (4.9 rating, 10 share). The "CBS Evening News" had 5.54 million viewers (3.8 rating, 8 share).

A ratings point represents 1,149,000 households, or 1 percent of the nation's estimated 114.9 million TV homes. The share is the percentage of in-use televisions tuned to a given show.

For the week of Sept. 21-27, the top 10 shows, their networks and viewerships: "NCIS," CBS, 20.60 million; "NCIS: Los Angeles," CBS, 18.73 million; "Dancing with the Stars" (Monday), ABC, 17.79 million; NFL Football (Sunday): Indianapolis at Arizona, NBC, 17.47 million; "House," Fox, 17.16 million; "Grey's Anatomy," ABC, 17.03 million; "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation," CBS, 16.01 million; "Criminal Minds," CBS, 15.84 million; "Dancing with the Stars" (Tuesday), ABC, 15.367 million; "Dancing with the Stars" (Wednesday), ABC, 15.356 million.

Jackson estate sues foundation over name

ANTHONY MCCARTNEY
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES Michael Jackson's estate on Tuesday sued a foundation that bears the name of one of his most famous songs, "Heal the World."

The federal court lawsuit claims the Heal the World Foundation is improperly using trademarks and Web sites to create the impression they were approved by Jackson to solicit donations.

The current administrators of Jackson's estate — attorney John Branca and music executive John McClain — have a probate court's authority to protect Jackson's image and likeness and prevent sales of unauthorized merchandise. They have negotiated deals for official Jackson merchandise, including a coffee table book, trading cards and calendars.

The lawsuit claims the Heal the World Foundation had no relationship with Jackson or his family.

After-hours phone messages left for the foundation and an attorney were not immediately returned.

The suit claims Jackson created a charity based on his hit "Heal the World" in 1992, but it dissolved a decade later. "Defendants' acts of infringement and unfair competition have been committed with the intent to cause confusion, mistake and to deceive," the lawsuit claims.

The current Heal the World Foundation was formed in 2008 and trademarked its name. The lawsuit claims the foundation has sought trademarks for terms associated with Jackson, such as "Thriller," "Neverland" and "King of Pop."

Jackson's estate has applied for trademarks of similar terms.

The foundation's Web site includes photos of Jackson and describes itself as a "universal charity organization designed to improve the condition of all mankind."

In August, the foundation filed a notice of its intent to use Jackson's name and sell merchandise in the singer's estate case.

The lawsuit claims trademark infringement and unfair competition, and seeks a cancellation of a trademark for Jackson's initials that the foundation has already received.



Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

STAY FOR A BITE — OR TWO: **Chuck Woodmansee and his wife Nancy enjoy their meals at the Spitfire Grill on Airport Avenue on Tuesday afternoon. The restaurant, along with a handful of others, are participating in 'Stay to Play,' a program by the Arts Commission that offers discounts to those who work in Santa Monica, encouraging them to stay in town after work.**

Highways to offer special workshops

FROM **STAY** PAGE 1

Third Street Promenade, will offer pitchers of mojitos, margaritas and mai tais for $20, a discount from its regular price of $26. The restaurant will also serve its pizzas, which are normally priced at around $14, for $8.

"We see great potential for the clientele that keeps the door open during lunch but we don't see as much during dinner," Megan Sheehy, the general manager of Lago, said. "Hopefully this motivates them to stay in town, have a bit to eat, watch a show and walk on the promenade before getting straight in their car and going home."

Highways, a theater inside the 18th Street Arts Center, will offer a series of workshops, starting with a "performance laboratory" that deals with somatic embodiment.

The opening workshop will be followed by an open dress rehearsal on Oct. 15 for a performance about Los Angeles garment history and will conclude on Oct. 29 with Highways' annual observance of Dia De Los Muertos, also known as Day of the Dead.

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cultural affairs supervisor
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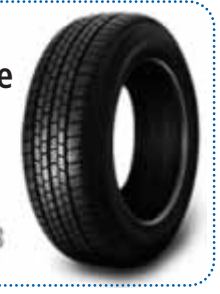
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Number of reported child abuse cases up from recent years

FROM ABUSE PAGE 1

of the alleged abuse took place outside of the school, whether it was in the home or elsewhere.

The changes in the policies and administrative regulations for child abuse came after a former ESL teacher at Lincoln Middle School was arrested last spring for molesting students. Thomas Arthur Beltran pleaded guilty to multiple counts of sexual molestation involving nine female students back in December.

The county's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) received more than 178,000 overall reports to its hotline from Sept. 1, 2008 to Aug. 31 of this year, a figure that doesn't include referrals.

Once a tip is received, a social worker is assigned to gather information about the child and their family, checking a 10-year-old database to see if there has been similar calls during the past decade. The department then sends the worker to meet with the subject child and any siblings before interviewing the parents or guardian.

"We work very hard to try to get the family the support that they need and depending on the severity of the allegations, there is the option to detain the children, but we prefer not to do that at almost all costs because we believe the children are better off with their families," Susan Jakubowski, spokeswoman for DCFS, said.

Jakubowski said that because children feel safe in schools, they often develop a rapport with their teachers and confide in any problems at home.

"We have found educators to be very focused in this crucial duty that they have and the bottom line is the department and the schools are all working together to try to give the family the support they need so their children can be raised free from abuse and neglect," she said.

"WE HAVE FOUND EDUCATORS TO BE VERY FOCUSED IN THIS CRUCIAL DUTY THAT THEY HAVE AND THE BOTTOM LINE IS THE DEPARTMENT AND THE SCHOOLS ARE ALL WORKING TOGETHER TO TRY TO GIVE THE FAMILY THE SUPPORT THEY NEED SO THEIR CHILDREN CAN BE RAISED FREE FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT."

Susan Jakubowski
spokeswoman, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services

But reporting on suspicions can be a tough call to make.

Harry Keiley, the president of the Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association, said that he will occasionally get a call from a teacher who is struggling with the decision to notify authorities.

"Although it is a difficult call that teachers have to make, we know that we have to place the safety of children first and in doing so, we take the obligation of being really the protector of children almost as a sacred right that we have during school hours," he said.

melodyh@smdp.com

REGIONAL BRIEFS

SM BAY

Military investigates if wreckage is missing jet

Military officials are investigating a historian's report that the wreckage of an Air Force jet lost at sea 54 years ago has been found in ocean off of Santa Monica.

A volunteer group headed by amateur historian Pat Macha claims it found debris of the Lockheed-Martin T-33A that went missing on Oct. 15, 1955.

The Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Command says it appears likely Macha is correct but further investigation will be done. Lt. Col. Wayne Perry, a spokesman for the joint-military agency, says the command will determine whether the water is shallow enough to recover the wreckage.

The jet was on a training mission with two crewmen who had taken off from Los Angeles International Airport. Perry did not immediately know the identity of the crewmen.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES

City Council approves graffiti coating

Taggers in Los Angeles beware.

The City Council voted unanimously Tuesday to pass an ordinance requiring that all new buildings, including homes, must have anti-graffiti coating unless the owners promise to remove graffiti soon after it appears.

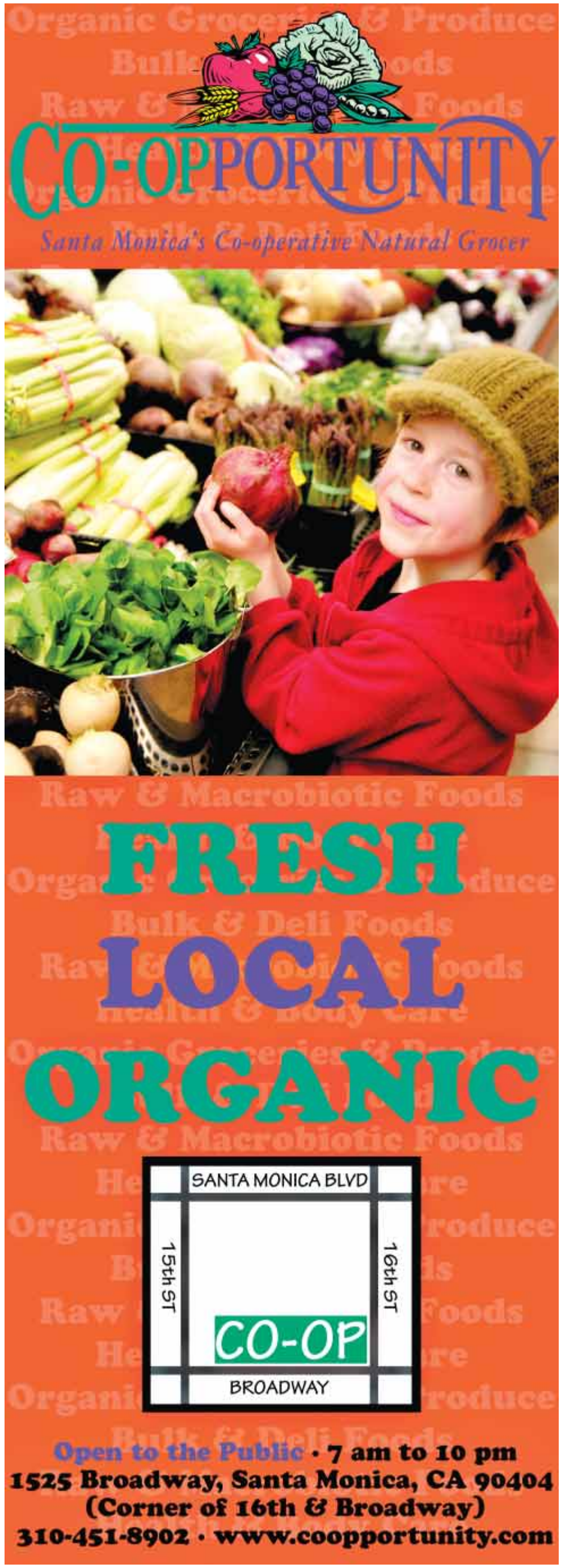
The law still needs signed approval from Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, and would take effect 30 days after.

Tony Perez, a spokesman for Councilman Ed Reyes, says the coating is a chemical type of gloss making it easier to wipe off graffiti.

It must cover walls and doors from the ground to at least nine feet.

Owners are exempt if they sign an agreement with the city's Department of Building and Safety promising to remove tags within seven days of graffiti being applied, or within 72 hours of being notified by the department.

AP



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Schwarzenegger wants fast action on tax overhaul

DON THOMPSON
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO A proposal to dramatically reshape California's tax system drew criticism Tuesday from across the political landscape, even before the Legislature begins considering the plan.

The state would repeal its sales and corporate taxes, flatten the income tax rate, and tax a wider variety of businesses under Tuesday's recommendations from the Commission on the 21st Century Economy. It would include a nearly unprecedented "business net receipts tax" that would apply to all companies doing business in California, including many based in other states.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger immediately endorsed the proposal by the tax commission he created with Democratic legislative leaders a year ago. He called lawmakers into special session, asking them to approve the plan this year.

But business and labor organizations alike urged slow and careful consideration of what the California Chamber of Commerce cautioned is "an unproven experiment."

"What's really extraordinary about it is this new tax is unprecedented anywhere in the world," said University of Connecticut professor Richard Pomp, a national tax expert who sat on the California commission. "It's got lots of potential problems. Maybe they're remediable, maybe not."

Pomp was one of five on the 14-member commission who refused to support its final recommendations. The centerpiece business receipts tax has been tried only on a limited scale in Michigan, he said, with uncertain results.

"This tax wouldn't be good for the economy," said Pomp, an international tax consultant and author who directed the New York Tax Study Commission from 1981-87. "I think this is shooting dice."

The business tax is among several ideas intended to end a boom-and-bust system that relies heavily on personal income taxes to fund state government. The top 10 percent of income earners paid more than 53 percent of the personal income tax last year, according to the commission's report.

"It is a system that just didn't work. It is heavily flawed and it is absolutely disastrous," Schwarzenegger said at a Capitol news conference. "All of these services go on this extraordinary roller coaster ride, up and down, up and down."

Had the recommendations been in place this year, they would have saved $9 billion in emergency budget cuts, said Stanford University professor John Cogan, a commission member who endorsed the report.

Commission chairman Gerald Parsky said if the proposal were adopted, Californians' overall tax burden would be reduced by $6.8 billion, mostly by shifting the burden to the federal government and residents of other states through the business receipts tax.

However, he described the proposal as a bipartisan compromise that will need legislative study.

Because there could be unintended consequences from some of the changes, the commission recommended they be phased in over five years beginning in 2012. Parsky said the plan is revenue neutral, so lawmakers could adopt the tax code changes with a majority vote. Raising taxes requires a two-thirds vote.

Assembly and Senate leaders said legislative tax committees would hold hearings to review concerns raised by the business community and advocates for middle-class families and low-income workers.

"Californians deserve a fair and full assessment of the ways these recommendations would affect them — whether positive, negative or neutral," Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, a Democrat from Los Angeles, said in a statement.

Bass and Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, did not say when they planned to call the Legislature into special session to take up the recommendations.

Robert Stern, president of the Center for Governmental Studies in Los Angeles, said the commission's report appears to be dominated by its conservative wing, while it is liberals who control the Legislature.

"That bodes ill. If it had been unanimous it would have had a tough time. If it's not unanimous it's even more difficult," Stern said. "We will not see this version enacted, but we may seem some version enacted."

Stern predicted legislators will need to tinker with the state's tax system, however, because it is so broken.

"I think the public is very concerned about tax fairness and recognizes that our system is old and perhaps needs some upgrading," Stern said. "I think they have to show they're not cutting taxes on the wealthy. They're either just making it simpler or fairer."

The plan was panned by tax groups on the left and the right.

Jean Ross, executive director of the nonpartisan California Budget Project, said overall revenue would grow more slowly under the commission's plan. She also objected that the plan would shift the tax burden away from the wealthy while penalizing businesses that provide high wages and good benefits.

"Based on the broad-based opposition to the commission's recommendations, they deserve to be rejected," Ross said.

Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Javis Taxpayers Association, opposes the business receipts tax.

"We believe that taxes should be obvious and painful. When you bury the tax in the ultimate cost of the service or product, people just don't know," Coupal said. "Everybody who's looking at this has no idea what the impact will be. ... If you don't know what it's going to do, you're far from building political momentum. It's just half-baked."

California Taxpayers' Association President Teresa Casazza said the state could get most of the same benefits simply by creating a rainy day fund to capture tax receipts during good economic times to be spent when the economy sours.

"To completely switch to a whole new taxing structure with so many unknowns is something you need much more time to consider," Casazza said.

Schwarzenegger said he wasn't surprised by all the criticism.

"People are scared of new things. Sometimes they feel more comfortable with a system that is in place that is disastrous," Schwarzenegger said.

Senate panel rejects health proposal

DAVID ESPO
AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON In a long-anticipated showdown, liberal Democrats twice failed on Tuesday to inject a government-run insurance option into sweeping health care legislation taking shape in the Senate, despite bipartisan agreement that private insurers must change their ways.

The two votes marked a victory for Montana Democrat Max Baucus, the Senate Finance Committee chairman, who is hoping to push his middle-of-the-road measure through the panel by week's end. It also kept alive the possibility that at least one Republican may yet swing behind the overhaul, a key goal of both Baucus and the White House.

"My job is to put together a bill that gets to 60 votes" in the full Senate, Baucus said shortly before he joined a majority on the committee in defeating efforts to rewrite a key portion of his draft legislation. "No one shows me how to get to 60 votes with a public option," he said, using the term used to describe a new government role in health care. It would take 60 votes in the 100-member Senate to overcome any filibuster Republicans might attempt.

Supporters of a new role for government repeatedly accused private insurers of placing profits over coverage, and said they would try for a federal option again when the full Senate votes.

"With some work and some compromise, we can get the 60 votes on the floor of the Senate that will make our system better by providing for a strong, fair and viable public option," said Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York, who backed one of the proposals rejected Tuesday.

A combination of Baucus, moderate Democratic allies and all committee Republicans combined to defeat both amendments.

The maneuvering occurred as the committee plunged into a second week of public debate on legislation that generally adheres to conditions that President Barack Obama has called for. The bill includes numerous new consumer protections, including a ban on companies denying insurance on the basis of pre-existing conditions. At the same time it provides government subsidies to help lower-income Americans afford insurance that is currently beyond their means. It also includes steps that supporters say will begin to slow the growth in health care costs nationwide.

Obama has urged lawmakers to hold the cost of legislation to about $900 billion over a decade. That's significantly more than House committees originally envisioned in measures cleared earlier in the year, and the leadership has been working in recent days to find ways to cut costs. "It's hard work but we're determined to get it down," Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said of the price tag after a marathon closed-door meeting.

The health care debate is intensely political, and lawmakers in both parties used Tuesday's debate to seek campaign funds as they near the close of the third quarter of the year.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., issued a recent appeal for funds for his re-election bid, saying, "Delaying reform to protect insurance companies' profits is completely unacceptable to Nevadans, the American people and me."

Similarly, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., who drew national notice for yelling "You Lie" at Obama during this month's health care speech to Congress, has emerged as a newly featured fundraiser for the National Republican Campaign Committee.

After weeks of delay, both the House and Senate now appear on track to vote on different versions of health care legislation this fall. Passage in both houses would set the stage for a compromise to be voted on by year's end.

Inside the Senate Finance Committee, the first effort to remake a key portion of the bill came from Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., who said his proposal was far from the government takeover that critics portray. "It's not. It's optional," he said, adding it was designed to offer competition and a lower-priced, reliable choice for consumers shopping for coverage.

Rockefeller, whose measure was rejected, 15-8, assailed the insurance industry in withering terms. "I hate to use the word 'rapacious,'" he said — but quickly added it was warranted. He said omission of a government option from the measure was a virtual invitation to insurance companies to continue placing profits over people, and he predicted they would raise their premiums substantially once the legislation went into effect.

Republicans countered that the proposals would lead to the demise of the private insurance industry and result in a system that is completely run by the government.

"Washington is not the answer," declared Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah.

Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, cited private studies — one by the conservative Heritage Foundation, the other by the Lewin Group, owned by United HealthCare — saying millions would be pushed out of private insurance as the government held fees to doctors at artificially low levels. He said the result would be a violation of Obama's pledge that consumers would be able to keep their current insurance if they wanted once the legislation went into effect.

While Baucus voted against the proposal, he was at pains to counter Rockefeller's charge that the legislation increased subsidies that would go to insurance companies without dictating changes in past practices.

He said the legislation would raise taxes on insurers, ban denial of coverage because of pre-existing conditions and limit the extra premiums that could be charged on the basis of age.

There was little appetite on the panel for a full-throated defense of the insurance industry, even among Republicans who voted against an expanded government role.

"The private sector is not doing exactly what it should do with medical services. but it can,' said Sen. Jim Bunning, R-Ky., one of the committee's most conservative members. He said most Democrats "don't want to help the insurance company" improve, preferring to have the government step in.

Schumer responded promptly.

"If the state insurance commissioners are doing such a good job, then why are costs going through the roof?" he asked.

All 10 Republicans on the committee voted against the Rockefeller proposal to allow the government to compete directly with insurance companies, Sen. Olympia Snowe among them. Democrats are hoping the Maine lawmaker will eventually break ranks with her party and support the legislation.

Also opposed were Baucus and fellow Democrats Kent Conrad of North Dakota, Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, Bill Nelson of Florida and Tom Carper of Delaware.

Schumer backed an alternative approach that he said would introduce more competition into the insurance market nationwide. His version differed from Rockefeller's chiefly in that it would have allowed for the government to negotiate payments with doctors and hospitals.

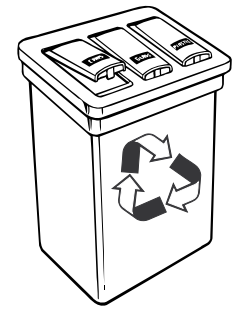
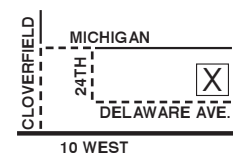


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Senate climate bill tougher than current House version

DINA CAPPIELLO &
H. JOSEF HEBERT
Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON A Senate climate bill calls for a 20 percent cut in greenhouse gases by 2020, deeper than the reductions mandated by the House but also includes stronger measures to try to avoid energy price spikes, according to a draft of the bill.

The draft obtained by The Associated Press, remains subject to change. But the overall carbon reduction requirements are expected to stand. The Democratic bill is to be released Wednesday by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee with a vote by the panel likely in late October.

The draft includes an economy-wide cap and trade system that would require power plants, industrial facilities and refineries to cut carbon dioxide and other climate changing pollution. While there would be an overall emission cap, polluters would be able to purchase emissions allowances to limit reductions. But the Senate bill does not lay out how emission allowances would be distributed, leaving that for later.

The bill is viewed widely as an early focus of Senate negotiations over climate in the coming months, but just a starting point as Democratic leaders seek to work out compromises — adding new provisions and dropping others — to garner the 60 votes that will be needed for passage.

The 800-page draft calls for a ceiling on greenhouse gas emissions beginning in three years, to be tightened annually so that emissions would be 20 percent lower in 2020 than they were in 2005. Emissions would have to be 83 percent lower by 2050. While the long-term cuts are the same as required by the House in June, the Senate bill has a faster early ramp-up, something many in industry had wanted to avoid. The House called for a 17 percent emission cut by 2020 and President Barack Obama originally had sought only a 14 percent cut.

But Democratic aides involved in crafting the bill said the legislation also includes measures that would make early reductions easier to achieve. And, they argued that information released since the House acted shows carbon dioxide emissions in the United States today already are 6 percent lower than what they were in 2005, a reduction attributed largely to the economic recession.

The bill also includes provisions that its sponsors argue would help avoid severe energy price spikes as the economy shifts more and more away from cheaper fossil fuels, especially coal for electricity production. The bill, for example, calls for more emission allowances to be held in reserve so they can be made available if energy prices soar, said the Democratic aides who spoke on condition of anonymity in advance of the bill's release.

The Democratic bill will be co-sponsored by Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., the environment committee's chairman, and Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., two of the Senate's strongest advocates for aggressive action to counter global warming. It is expected to be taken up, and likely be approved, by Boxer's committee in the coming weeks despite opposition from GOP members.

Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma, the committee's ranking Republican and a sharp critic of climate legislation, said he expects that Democrats will be able to push the bill through committee. But he urged Boxer to have a "fair, open and transparent process" and not add key parts of the bill "at the last minute" as did House Democrats.

As the draft began to circulate Wednesday among environmental organizations, it became clear the legislation is viewed by both supporters and opponents as largely a beginning for what is expected to be intense and difficult discussions and debate among senators in the coming months over climate legislation.

"It's a starting point for negotiations," said Anthony Kreindler, a spokesman for the Environmental Defense Fund, a leading proponent of cap-and-trade measures to deal with climate. "There are going to be efforts to strengthen it and efforts to weaken it."

While a stronger bill than the one passed by the House, it leaves gaps to be filled, said David Doniger, climate policy director for the Natural Resources Defense Council. "It's a bill with all comers in mind," he said.

Jack Gerard, president of the American Petroleum Institute, the industry's trade group, said the bill fails to make clear how it will constrain carbon dioxide emissions and "appears to be following the (House) pattern ... which resulted in a political bidding process that picked winners and losers."

Republicans, with the exception of a few, have voiced strong opposition to cap-and-trade climate legislation calling it a massive energy tax on consumers as energy prices increase amid the shift away from fossil fuels. And many centrist Democrats — especially from rural areas and from states with energy intensive industries — have expressed reluctance to support any bill that does not protect against energy cost spikes and protect domestic industries.

The Senate draft does not spell out how emission allowances will be distributed, leaving one of the most contentious issues to further negotiations. The House would provide for free 85 percent of emission allowances to various industries, especially electric utilities to help reduce the cost to consumers.

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OLYMPICS

Obama's pitch draws Republican complaints

BETH FOUHY
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK President Obama's decision to travel to Copenhagen to boost Chicago's chances of winning the 2016 Olympics has drawn criticism from some Republicans, who call it a boondoggle for Obama's hometown allies and evidence the president has blurred his priorities.

Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele denounced the visit on a conference call with reporters Tuesday. Calling it "noble for the president to pitch his home city, Chi-town," before the International Olympic Committee Friday, Steele said it nonetheless was a distraction from more pressing issues such as health care, job creation and other urgent demands on Obama's time.

However, Mitt Romney, the former Massachusetts governor and 2008 Republican presidential contender, said Obama was right to make an appearance.

"In the current environment, the presence of a head of state is important to get the Games," Romney, who headed the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah, said, noting that former British Prime Minister Tony Blair had set a new standard by personally lobbying for his country's succesful 2012 Olympic bid.

Steele said it raised questions about Obama's priorities.

"Where is the focus?" Steele asked. "At a time of war, at a time of recession ... I think this trip is nice but not necessary for the president. The goal should be creating job opportunities not seven years from now, but job opportunities today."

White House spokesman Robert Gibbs laughed when told of Steele's criticism of Obama's trip.

"Who's he rooting for?" Robert Gibbs said. "Is he hoping to hop a plane to Brazil and catch the Olympics in Rio? I don't know. Maybe it's Madrid."

Steele's comments echoed those of Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, the ranking GOP member of the House Intelligence Committee, who told reporters Obama should focus on the escalating conflict in Afghanistan.

Just last week Obama said he wouldn't make the trip to Copenhagen, citing his need to press for health care reform legislation instead. White House officials mentioned the economic benefits the U.S. would receive from a winning Olympics bid in explaining the president's sudden change of heart.

First Lady Michelle Obama was originally slated to represent Chicago before the IOC but will now share the duties with her husband.

The city's bid is competing with bids from Rio de Janeiro, Madrid, Spain and Tokyo, and the heads of state from Brazil, Spain and Japan are appearing in person to make their countries' pitch.

Indeed, Curt Hamakawa, director of the Center for International Sport Business at Western New England College in Massachusetts, said Chicago would likely lose the bid if Obama had chosen not to go.

"For the president not to attend would send a signal, and it would not be helpful to Chicago's bid. Almost certainly it would result in Chicago not having a chance," Hamakawa said.

NCAA FOOTBALL

USC's Johnson begins long recovery from injury

GREG BEACHAM
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES Southern California tailback Stafon Johnson probably wouldn't have survived his weightlifting accident without his muscular athlete's neck, which helped maintain his airway when a weight bar crashed down on it, a doctor said Tuesday.

Johnson could communicate non-verbally with his family members and teammates on Tuesday morning, less than 24 hours after his bench-pressing accident in the Trojans' weight room. The bar crushed his neck and larynx, which required seven hours of surgery.

Johnson's fitness helped him survive, said Dr. Gudata Hinika, the trauma medical director at California Hospital Medical Center.

Johnson is unlikely to play again for USC this season, but coach Pete Carroll is grateful for the team leader's improved health.

"He's not talking, but he was doing his wave and writing," Carroll said. "It's very uplifting for his mom and his family and all the guys who got a chance to go down there."

Hinika said Johnson is recovering well and is in stable condition. Johnson, who was taken away from USC's campus wearing a neck brace, woke up Tuesday morning after undergoing an emergency tracheotomy, followed by reconstructive surgery.

Johnson's mother, Kim Mallory, happened to be working at the same Downtown Los Angeles hospital where her son was transported Monday.

It's unclear when Johnson will be able to speak again, but he's expected to fully recover. The news was greeted with sighs of relief at USC's Heritage Hall, where the seventh-ranked Trojans gathered before Tuesday's practice in preparation for Saturday's key game at No. 24 California.

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SURF REPORT

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Swell Forecast

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Long Range Synopsis

Should see some SSE swell come in from from a very steep 170° and likely spotty as well.

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 22, 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 -- 1
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 1
- Number of wet days -- 0
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 40 / ns
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 4 / ns

The Beach Report Card is made possible by Goldhirsh Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, simplehuman, 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
Las Corrilla Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth	A+	ns
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechusa and Los Alisos 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	B	ns
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A+	ns
Solstice Canyon at Dan 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	F	ns
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily	A	ns
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	B	ns
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	ns
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A+	ns
Big Rock Beach at 19848 PCH stairs	A+	ns
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	ns
Tuna Canyon	ns	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 Potrero 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	D	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
Marine 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.

PGA

Mickelson poised for yet another run at Tiger

DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

ORLANDO, Fla. Even after eight decades of golf, Arnold Palmer is vulnerable to a few surprises.

In this case, both occurred on the same day.

He watched the final round of the Tour Championship, where Tiger Woods started two shots out of the lead and didn't make a birdie until the 15th hole. By then, Phil Mickelson blew past everyone and won by three shots.

"I was a little surprised at Tiger," Palmer said Tuesday at his Bay Hill Club. "If you just watch him like I do — and I've watched him since he was a little guy — just the way he walks, the way he holds himself, it amazed me he didn't win. That was my reaction."

And then came a bigger surprise.

Did he ever imagine seeing two fierce rivals posing on the 18th green while holding their own trophy?

Palmer threw his head back and laughed.

"No, but that's good," he said. "I did think about that. I just didn't put it that context."

Sunday at East Lake presented a bizarre scene, for sure, when Mickelson rallied to win the Tour Championship and Woods did enough on the back nine to capture the FedEx Cup. The PGA Tour could not have asked for a better finish to its FedEx Cup. Golf is at its most interesting when Woods and Mickelson are on top of their games.

The question is how long this will last.

The next time Woods and Mickelson play against each other — assuming they aren't partners in the Presidents Cup — is scheduled to be the HSBC Championship in Shanghai the first week of November.

The better barometer will be in 2010.

The way he won and the player he beat must have made Mickelson wish that next year started next week. He had been hitting the ball well enough to contend just about every week. His driving — higher launch, less spin, straighter than ever — was superb at East Lake.

The problem was his putting, which was so bad that Mickelson asked his caddie for suggestions. Jim "Bones" MacKay jumped at the chance to help, and spent the Monday after the BMW Championship searching for Dave Stockton's phone number.

"Bones came up with the idea," Mickelson said. "I said, 'Bones, for two years I've been kind of floundering here, not having the right direction. I want you to think about it.' He came back the next day and he said, 'I think you should call Dave Stockton.'"

Mickelson and Stockton hooked up in San Diego, and Stockton encouraged him to return to his putting style of old — a forward press with his hands, which Mickelson had been doing since he was a kid. The move felt natural, and the results were astounding. He one-putted 36 times over 72 holes at East Lake.

"I feel like I have some direction now on where I want to go with my putter," Mickelson said. "I felt like I've been hitting it this well for quite some time since working with Butch (Harmon), and yet I have not had the results. To be able to put it all together from tee-to-green, as well as on the green, feels great."

He looked so good that NBC Sports analyst Johnny Miller suggested Mickelson could win PGA Tour player of the year.

Mickelson is talented enough to do that.

So, too, is the guy he has been trying to chase for the better part of a dozen years.

Even a player of Mickelson's caliber — 37 career victories on the PGA Tour and three majors — still needs more than one tournament to show that he is up to the challenge. Because what the last decade has shown is that when Mickelson appears ready to challenge, Woods always seems to have an answer.

Go back to 1998.

One year after Woods' established himself at No. 1 with a 12-shot win at the Masters among his four victories, Mickelson won the season-opening Mercedes Championship with a strong statement. After hearing the roar for Woods' eagle during a Sunday charge, Mickelson fired off four birdies over the next five holes and went on to win at La Costa.

He didn't win again for seven months. He didn't win a major for six more years.

Some other examples:

• Mickelson won consecutive events on the West Coast in 2005 and was atop the leaderboard for 10 consecutive rounds in stroke play until Woods beat him in a duel at Doral. Mickelson didn't win again until the PGA Championship five months later.

• Mickelson was one hole away from joining Woods and Ben Hogan as the only players to win three straight majors in the modern era until he took double bogey on the 18th hole at Winged Foot and tied for second in the 2006 U.S. Open. He didn't seriously contend in another major for two years.

• Playing with Woods for third time in four days, Mickelson buried him on the front nine of the TPC Boston and shot 66 for a two-shot victory at the 2007 Deutsche Bank Championship. That gave Mickelson the lead in the FedEx Cup standings, but he took the next week off. Woods answered by winning the final two playoff events and the FedEx Cup.

So what will this Tour Championship victory over Woods do for Mickelson?

Lefty turns 40 in June, which could give him an even greater sense of urgency. Then again, Woods has a say in this rivalry, too.

"Certainly, I would love to go at it again with him," Woods said.

Most everyone would love to see it.

Perhaps the Tour Championship was a preview for what could be a special year in 2010.

Or maybe it was a rerun.

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MOVIE TIMES

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AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

Beyond a Reasonable Doubt (PG-13) 1hr 45min
2:30, 5:00, 7:25, 9:55

I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell (R) 1hr 45min
2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50

Ponyo (G) 1hr 40min
2:10, 4:35, 7:00, 9:25

Julie & Julia (PG-13) 2hr 3min
1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

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

9 (PG-13) 1hr 19min
1:10, 3:10, 5:20, 7:40, 9:40

Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs (PG) 1hr 21min
2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:45

Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 3D (PG) 1hr 21min
1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

Jennifer's Body (R) 1hr 42min
2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Love Happens (PG-13) 1hr 49min
1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50

September Issue (PG-13) 1hr 30min
2:10, 4:40, 7:00, 9:30

Surrogates (PG-13) 1hr 29min
1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10

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

Bright Star (PG) 1hr 59min
1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

Crude (NR) 1hr 44min
1:50, 7:20

Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers (NR) 1hr 32min
1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:15

Amreeka (PG-13) 1hr 32min
1:40, 4:20, 7:10, 9:40

Extract (R) 1hr 30min
4:30, 9:55

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

District 9 (R) 1hr 53min
1:30, 4:10, 7:00, 9:40

The Informant! (R) 1hr 48min
11:30am, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:20

Inglourious Basterds (R) 2hrs 32min
12:00, 3:20, 6:40, 10:00

Fame (PG) 1hr 47min
11:40am, 1:10, 2:10, 3:50, 4:50, 6:30, 7:30, 9:10, 10:10

Pandorum (R) 1hr 48min
11:50am, 2:30, 5:00, 7:40, 10:30

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

Happily head home, Sagittarius

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Listen to a friend or the voices of a group. Let your imagination be charged with new thoughts and ideas. Creativity colors the day until late afternoon, when pragmatism enters once more. Tonight: Connect with your feelings first.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ A must appearance puts a glow on a situation and helps you meet a responsibility. A brainstorming session needs to be welcomed, but realize not every idea has to be a gem. Read between the lines with a friend. Tonight: Caring runs deep, especially if you can understand this person.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ The time has come to move in a new direction and see different perspectives. To see them doesn't mean you agree, but you are in the process of opening a door. Listen to someone who could have an impact on your life. Tonight: Burn the midnight oil, if you must.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ A partner is feeding you information, though a haze surrounds the words. Pull back and see the haze, and only then will you have the complete story. A partner is changing before your very eyes. Tonight: Make nice.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ You could be rethinking a decision and the direction you would like to head in. Investigate great ideas that keep floating in your direction. We often don't know until they are tested. Encourage brainstorming. Tonight: Try a new spot.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ Engage in a discussion, and know where you are coming from. Understand the source of someone's inspiration, knowing full well which way to go. Act on an idea once you are 90 percent sure of its destiny. Tonight: Among the throngs of people.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ You might want to rethink your choices and direction, as someone's idea proves to be even better than you thought possible. Talk is great; action is even better. What can be accomplished could amaze you. Tonight: Work as late as you want.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ Once you handle immediate confusion, you'll know which way to go. Discussions are great, but they have limitations. They will prevent actions if they don't stop. Go and do what must be done. Tonight: Dive into adventure. The theme is action.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Listen to the rhythm of another's words, and you might understand a lot more of what motivates this person. Get to the bottom of this issue and root it out. Don't stop looking within for your side of the problem. Tonight: Happily head home.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Honor who you are in a discussion. Know your boundaries and let others know them as well. If you feel that someone is painting a cloudy picture and questions are not well-received, back out. Communication will improve. Tonight: Hang out at a favorite haunt.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Could you be peeking through a veil and seeing someone realistically for the first time? Continue the viewing, as it might be helpful in the long run. Ask needed questions, and you could be given clear insight into the next step. Tonight: Treat yourself.

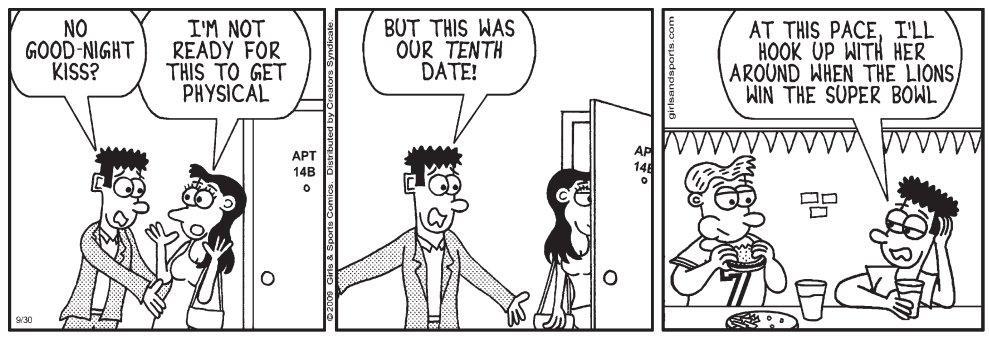
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★ Know when you need to back off, if for no other reason than the timing is not working in your favor. A discussion might tap into your creative energy. Act on ideas and suggestions later on today or tomorrow. Tonight: The world is your oyster.

Happy birthday

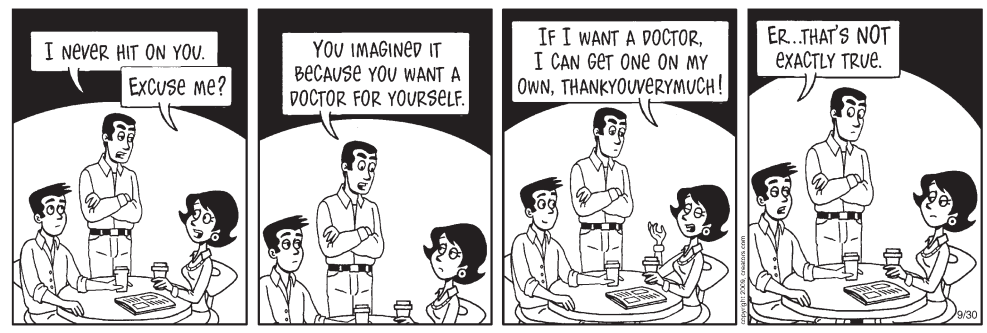
This year, you will become much more of a dreamer than in the past few years. You will have many reasons to smile, especially as you have the good sense to think through your ideas. Sometimes others will give you more feedback than you'd like. Learn to take it and accept what is given in good faith. If you are single, romance could knock on your door anytime before New Year's 2010. Excitement also could surround relationships during summer 2010. If you are attached, romance blooms between the two of you in the above-mentioned periods. AQUARIUS can be provocative or fun.

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

Girls and Sports
By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



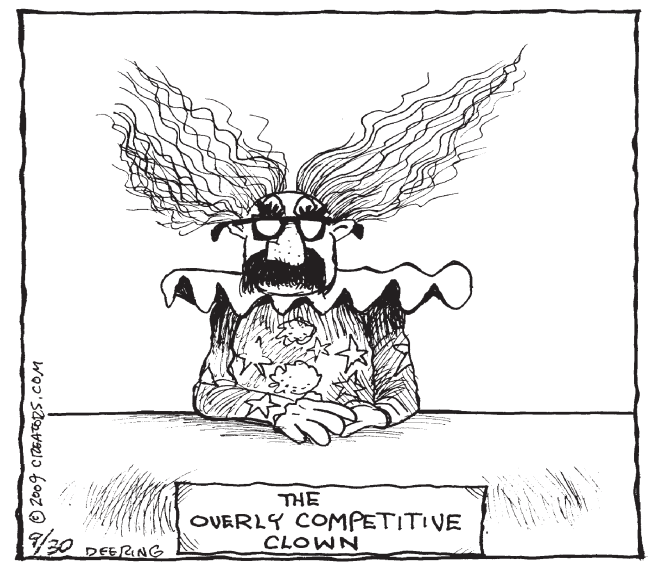
The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



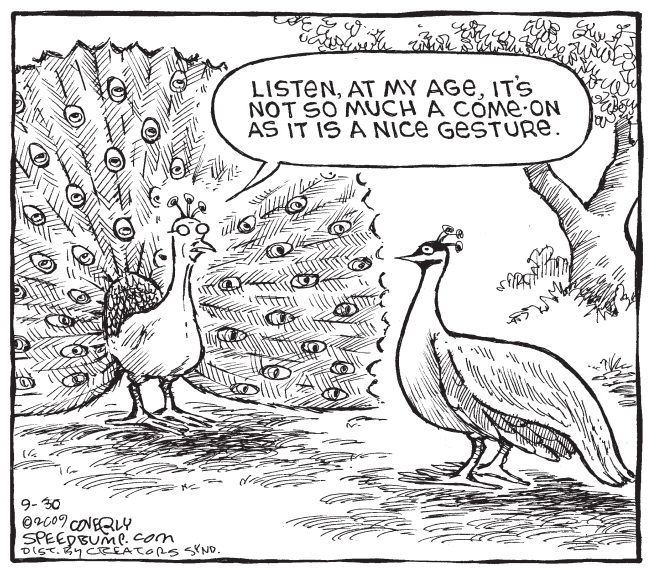
Garfield
By Jim Davis



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 ★★★

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

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

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

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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 "Gee whiz!"
5 Small chicken
11 Diva's song
12 One-celled organism
13 Lord's wife
14 Track athlete
15 Pub brew
16 Cuban coin
17 Make fun of
19 Old boat
22 Barn section
24 Church topper
26 Research sites
27 Border
28 Car parts
30 Welcome
31 Chart shape
32 Concerning
34 Iditarod item
35 Cash dispenser
38 Lane of Broadway
41 Bassoon's kin
42 Not out
43 Ice chunk
44 Messed up
45 Fedora material

DOWN

1 Fancy party
2 Test type
3 Furniture by a wall
4 Cow chow
5 Uncovers
6 Entertains
7 Forbidden act
8 Wallet bill
9 Justice Fortas
10 Disfigure
16 Chum
18 Instead
19 Sailor's list
20 Yen
21 Sugar source
22 Sign of freshness
23 Curbside call
25 Where El Misti rises
29 Seasoned sausage
30 Zeus or Odin
33 "John Brown's Body" poet
34 Display
36 Shop item
37 Convene
38 Collar
39 Pac.'s counterpart
40 Common title word
41 Not working

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

Yesterday's answer

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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			
44						■	45			

9-30

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 7 27 42 49 52
Meganumber: 19
Jackpot: $88M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 7 13 34 39 47
Meganumber: 3
Jackpot: $9M

FANTASY 5: 14 18 20 30 36

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 3 2 5
EVENING: 1 4 7

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 09 Winning Spirit
2nd: 04 Big Ben
3rd: 03 Hot Shot
RACE TIME: 1:46.83

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ **Not My Fault:** (1) A 60-year-old highway worker was injured when struck by motorist Catherine Stotts, 62, who was speeding down a blocked-off road construction lane near Willits, Calif., in July. The worker required hospitalization, but Stotts complained about receiving a traffic citation, telling officers that the man could have jumped out of the way faster. (2) Alexander Kabelis, 31, was arrested for slashing tires on almost 50 vehicles in Boulder, Colo., in May, but offered several explanations, including being overwhelmed by radiation from the nearby Rocky Flats nuclear facility and having been forced by his mother to wear braces on his teeth as a child.

■ **What Century Is This?** During the recent influence-peddling trial against Ottawa, Ontario, Mayor Larry O'Brien, local politician Lisa MacLeod, 34, gave seemingly important evidence for the prosecution. However, it was ruled of minimal value by Ontario Superior Court Justice Douglas Cunningham. The judge, 69, reasoned that since MacLeod, as a working woman with a long commute that leaves a husband and 4-year-old daughter at home, has "a number of rather significant things going on in her life" and must therefore be "distract(ed)" and thus a less reliable witness. One member of Parliament called Cunningham's ruling "pathetic."

TODAY IN HISTORY

1399 Henry IV is proclaimed King of England.

1744 France and Spain defeat the Kingdom of Sardinia at the Battle of Madonna dell'Olmo.

1791 The Magic Flute, the last opera composed by Mozart receives its premiere performance at Freihaus-Theater auf der Wieden in Vienna, Austria.

1791 The National Constituent Assembly in Paris is dissolved; Parisians hail Maximilien Robespierre and Jérôme Pétion as incorruptible patriots.

1813 Battle of Bárbula: Simón Bolívar defeats Santiago Bobadilla.

WORD UP!

ameliorate \uh-MEEL-yuh-rayt\ , transitive verb: 1. To make better; to improve.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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Help Wanted

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close to beach and 3rd Street Promenade, Lower 1+1, den, patio, backyard, paid utilities
(310)395-1495, (310)666-8360

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. $1575 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

501 N. Venice 1+1, #29 $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 12 single, $1025/mo $500 off move-in stove, fridge, carpet, utilities included, laundry, parking, no pets. (310)574-6767 www.jkwproperties.com

MAR VISTA 12450 Culver Blvd. Unit 224 1bdrm/1bath, carpet, granite counter tops, gated parking, intercom entry, stove, fridge, utilities included, laundry, no pets. $1025/mo $500 off move-in on site manager (888)414-7778 www.jkwproperties.com

For Rent

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1120 6th St #5 2+1
Pergo floors, 2 parking spaces, balcony $1995

1011 Pico Blvd. #8 2+2, Loft, 3 levels modern building, $2650

Please visit our website for complete listings and information on vacancies in Santa Monica and the Westside
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MAR VISTA 12760 Matteson Ave #8 1+1 $975/mo stove, fridge, tile and vinlyn floors, blinds, parking, laundry, no pets call between 5:30-7:30pm units shown by appt.only $750 off move-in (310) 439-1928 jkwproperties.com

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

MAR VISTA: 12434 CULVER Blvd. units 3 1+1 stove, fridge, AC, carpets blinds, laundry room, intercom entry, gated parking, no pets.$1095/mo $500 off move-in (888)414-7778 www.jkwproperties.com

MARVISTA-LA $1550.00 2bdrms, 2 baths, no pets, balcony, stove, refrig, dshwshr, washr/dryr, 2-car garage 12048 Culver Blvd. #202 Open daily 8am-7pm. Additional info in unit

PALMS 2+1 3633 Keystone ave #1 stove, blinds, tile flooring, carpets, ceiling fan, laundry,parking, AC, no pets. $1365/mo $500 off move-in (310)578-7512 www.jkwproperties.com

PALMS 3346 S. Canfiled #104 $1015 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 3346 S. Canfiled #205 $975 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 unit 2 $900 Stove, fridge, carpet, blinds, laundry, street parking, no pets. $700 off move-in special. (310)578-7512 www.jkwproperties.com

PALMS ADJ/ LaCienga Hghts. $995.00 1 Bdrm, 1Bath, NO PETS, stove, refrg, parking 2009 Preuss Rd., #10 Open daily 8am-7pm . Additional info in unit

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Private backyard, hardwood floors, washer/dryer.
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LIC # 1840820 Tobi (818)268-2230

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For Rent

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

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2 Bed, 2 Bath
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Dramatic, Remodeled Penthouse
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$1,250,000
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Median Price of ALL Santa Monica Listings from All Agents from All Offices Listed for Sale As of Late September 2009

	Single Family Homes	Condos & Townhomes
Santa Monica Canyon	$2,395,000	$4,810,000
North of Montana	$3,025,000	$1,474,000
Between Wilshire & Montana	$1,948,500	$919,000
South of Wilshire	$859,000	$624,500
Sunset Park	$1,299,000	$669,250
Ocean Park	$1,488,000	$989,000

Statistics Updated Every Monday

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