

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

8 13 19 22 40

Meganumber: 17

Jackpot: \$7 Million

FANTASY 5

8 18 19 21 27

DAILY 3

Daytime: 6 7 6

Evening: 9 8 9

DAILY DERBY

1st: 05 California Classic

2nd: 01 Gold Rush

3rd: 08 Gorgeous George

RACE TIME: 1:48.25

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

(1) Judge Jeffrey K. Sprecher of Berks County, Pa., dismissed charges against a man in August for buying beer for his underage neighbor, ruling that the prosecutor hadn't proved all of the elements of the crime. Specifically, said Sprecher, there was no evidence offered that Miller Genuine Draft is "beer." (Prosecutors usually submit a government-created listing of beers as proof but failed to do that.) (2) In August, police in London, Ontario, informed the mother of a college student murdered in 1990 that they had recently solved the case and were certain that the perp was a man on parole at the time and who died in 1994. However, said police, they cannot reveal his name because of "privacy laws."

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 279th day of 2005.
There are 86 days left in the year.

On Oct. 6, 1927, the era of talking pictures arrived with the opening of "The Jazz Singer," a movie starring Al Jolson which featured both silent and sound-synchronized scenes.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"A hat should be taken off when you greet a lady and left off for the rest of your life. Nothing looks more stupid than a hat."

P. J. O'ROURKE

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Former coach cops to sex charges

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

LAX COURTHOUSE — A former Santa Monica High School coach pleaded guilty on Wednesday to nine felony charges related to sexual relationships he had with three teenage girls.

Mike Hearn, 38, was an assistant basketball and football coach at Samohi when he was arrested on June 2, 2004. He was subsequently freed on \$42,000 bond.

Hearn pleaded guilty to six counts of unlawful sex with a 17-year-old girl, two counts for having oral sex and performing a lewd act

upon a 15-year-old girl, and one count for sharing pornographic materials with a third girl, also 15.

District Attorney spokeswoman Jane Robison said the court has indicated Hearn will face up to two years in prison, the low end of what may have been a maximum of eight years had he been tried

and found guilty by a jury.

Superior Court Judge Stephanie Sautner is expected to sentence Hearn on Oct. 11.

School district administrators maintained the 17-year-old girl wasn't a Samohi student, but said

See HEARN, page 11

District finds best laid plan can use a hand

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

MALIBU — The local school district tonight will choose a consultant to develop a master plan for its facilities, which may lead to a new bond measure.

Several firms have been considered by the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District to develop a facilities master plan for area schools. On Thursday, board of education members will weigh in on what they expect of the finalist, Fields Devereaux Architects & Engineers (FDAE), a firm staff recommends for organizing the plan and directing future school structure improvements over the next 20 years.

See SCHOOLS, page 9

LOCAL

Drive-by shootings put pair in hospital

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

16TH STREET — Two men are listed in stable condition at a local hospital after they were shot here on Tuesday night.

At about 8:55 p.m., Santa Monica Police responded to the alley west of 16th Street near Broadway after they received a call of shots fired. Officers found two gunshot victims at the scene. The first victim, a 16-year-old male black who lives in Los Angeles and is cur-

See SHOOTINGS, page 10

Getting her second wind



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

81-year-old Liz Bevington, AKA 'Skateboard Mama,' wind skates along the Santa Monica Beach strand. The retired mother of one spends most of her time at the beach rollerblading, wind skating, skateboarding and bike riding. 'I can't just stay at home and be a coach potato,' she said.

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What it takes, Scorpio

Santa Monica Daily Press



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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Your temper could easily get the best of you, causing you to run around with your tail between your legs. Do whatever you need to do to not explode, and deal with a situation appropriately. Try as hard as you can to understand a key person. Tonight: Just say yes to another's request.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ Take a hint from Aries' message, because you could find yourself in a similar predicament. If dealing with an Aries, watch out; it could be quite a hot exchange. Let others reveal their thoughts. Keep judgments to yourself right now. Tonight: Just don't be alone.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Focus on each project, conversation or call today. You might find yourself holding back anger. Express yourself in a way that others can hear. You might be surprised by the response you get. Tonight: Consider your negative emotions and how to clear them.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Your imagination clears out problems and difficult people. Though someone might be outright aggressive and difficult, your humor can help you deal with this person. Do not personalize what others are saying. Tonight: Still on a romp.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Anchor in with full knowledge of what is important to you. Communications can run amok, but you can charm your way through any hassle. Telling someone you care should be done in a very personal way. Tonight: Treat someone to some Leo hospitality.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ You might be more vested in a communication or meeting than you realize. Awkwardness merges with a haziness. You cannot be too clear or direct. Sugar goes much further than vinegar. Use your charm. Tonight: Out with a favorite person at a favorite place.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Display your innate talents and charm. Money is not the only asset or game in town. You have so much to offer. Start realizing your talents. Someone responds to you big-time. Tonight: Remember what you have to offer.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Much might be going on behind the scenes, but the truth is, you have a lot of assets. Others respond to your inquiries. Don't allow insecurity to plague you in any way, shape or form. Tonight: You've got what it takes.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ You are weighing different elements and might not be sure which way to go. Be careful with a new friend. This person might not be all that he or she seems to be. Trust your long-time friends. A conflict will resolve itself. Tonight: Play it low-key.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ You seem to be unsure of which way to go. The obvious fact right now is that you do very well with groups and in meetings. You might want to play it low-key regarding your work. Tonight: Be sensitive to those around you.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Someone has nothing but praise for you. This person's opinion counts in your world. You might want to spend some time evaluating a situation that involves your community or professional standing. Ask for what you want. Tonight: Maintain your high profile.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Taking an overview will be more helpful than getting locked up in rigid thinking. By being able to extend understanding, and perhaps empathy, you'll gain and will be able to mobilize another's energy. Tonight: Stay positive. Take the high road.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Clients tap into Red Cross resources

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica chapter of the American Red Cross will be hosting a client resource fair this Thursday and Friday, Oct. 6 and Oct. 7 for evacuees displaced by the recent hurricanes.

"This is an opportunity for our clients to learn about all of the different services our city agencies have to offer," said Francisco Vidrio, director of family services. "This fair will help the victims of the recent hurricanes by giving them information and resources on how to rebuild their lives."

Attending will be Santa Monica state and government social service agencies that can assist with housing, medical and mental health, finance, employment, and transportation. For more information, call (310) 395-4583 or (310) 451-9237.

The American Red Cross of Santa Monica has been receiving offers of assistance from the public to help evacuees displaced by the recent hurricanes.

"Our most prevalent needs are for long-term housing and employment opportunities for the families re-settling locally," said Eric Faber, a board member who has been managing offers of assistance. Faber stressed that the chapter is serving as a conduit for offers of assistance, but will not be involved in making selections for clients.

"We have clients with a variety of skills who urgently need job opportunities and housing assistance," he added. "The chapter will not be accepting any tangible items delivered to the site, but these offers can be made via e-mail or telephone."

To provide an offer of assistance, or to get further information, e-mail offerso-fassistance@redcrossofsantamonica.org, or call (310) 394-3773.

The Santa Monica chapter of the Red Cross has served nearly 300 displaced persons to date. Cases represent families, couples, and individuals that have relocated to the Santa Monica area and have turned to the Santa Monica chapter for aid and services.

About \$948,000 has been contributed to hurricane relief through the Santa Monica chapter of the Red Cross as of Oct. 3. Money raised locally goes to direct financial support, mental and medical health needs, and food and shelter for more than 721,000 families in 1,150 Red Cross shelters and other lodging scattered across the nation.

On Second thought: Jam to benefit hurricane victims

By Daily Press staff

A local band will play their hip-hop and alternative music this Saturday to benefit Hurricane-Katrina victims.

Noah King Renegade Soldiers begin their concert of wide-ranging music — from funk to rock to acoustic folk — at 8 p.m. at 14 Below, 1438 14th St.

Others playing live at the benefit, which costs \$7 to \$10, are Mudluscious, Leah Hanna-King, Inverse, Illadapted and Liqdzunshine. DJ Rocky Rock and DJ Replay will spin.

Donations from the 21-and-over event will go to America's Second Harvest.

Party planned for 'The Living'

By Daily Press staff

The new art show at the 18th Street Arts Center opens with a reception this month followed by a Halloween party.

The reception of "The Living," an exhibition of paintings, installations and visual art, goes from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the center, 1639 18th St.

The Halloween party "Night of the Living" consists of live bands, performance artists, a visual art exhibition and a DJ dance party on Oct. 29 from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. at the center.

Proceeds from the party will benefit the non-profit center.



SURF REPORT

Most west-facing breaks are doing best with waist- to chest-high sets. South-facing breaks are running waist high. On Thursday morning, expect NE winds to 15 mph early on. Winds should then shift onshore late in the day. We have some moderate southern hemi SW swell due, but bigger SW will fill in on Friday into the weekend. Winds could still be tricky from the Santa Ana as well.

Today the water is:

62°

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

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
MONDAY	3:35	0.8	4:04	0.7	9:47	5.4	10:06	4.9
TUESDAY	3:55	1.2	4:40	0.5	10:08	5.6	10:44	4.5
WEDNESDAY	4:16	1.5	5:19	0.4	10:31	5.8	11:27	4.1
THURSDAY	4:36	2.0	6:06	0.4	10:58	5.8	N/A	N/A
FRIDAY	4:56	2.3	7:05	0.5	12:22	3.6	11:29	5.9

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The Q Line  **Sponsored by...**

More than 40 residents turned out last week to voice their concerns over a recent report on future development and traffic plans for Santa Monica. They demanded that elected leaders put into effect a "zero" to "minimal" growth policy for the city over the next 20 years. In light of the controversy, city officials are urging staff to make sure the public's comments are heard as the land-use plans move forward.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "How can City Hall best understand and represent the will of citizens in formulating development plans for the future of Santa Monica?"

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

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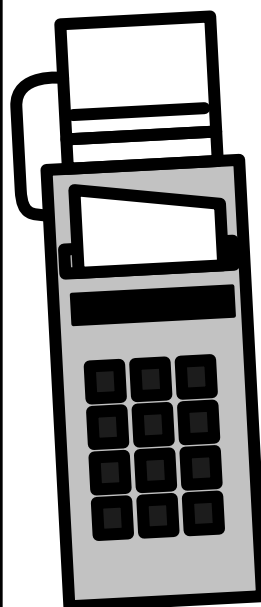


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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letter writers spewing hatred

Editor:

Understanding the need — and your responsibility — to feature diverse and divergent points of view in your paper, it is nonetheless curious to me that you regularly print hate mail directed at the least fortunate members of our local community. How does this generate variety of opinion when the targets are always the same?

Monday's letter, (SMDP, Oct. 3, page 4) for example, starts off with a mean-spirited — and inaccurate — screed against the usual targets: people who are homeless and those here without enough documentation to satisfy the writer — or perhaps just speak a language he doesn't understand. In the letter he equates these people with animals.

How does the writer know that the "s--t on your sidewalks" was left there by someone who is "illegal?" Does he check its papers? How does the writer figure building housing contributes to homelessness? And the reference there to "lowering property values" is patently ridiculous — all he has to do is read your Wednesday real estate listings to know that.

The letters end off with the denigration of those who don't speak English as their first language as "non-contributing outsiders." (Thanks, at least, for the middle one, taking a somewhat more compassionate view of our community's efforts to help those less fortunate.)

You do a great job of covering local news and providing analysis of events that other media generally don't get to. Please don't confuse the ignorant rantings of angry know-nothings with genuine and constructive difference in points of view that can help inform us all. It really lessens the credibility of your good paper.

Elyse Montiel
Santa Monica

Screwed by the socialists long enough

Editor:

First it was Wilshire Boulevard, then parts of Santa Monica Boulevard. Now the folks who run Santa Monica want to cut away half the traffic lanes on parts of Lincoln Boulevard in favor of a buses-only lane. I am just beside myself at the stupidity behind all of this. I sometimes wonder if these people have a clue.

Southern California is unlike most large cities in that there is no central hub of business and another area where people live, like Chicago or New York. Southern California is spread out for hundreds of miles and there is no amount of public transportation that will help. Even carpool lanes are a waste and I cannot wait for the day that those little diamonds are painted over.

If you really want to help the traffic situation it is time to start thinking about new ideas. Instead of removing lanes and jamming the same number of cars into fewer lanes, why not give tax breaks to businesses that set up their companies so that 20 percent of their workforce can work from home? And I will share another really bold idea, get rid of the public busing system altogether. They are a waste, they slow down traffic and they are usually empty.

Those bus drivers are just drivers of death traps with no regard for anyone else on the road. It is a black hole of a money pit where money is thrown away, never to be seen again. When the bus drivers went on strike entrepreneurs stepped up and began to fill the void with vans and cars. People found a way to get to where they needed to go. The city continued to function and traffic was a breeze with no buses on the road, my commute was cut in half. Imagine how much money would be saved by not having to overpay a bunch of lousy bus drivers to run people off the road and to no longer have to pay for all that gas to keep those buses running. Let the free market have a shot, the socialist have screwed this city up royally enough.

Billy Woody
Santa Monica

GUEST COMMENTARY BY JOHN W. WHITEHEAD

Senator's stock sale raises questions

"It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native criminal class except Congress."

— Mark Twain

In the aftermath of the economic boom of the 1990s, the United States faced countless corporate scandals. Due to the media attention given to them, issues like insider trading came to light.

Now with Senate majority leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) dumping all his stock in the nation's largest for-profit hospital chain, thus making millions, the issue of insider trading has once again come into public view. Precisely a month later, after Frist sold his stock, the price tumbled 9 percent when executives in the company, HCA Inc. — which was founded by Frist's father and on whose board Frist's brother served — disclosed that hospital admissions of insured patients were lower than expected, depressing profits in the second quarter.

The timing of Frist's sale raised obvious questions about whether Sen. Frist had somehow traded on information he obtained in advance from the company.

Insider trading, roughly defined as trading on non-public information obtained through an insider, has been on the rise over the last half century. With the Securities and Exchange Commission's persistent attack on the popular celebrity Martha Stewart, the public quickly learned of this practice. Although corporate executives and other high-profile citizens have been pursued, very little has been said about the possibility of insider trading within the halls of the United States Congress. Amazingly, no official inquiry into possible wrongdoing has ever been conducted.

The stock market, which is often advertised as a way to make lots of money, is viewed by most analysts as something much less promising. By the time an investor finds out all the necessary information to invest in a promising company, that information has been viewed by thousands of stock brokers, and institutional investors have already purchased thousands of shares.

Essentially, the only way to consistently see huge returns on an investment is through the illegal practice of insider trading.

A recent study by Dr. Adam Ziobrowski, published in the Journal of Quantitative Finance, shows an alarming success rate among senators who invest in the stock market. The study used disclosed information about senators from 1993 to 1998, looking at 6,000 common stock transactions, and determined that senators beat the market by 12 percentage points per year while the average American investor underperformed on the market by 1.4 percent during that same period. Ironically, corporate insiders, who would be expected to do well, only beat the market by 6 percentage points per year.

This study also looked at the timing of each sale or purchase and indicated that senators seemed to know the perfect time to buy or sell as well.

Although this study uses older data,

two of the most successful investors during this time were Senators John Warner (R-Va.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), who are still in the Senate today.

Senators essentially find themselves privy to information that is usually known only by corporate executives. They know when there will be changes in tax laws and when big government contracts will be handed down to certain companies, not to mention their constant socialization with corporations as well.

The key difference between the information received by senators and that received by corporate executives is that the executives are severely limited in what they can do with the information.

There are supposed to be limitations on the type of transactions a government official can participate in. The Senate Code of Conduct says that senators "may not use official position to introduce or pass legislation, where a principal purpose is to further a ... member's financial interest." The Code of Ethics for the U.S. Government Service goes even further in saying a representative should "never use any information coming to him confidentially in the performance of government duties as a means for making private profit."

One would assume that the code of ethics would bar any self-dealing or profit-making, but in reality it actually gives senators more leeway. As one researcher concludes: "Congress has excluded investment income, such as stocks, from ethics limitations on income."

Although the study by Dr. Ziobrowski and his colleagues was published almost a year ago, the SEC has had a copy since March of 2004. Nevertheless, the SEC has continually refused to investigate insider trading among representatives in Congress because they say it is very difficult to win those types of cases without more detailed knowledge than they already have. However, the public revelations concerning Frist have forced the SEC to look closer at the Senator's dealings.

Regardless of how difficult it is to prove insider trading, the SEC has the resources and the expertise to conduct this type of investigation. It seems rather ironic that the SEC was ruthless in its pursuit of Martha Stewart for about \$100,000 but is unwilling to conduct an investigation into such conduct within the U.S. Senate.

There is no question that the SEC has taken on a more intrusive role in recent years to crack down on corporate crime and insider trading. It is also understandable that insider trading is extremely difficult to investigate and prove. The recent studies, however, should have raised enough suspicion for the SEC to at least take a deeper look into senators' private transactions. If this study had been conducted on a group of average investors with no political clout, like you and me, it is highly likely that the SEC would have conducted a thorough investigation and, eventually, prosecuted the guilty.

(Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead can be contacted at johnw@rutherford.org.)

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Santa Monica Daily Press

STATE



Watchdog is whittling down bulging caseload

BY STEVE LAWRENCE
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Hamstrung by funding and staff shortages, California's political watchdog agency is dropping about 225 cases and instead is sending warning or advisory letters to some candidates or officials accused of violating election or ethics laws.

"We have to prioritize cases," John Appelbaum, head of the Fair Political Practices Commission's enforcement division, said Tuesday. "If we don't have the resources, they may get closed."

The enforcement division currently has 23 members, down from a high of nearly 33 in 1997. Overall, the FPPC has lost about 30 staff positions — a third of its work force — since 1991.

Meanwhile, the number of enforcement cases has increased. Applebaum's staff has begun a "triage approach" to whittle its workload to a more manageable level.

That means dropping about 225 cases that the agency would "love to pursue" if it had the resources, said Mark Krause, the commission's executive director.

The 225 are among 485 cases the agency has closed since May 1 or plans to close. The 485 also include 128 completed cases in which fines were issued, as well as cases in which investigators found no violations or only technical violations.

About another 650 cases are pending, Krause said.

Most of the 225 dropped cases fall into a "low public harm" category, but they represent a large percentage of the approximately 1,000 complaints the commission receives each year, Krause said.

Besides additional manpower, the enforcement division also needs higher pay and benefits to slow a turnover rate among its attorneys that reached 157 percent in the last five years, Appelbaum said in a report to the commission.

The commission has asked Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger for a \$1.2 million increase in funding next year, which would allow it to restore the 30 positions it has lost since 1991. Its backup request is for another \$600,000, which would return its budget to the same level it was three years ago.

Spokesman H.D. Palmer said the Department of Finance, the governor's budget arm, will consider the requests.

"As with any agency, we don't reject a request out of hand. At the same time, we don't offer a blank check," he said.

"Our staff will sit down with the commission staff, review their case load, review their staffing level and based on that review make recommendations to the governor on what he should provide in his budget in January."

H.D. PALMER
Spokesman

"Our staff will sit down with the commission staff, review their case load, review their staffing level and based on that review make recommendations to the governor on what he should provide in his budget in January."

Krause isn't optimistic the commission will get either increase.

"While it is not highly likely that either of these requests will be granted this year, our strategy is to begin making the case in order that some additional funding be secured when revenues are available," he said in a memo to commission members.

The five-member commission was created by voters when they approved Proposition 9 in 1974. It investigates and prosecutes campaign law violations, such as failure to report donations or exceeding contribution limits, and provides advice to public officials on requirements of the state's Political Reform Act.

It releases information only about cases it has completed.

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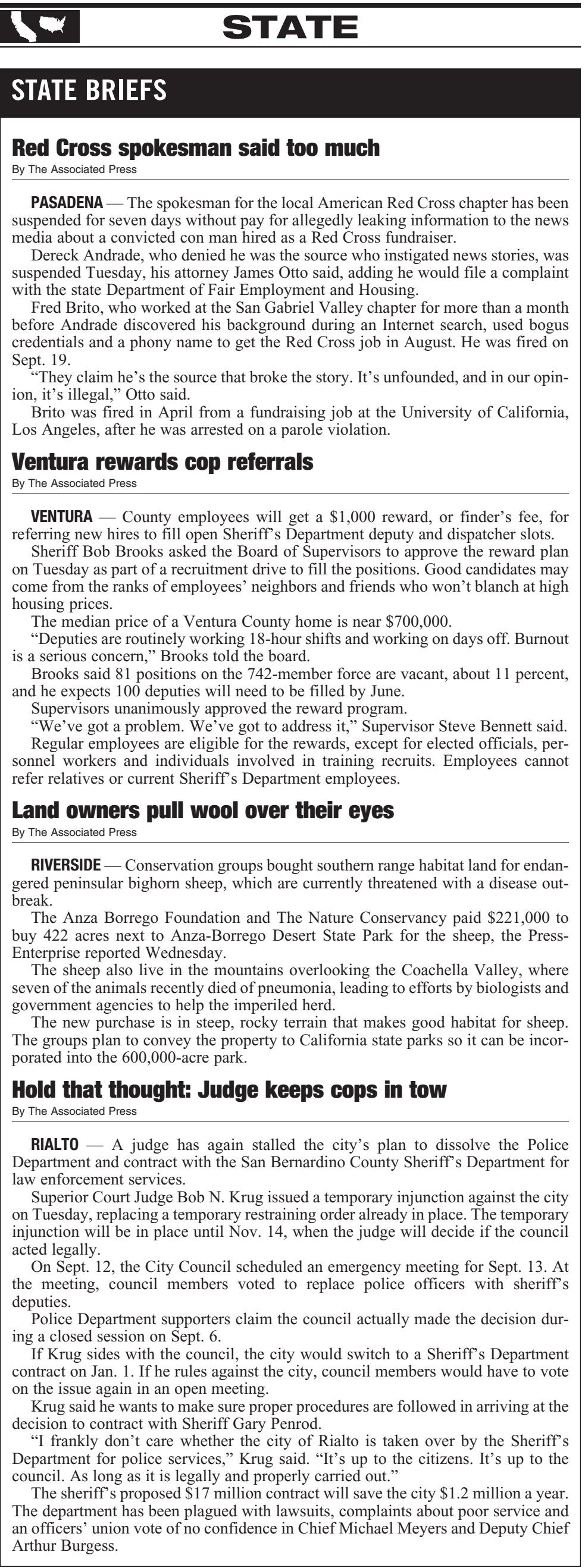
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STATE



Robotic Hummer gets pole in \$2M desert race

BY ALICIA CHANG

AP Science Writer

FONTANA — A driverless red Hummer that was involved in a rollover accident during practice a few weeks ago snagged the pole position Wednesday in a government-sponsored sequel race across the Mojave Desert that will pit 23 robots against one another.

The finalists were chosen after an intense, week-long qualifying run at the California Speedway, where the self-navigating vehicles had to traverse a bumpy road, zip through a tunnel and avoid obstacles. No human drivers or remote controls were allowed.

The Hummer named Highlander, built by Carnegie Mellon University, flipped during practice a few weeks ago when it struck a rock. But it still managed to complete all four required semifinal runs.

Last year, only half of the 15 autonomous robotic vehicles that ran in the so-called Grand Challenge passed the semifinals. No team claimed the \$1 million inaugural prize because all the contestants broke down within a few miles of the starting gate.

So this year, the sponsor, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, doubled the purse with the hope that a vehicle would finish Saturday's \$2 million race.

This year's finalists completed the hilly qualifying course littered with hay bales and parked cars at least once. Five of the vehicles finished it four consecutive times. Those included Carnegie Mellon's Highlander; a converted Humvee Sandstorm from Carnegie Mellon; a modified Volkswagen Touareg by Stanford University; a six-wheel truck; and a Jeep Grand Cherokee.

"I'm inspired by all the robots," said William "Red" Whittaker, a Carnegie Mellon robotics professor. "Never discount or diminish any of them."

The race is part of the Pentagon's effort to fulfill a congressional mandate to have a third of all military ground vehicles unmanned by 2015. The Defense Department envisions using robotic vehicles to bring supplies in combat zones.

DARPA, the Pentagon's research and development arm, spent \$9 million on this year's event. The agency would award the

prize to the first team whose computer-driven vehicle can traverse a rough and winding desert course of up to 175 miles in less than 10 hours.

There are several reasons why this year's field is more competitive. Teams had more time to prepare for the race. Many spent the past 18 months focused on beefing up their vehicle computers' artificial intelligence through improved computer algorithms.

Teams also had the advantage of practicing in various parts of the Southwest desert under race-like conditions. Even before the semifinals, some robots had driven hundreds of continuous miles during practice, including some that tested on last year's course between Barstow, Calif., and Primm, Nev.

"Nobody was ready last year," said Bill Kehaly of Westlake Village, Calif.-based Axion Racing, whose Jeep Grand Cherokee named Spirit is racing in the finals. "Everybody feels a lot more confident this year."

Because the vehicles must be self-navigating, they are equipped with GPS tracking. Mounted sensors, radar, lasers and cameras feed information to onboard computers to orient the vehicles and help them avoid obstacles and traps.

The exact route that vehicles must follow is kept secret until two hours before the competition. Organizers said the course, which will loop from and to the casino town of Primm will feature rugged desert and mountain terrain. Vehicles have to average 15 to 20 mph to finish in time.

"The worst vehicle we have is as good or better than the best vehicle last year," said DARPA director Anthony Tether.

Carnegie Mellon's workhorse, Sandstorm, traveled the farthest in the Mojave Desert last year despite trekking only 7 1/2 miles. It will start third in this year's race.

Of the vehicles that successfully coursed the speedway four straight times, an off-road, six-wheel truck built by Oshkosh Truck Corp., had the slowest time. But team leader Jim Fravert did not think that was a problem. The desert will be tougher and the truck was designed to handle 60 percent grades and push through 5 feet of water, he said.

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Business



SANTA MONICA BUSINESS BRIEFS

Your time is worth something

By Daily Press staff

The Internal Revenue Service is encouraging leave-based donation programs for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Employees may donate their unused vacation, sick or personal leave in exchange for cash payments which their employer can then make to qualified tax-exempt organizations providing hurricane relief.

The employer must agree to set up such a program, and make the cash payment to the tax-exempt organization by the end of 2006. Employees do not have to include the amount of their donated leave in their income, and employers will be permitted to deduct the amount of the cash payment.

Since employees will not be taxed on the value of the leave, they cannot take a charitable contribution deduction on the donated leave.

"It's a win-win situation because most taxpayers don't itemize on their taxes and so they can't claim a tax deduction for any of their charitable contributions," said Victor Omelczenko, IRS spokesman in Los Angeles. "With this donation program, any taxpayer can contribute unused leave and not have it count toward taxable income while still helping Hurricane Katrina victims."

For those citizens who want to make charitable donations directly to a specific charity, the IRS encourages them to make sure that it is a qualified charity by searching an IRS-approved list.

The Web site at www.irs.gov has an on-line search feature that allows people to find qualified charities. Some organizations, such as churches and governments, may be qualified even though they are not listed.

The IRS does not endorse any charity. However, the Federal Emergency Management Administration has urged citizens to make cash donations to volunteer agencies with whom it is working.

The U.S. government's official Web portal, FirstGov.gov, also contains disaster-relief information.

Taxpayers may claim a deduction for contributions to charitable organizations only if they itemize deductions on Schedule A of their Form 1040.

"Taxpayers should retain proof of the contribution and, if the amount is more than \$250, must obtain an acknowledgment from the charity for the amount to be deductible," Omelczenko said.

Dining on Japanese cuisine to benefit Katrina victims

By Daily Press staff

Responding to the catastrophic effects of Hurricane Katrina along the Gulf Coast, Benihana Inc. has announced plans to donate 100 percent of Benihana roll sales nationally from Oct. 10 through Oct. 16 to the United States Fund for UNICEF's recovery efforts for hurricane victims.

With 72 Benihana restaurants throughout the United States, including one in Santa Monica, the restaurant chain has pledged the donations to UNICEF, which was selected based on its strong history of supporting vulnerable children in need, without regard for border or class, restaurant representatives said.

Throughout the ongoing relief efforts, the U.S. Fund for UNICEF is partnering with businesses and non-governmental organizations to deliver the much-needed supplies and technical assistance to victims of Hurricane Katrina.

For instance, recognizing that Hurricane Katrina left hundreds of thousands of school-age child evacuees without classrooms and school supplies at the start of the traditional U.S. school term, the U.S. Fund for UNICEF is coordinating the delivery of UNICEF "School-in-a-Box" kits to several aid partners assisting the displaced population.

The "School in a Box" is a mobile classroom for 80 pupils that can be used in any setting. It consists of a metal box and teacher's bag, a teacher's guide and teaching materials.

The kit also includes writing materials including chalk, pencils, sharpeners and exercise books for children.

The proceeds from the program will be donated to the U.S. Fund for UNICEF on Oct. 24, United Nations Day.

Cleaning up domestic violence

By Daily Press staff

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Molly Maid is sponsoring its 10th annual "Making a Difference Drive" in order to raise funds to support shelters and safe houses across the country.

The 2004 drive collected more than \$60,000 from participating businesses, and Molly Maid locations all over the United States are gearing up to help local shelters and safe houses that provide refuge and personal care items for those who need them in their communities.

During October, many Molly Maid businesses nationwide will donate a portion of the service fee for every home cleaned to assist local shelters that provide services to victims and families affected by domestic violence.

Last year, donations increased 300 percent over the previous year, officials said. Since its inception, the Making a Difference Drive has raised more than \$500,000 for shelters all over North America, and aims to raise more than \$150,000 across the country for the 2005 effort.

For more information on how to participate or to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Foundation, visit www.mollymaid.com/foundation.

More to your stock than meets the eye



MARKET MATTERS

BY BRIAN HEPP

Some people may see the stock market as nothing more than a speculator's game, where you have just as much chance of losing money as you do making any.

While it's true that the market can be unpredictable at times, and stocks tend to fluctuate, this view is really only supported if you judge a stock by nothing more than its price alone. Fortunately, if you take the time to look a little deeper, there are several factors beyond just a stock's price that can help you decide whether or not it would be a good investment.

A number of elements can make up a stock's investment value. If a company pays a dividend, the term "total return" refers not only to a stock's price movement over time, but also to the dividend it pays and any growth in that dividend. Taken in combination, all of these factors can add up to potentially give you a positive return on your investment in the stock market. While past performance is no guarantee of future results, those who focus on stock price alone may be surprised to learn the results that can come from a total return perspective.

In basic terms, a dividend is the portion of a company's profit that gets paid out to its shareholders. The decision of how large a dividend will be — or whether a company will pay one at all, for that matter — is made by the company's board of directors. Typically large, mature companies are more inclined to pay dividends, while smaller companies reinvest their profits to continue growing.

In addition to paying a dividend, some well-managed companies have the ability to increase that dividend as their cash flow or earnings grow. In fact, there are many companies that have a long history of increasing their cash dividends annually. As an added advantage, companies that increase their dividends at above-average rates help investors limit the damaging effects inflation can have on investments.

When discussing the total return for a stock, it's important to take into account

things that could adversely affect that return as well. The rising cost of living that results from inflation is really in direct competition with the return you're trying to get from your investments. By purchasing stock in companies that pay a steady dividend, you're basically hedging against the effects inflation will have on your earnings. In a best-case scenario of rising dividends, you may even be able to outpace inflation.

Dividends are usually distributed to investors in the form of a check. If you don't need to receive the dividends, make them work harder for you by using them to buy more shares of the company. These additional shares can be purchased — using your dividends — through a program known as a dividend reinvestment plan, which many companies offer.

In the universe of companies you can invest in, the number that actually pay a dividend — much less increase that dividend regularly — fall in the minority. Current estimates show that about one-third of companies offer any dividend at all. But don't be discouraged by that statistic. Companies that pay dividends, and especially those that regularly increase their dividend are generally well managed and therefore offer good total return opportunities to investors.

When you're looking to buy stocks, choosing the right one can be a tough decision. However, if you study carefully and look beyond just the market price and current economic and market conditions, you can find many opportunities to help build a healthy portfolio. Keep in mind the return and principal value of an investment in stocks fluctuates with changes in market conditions. Upon redemption, it may be worth more or less than the original investment. Talk to your financial consultant today to help identify those stocks that are positioned to pay you more.

(Brian Hepp is a financial consultant for Santa Monica-based A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc. Member SIPC. He can be reached at (310) 453-0077 or at brian.hepp@agedwards.com. A.G. Edwards is a full-service retail brokerage firm that offers a complete spectrum of financial products and services, including stocks, bonds and mutual funds, financial retirement planning and tax-advantage investments.)

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Check Out the Question of the Week on Page 3 and let us hear what you have to say

The Q Line™



Plan may provide opportunity for groups to work together

SCHOOLS, from page 1

While assessing the district's structural needs, the consultant will likely conduct a feasibility study to determine if bonds might be levied to support the plan's goals, school officials said.

Consultant estimates to develop the plan ranged between \$400,000 and \$2 million, reflecting a "varying magnitude and interpretation of phases and tasks," according to John Deasy, schools superintendent. FDAE's proposal is expected to cost the district \$1 million, which board members on Sept. 22 agreed would be a reasonable price for the project.

Deasy said the facilities master plan will be financed with state funds. Upon its completion, the district will know if a new bond is needed.

"The board is being presented with a recommendation for a course of action which we hope will be done in a year and lay out a 20-year plan," Deasy said. "Whether or not there is a bond in the immediate future is not decided at all, and that won't come for a year."

Currently, the district has \$88 million in bond indebtedness, according to Karen Garot, executive assistant to the superintendent. For every \$100,000 in assessed

property value within the cities of Santa Monica and Malibu, property owners pay \$30 per year to support the district's bonds, Garot said.

Santa Monica property owners also pay two parcel taxes which support the school district, Garot said. Since 2000, property owners began being charged \$98 for each parcel of land they own, a tax which will last until 2010. Since 2003, property owners started to be charged \$225 a year for each parcel of land. That tax will last until 2009.

Emily Bloomfield, board of education president, said she wants the consultant to ensure various groups within the community that they have an opportunity to voice their opinions during the planning process.

"I believe there will be a strong expectation of community outreach to determine what different constituencies would like to see done in a systematic fashion," Bloomfield said.

Bloomfield said FDAE's \$1 million price range gives the district flexibility in how it approaches the plan.

"We don't necessarily have to take the entire package that's offered to us," Bloomfield said. "Some of the work may be done in-house."

Despite the substantial upgrades from previous bond measures, there remain

Despite the substantial upgrades from previous bond measures, there remain areas where facilities could be improved in order for the district to attain its educational vision.

areas where facilities could be improved in order for the district to attain its educational vision, suggesting the need for a "facilities bond measure for a yet-to-be-determined amount in the very near future," according to the staff report.

The facilities master plan would take into account the state of current buildings, their use, any new buildings or structures that may be needed, as well as potential joint-use agreements with the city of Santa Monica and Santa Monica College, according to staff. The district will ask the consultant to pay special attention to day care and parking needs, public access issues, and a building for recreation and information management systems, according to staff.

School board member Oscar de la Torre said the development of the facilities master plan presents new opportuni-

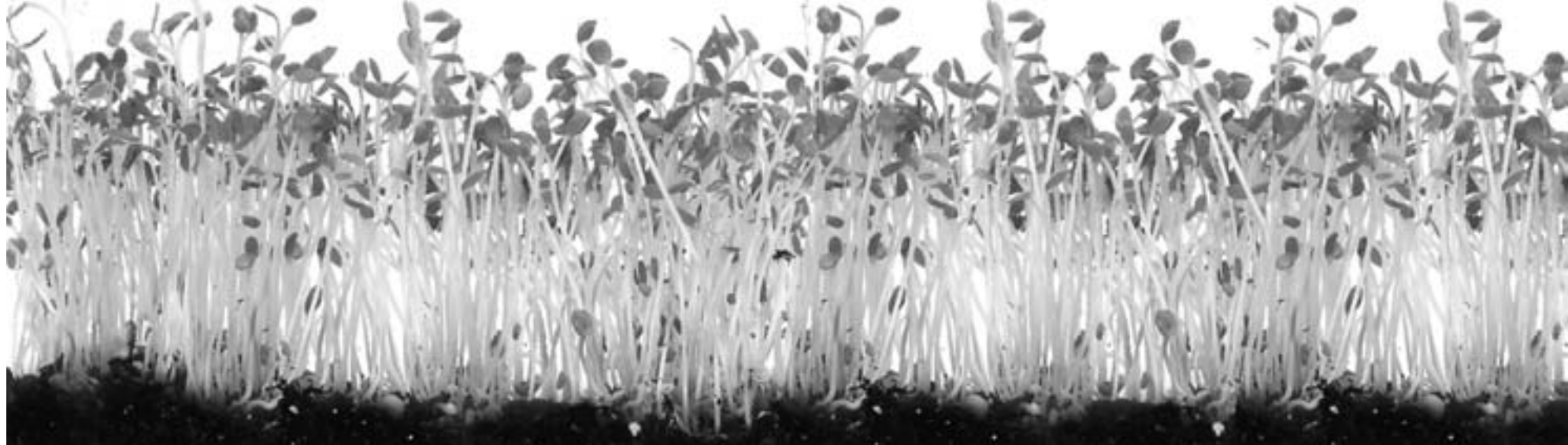
ties for groups in Santa Monica to come together to make the city a better place.

"This is a chance for the city, college and school district to run parallel processes to make the best use of public space," de la Torre said. "This is not just the opportunity to serve the community through education, but also recreation."

"What's needed is a collective vision for providing the best public space for the citizens of Santa Monica."

De la Torre also said facilities that may come from the master plan could be used for public safety in times of distress.

"In light of Hurricane Katrina and Santa Monica being on a fault line where a major earthquake is predicted, one of the main criteria is that we ensure the schools are retrofitted and we're prepared for natural disaster so our schools can be used for safety shelters," de la Torre said.



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LOCAL

Bare essential



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Antique dealer Cynthia Lindberg (left) strips her mannequin in order to sell a vintage 1940s-era dress to customer Sharlene Choy this past Saturday at the John Muir PTA Flea Market, held the first Saturday of each month on the corner of Lincoln and Ocean Park boulevards.

Police: Homicides in city this year all gang-related

SHOOTINGS, from page 1

rently on probation and wanted for robbery, was shot once in the stomach. The second victim, a 19-year-old Hispanic male from Santa Monica and a known Los Angeles gang member, was shot twice in the lower torso. He is on felony probation, police said.

While he has not been cooperative with police on any information about who shot him, the Santa Monica man who was shot told police he was taking out the trash when the suspects drove by and fired shots from a vehicle — described as a possible white or silver, late 1980's sedan similar to a Pontiac Grand AM.

The suspects are described as two Hispanic males.

The second victim has been documented by law enforcement agencies as a gang member, police said.

One way police document gang members, whose population is estimated to be about 150,000 in LA County, is through an organization called Cal Gangs. It is a cooperative automation project between the California Department of Justice, the Bureau of Investigation, Division of Criminal Justice Information Services, Hawkins Data Center, local law enforcement agencies and ORION Scientific Systems, to electronically share information on criminal street gangs and gang members via a statewide automated Intranet.

SMPD officials also use the following

criteria to determine if a person is a gang member:

- Is a self-admitted gang member.
- Has tattoos symbolizing a gang.
- Is arrested alone and/or admits to being affiliated with gangs, or is arrested with gang members.
- Frequents gang areas or affiliates himself with gang members.
- Wears attire that symbolizes a particular gang.

Tuesday's incident was the third gang-related shooting in Santa Monica in the past month — all of them involving outside gangs from Los Angeles, police said. Saturday's shooting at the beach, which involved Los Angeles gang members, marked the third homicide of the year in Santa Monica. All three homicides this year have been gang-related, police said. And in Los Angeles late last month, a Santa Monica man, who was known to be affiliated with gangs, was fatally shot in the back of the head after he attended a party at 21st Street and La Brea Avenue.

Anyone having information regarding Tuesday's incident is encouraged to contact the robbery/homicide unit of the SMPD at (310) 458-8451 or the watch commander's office at (310) 458-8426. Callers who wish to provide anonymous information also may call the We-Tip national hotline at 1-800-78-CRIME (27463). Callers with information that leads to an arrest and conviction become eligible for a reward of up to \$1,000.

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District offers help to victims' families

HEARN, from page 1

the other two victims were. The girls' identities were not released because they are minors who are victims of sex crimes.

Hearn, who is married and has children in local schools, had been placed on home assignment during the court proceedings.

Neither Hearn's attorney, James Brewer, nor the prosecutor, Kelly Read, would comment on the case.

John Deasy, superintendent of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, said Hearn was a seasonal employee who was not rehired after the charges were filed against him.

Deasy said the Santa Monica public schools will continue to offer its support in any way it can to the families who have been affected by Hearn's crimes.

"We will give them any kind of support

they need that we can provide," Deasy said.

Hearn's guilty plea comes just before his case was supposed to go to trial, although it had been pushed back for about two months. A status conference in the case was held at the end of August 2004. Hearn was ordered not to harass or assault the three victims and stay at least 100 yards away from the three girls and the Samohi campus.

The victims have been treated at the Stuart House in Santa Monica, which often deals with sexual abuse cases. The Stuart House is overseen by officials from the Rape Treatment Center, based at the Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center.

Robison said Hearn made no plea agreement with the DA's office.

"He threw himself at the mercy of the court," Robison said.

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NATIONAL

High court dealing with suicide debate

BY GINA HOLLAND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Newly installed Chief Justice John Roberts on Wednesday sharply questioned a lawyer arguing for preservation of Oregon's physician-assisted suicide law, noting the federal government's tough regulation of addictive drugs.

The 50-year-old Roberts, hearing his first major oral argument since succeeding William H. Rehnquist at the helm of the court, seemed skeptical of the Oregon law, and the outcome of this case was as unclear after the argument as before.

At the outset, Roberts laid a barrage of questions on Oregon Senior Assistant Attorney General Robert Atkinson before he could finish his first sentence.

"It's a tough case," noted Justice Anthony Kennedy, a moderate, who with Roberts and others got immersed in one of the most vexing cases of the court's term. Justices pondered whether the federal government has the power to block doctors from helping terminally ill patients end their lives.

As they did so, demonstrators — some carrying signs saying "My Life, My Death, My Decision" — carried their pleas to the courthouse steps.

Inside, retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor seemed ready to back the law allowing dying patients to obtain lethal doses of medication from their doctors.

Although O'Connor could provide the fifth vote in Oregon's favor, she likely will be off the court before the case is decided. A 4-4 tie would be decided by a new justice.

Voters in Oregon have twice endorsed doctor-assisted suicide, but the Bush administration has aggressively challenged the state law, the only one of its kind in the nation.

O'Connor immediately challenged Solicitor General Paul Clement, asking if federal drug laws also prevented

doctors from participating in the execution of murderers.

Kennedy said he found it "odd" that the U.S. attorney general determined physician-assisted suicide to be an abuse of drug laws, when the state of Oregon strictly limited how the drugs could be administered and in what cases.

"I don't think it's odd," Clement replied, noting that federal laws regulating drug use have been in place for more than 90 years.

The case was heard by justices touched personally by illness. Three justices — O'Connor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and John Paul Stevens — have had cancer, and a fourth — Stephen Breyer — has a spouse who counsels young cancer patients who are dying.

Their longtime colleague, Rehnquist, who once wrote about the "earnest and profound debate" over doctor-assisted suicide, died a month ago after battling untreatable cancer for nearly a year.

In 1997 the court found that the terminally ill have no constitutional right to doctor-assisted suicide. O'Connor provided a key fifth vote in that decision, which left room for state-by-state experimentation.

The appeal is a turf battle of sorts, not a constitutional showdown. Former Attorney General John Ashcroft, a favorite among the president's base of religious conservatives, decided in 2001 to pursue doctors who help people die.

Hastening someone's death is an improper use of medication and violates federal drug laws, Ashcroft reasoned, an opposite conclusion than the one reached by Janet Reno, the Clinton administration attorney general.

Oregon filed a lawsuit to defend its law, which took effect in 1997 and has been used by 208 people.

The Supreme Court will decide whether the federal government can trump the state.

"It could be close," said Neil Siegel, a law professor at Duke University and former Supreme Court clerk. "It is a wrenching issue. It's one of the most difficult decisions

any family needs to make. There's a lot of discomfort with having the government at any level get involved."

Under Rehnquist's leadership the court had sought to embolden states to set their own rules.

The administration lost at the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, which said that Ashcroft's "unilateral attempt to regulate general medical practices historically entrusted to state lawmakers interferes with the democratic debate about physician-assisted suicide."

In Oregon, the first assisted-suicide law won narrow approval, just a 51 percent majority, in 1994. An effort to repeal it in 1997 was rejected by 60 percent of voters.

"There is a real human need" for control over one's life, said cancer patient Charlene Andrews of Salem, Ore. "We are terminal and we know when we have a few weeks left. We know when we're unconscious. We know when we're at the end."

One terminal patient has pills, determined to die on own terms

BY JOSEPH B. FRAZIER

Associated Press Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. — The lethal dose of barbiturates arrived at cancer patient Don James' apartment a few days ago, but he hasn't seen it. He asked his family to put the bottle away in a safe place.

"I may never see it," he said, but added that it is a comfort to know it is there.

James, 79, a retired Portland school administrator, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in December 2001. In January 2002 they told him it had spread to the bone.

"I had 21 radiation treatments in February of '02 and I felt pretty good," he said. "But a little while later they called and said, 'well, we didn't quite get it all.'"

He said he has been given six months to live but has beaten that prognosis several times.

"How do you pronounce it, Schaivo?" he asked. "I don't want to be one of those, when they come around and pat you on the cheek and say 'are you still alive in there?' Nosiree. The point is I have this desire to have some control in the end."

James acquired the lethal dose under terms of Oregon's unique law that allows terminally ill patients to end their lives with prescription drugs under some conditions.

On Wednesday, the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., heard arguments on the legality of the Oregon law. The Bush administration contends the legislation allows an improper use of federally controlled substances.

Since the law took effect seven years ago, 208 terminally ill patients have used doctor-prescribed drugs to end their lives. State officials say that in most cases the patients quickly slip into unconsciousness and die within a few hours.

Oregon's five Democratic members of Congress reiterated their support for the law Wednesday.

Reps. Peter DeFazio, Earl Blumenauer, Darlene Hooley and David Wu and Sen. Ron Wyden filed a friend of the court brief this year opposing efforts by the U.S. Department of Justice to overturn Oregon's Death with Dignity Act.

They said former Attorney General John Ashcroft used the Controlled Substances Act incorrectly to threaten Oregon physicians who follow the Oregon law.

U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, a Republican, said Wednesday that Oregonians had approved the law twice and that the Supreme Court should respect that.

Sen. Gordon Smith's office had no comment on Wednesday's arguments. However, Smith has opposed the Oregon law in the past on moral grounds.

Don James said he's talked with his family about possibly using Oregon's law to hasten his death, and they are supportive.

"It bothers my wife to think about it," he said. "But she knows it is my desire to have this comfort, this possibility."

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NATIONAL



What a dump: Winter storm leaves thousands in the dark

BY BECKY BOHRER
Associated Press Writer

BILLINGS, Mont. — Thousands of homes in eastern Montana and western North Dakota were without power Wednesday morning after a slow-moving snowstorm dumped heavy, wet snow across the region.

The snow caused trees to snap or sag into power lines in parts of Montana and western and central North Dakota. Blackouts also were reported in northern Wyoming and in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

As much as 11 inches of snow had fallen in southeastern Montana by early Wednesday. Billings had received 10.8 inches and set a record for snowfall Tuesday with 9.9 inches, National Weather Service meteorologist Tom Humphrey said.

"Fall is a potentially dynamic season," he said.

Interstate 94 east from Glendive, Mont., to near Bismarck, N.D., was closed, as was U.S. 12 from Miles City to the North Dakota state line.

"It's really treacherous — heavy, deep snow. Visibility is just really poor. It's so heavy that vehicles just can't push through it," North Dakota Highway Patrol Capt. Mark Bethke said.

About 8,000 customers served by NorthWestern Energy were without electricity early Wednesday in communities in central and southern Montana, including Billings, spokeswoman Claudia Rapkoch said. Nine crews were out in the Billings area alone overnight, and officials planned to assess whether reinforcements from other parts of the company are needed, she said.

Dan Sharp, a spokesman for Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., said customers from Miles City, Mont., to Bismarck, N.D., were without electricity, though some were being brought back online slowly. He didn't have an estimate on how many customers had been affected, but said it was in the thousands.

Sharp said he hoped service would be restored by day's end.

Minutemen now patrol northern border

By The Associated Press

BLAINE, Wash. — The Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, which has a strong base along the U.S.-Mexico border, has started operating along Washington state's northern border to watch for people illegally entering the country from Canada.

The group formed a year ago after concerns developed about the number of immigrants crossing the U.S. border from Mexico. Its first patrols were in Arizona.

Members opted to also monitor the 4,000-mile northern border, even before a drug-smuggling tunnel was discovered in July.

About 20 volunteers, who pay \$50 to join, completed training and began monitoring the U.S. border in Whatcom County north of Seattle last weekend.

"The principle of it is to get the government to realize as citizens, we believe after 9/11 that things haven't been done," said Betsy Madan, 48, of Lynden. She and her husband are among the volunteers.

The U.S. Border Patrol does not endorse what the Minutemen are doing, nor does it stop them as long as they follow the law.

Between 60 and 100 volunteers — most from the Northwest and many retired military or law enforcement — are expected to come through for the monthlong operation, said Tom Williams of Deming, a retired police psychologist and former Marine who leads the Washington Minuteman Detachment.

Volunteers wear colored armbands to identify themselves and carry walkie-talkies and binoculars. They're

trained to call the proper law enforcement agency and the Minuteman command center if they see anything illegal.

Observers are not supposed to confront anyone, Williams said.

The Minutemen will provide the Border Patrol with rosters of people they will have onsite and lists of which people are armed, said Joe Giuliano, deputy chief of the Blaine Border Patrol Sector.

"They're here to present their political agenda," he said. "It is their right. They can keep doing that until they interfere with us or break the law."

The Minutemen are not prepared to deal with the unique challenges of the northern border, said U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen, D-Wash., whose district includes Whatcom County and the Blaine sector's border crossings.

"Where our southern border battles a great deal of illegal immigration, the northern border's threats are more often drug-, gun-, and money-smuggling by criminal organizations," Larsen said in a statement. "These unique threats call for trained law-enforcement professionals who are skilled in dealing with organized crime and our border's unique geography."

Meanwhile, the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington plans to monitor the Minutemen.

"We want to make sure nobody is physically accosted or harassed," spokesman Doug Honig said, citing earlier reports of people being stopped and harassed at the Mexico border while the Minutemen were patrolling in Arizona earlier this year. Honig did not know if those incidents involved Minutemen or people from other groups who may have been drawn to the action.

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NATIONAL

Son of President Carter may seek Senate seat

By The Associated Press

CARSON CITY, Nev. — Jack Carter, the oldest child of former President Carter, said he's considering a run for the Senate, citing unhappiness with the federal government's handling of Hurricane Katrina.

"I'm more concerned than ever with the way that the country is headed," said Carter, 58.

Carter told the Las Vegas Review-Journal in Tuesday's editions that he's

considering a challenge of Sen. John Ensign, R-Nev., in 2006. He termed himself a social liberal with conservative Southern roots and a business background that taught him that "you pay for what you spend."

"I'm very seriously exploring it," he said. "I had not planned to run for office. I have no infrastructure and this is new to me."

Carter and his wife, Elizabeth, have

lived in Las Vegas since 2003, operating an investment consulting firm. He said he began looking at the Senate race following Hurricane Katrina, adding he was offended by the federal government's response to the disaster.

Carter, son of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, was born in Virginia and raised in Georgia. He was in his late 20s when his father won the presidency and did not live in the White House.

Carter said he spoke with his father, who served as the nation's 39th president from 1977 to 1981, about a Senate bid, adding, "He thinks I'd be good at it."

Carter's name has previously been floated for political office in Nevada. An effort last year was made to recruit him to run against Republican U.S. Rep. Jon Porter. Carter said at the time that since he was new to the area, "I didn't think it would be polite."

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INTERNATIONAL



Pair of Americans snag Nobel Prize in chemistry

BY KARL RITTER

Associated Press Writer

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Americans Robert H. Grubbs and Richard R. Schrock and Yves Chauvin of France won the Nobel Prize in chemistry Wednesday for discoveries that let industry produce drugs and advanced plastics more efficiently and with less hazardous waste.

The trio won the award for their development of the metathesis method in organic synthesis — a way to rearrange groups of atoms within molecules that the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences likened to a dance in which couples change partners.

The process is used daily in the chemical, biotechnology and food industries to make stronger plastics, better drugs and improved food preservatives.

"This represents a great step forward for 'green chemistry,' reducing potentially hazardous waste through smarter production. Metathesis is an example of how important basic science has been applied for the benefit of man, society and the environment," the committee said.

Grubbs, 63, is a professor of chemistry at the California Institute of Technology, and Schrock is a chemistry professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Chauvin, 74, is the honorary director of research at the Institut Francais du Petrole in Rueil-Malmaison, France.

"I feel pretty shaken — that means I can't talk very well. I had just gotten up and was having a little coffee. I felt that it couldn't possibly be true, but it was," Schrock told Swedish Radio after receiving the news.

Grubbs, who spoke to The Associated Press in Los Angeles by telephone from Christchurch, New Zealand, said he was celebrating with a good bottle of port.

"It's tasting pretty good right now," he said.

Winning the prize was "one of these things you never expect to happen in your career," he said. "You just keep doing science and see what happens."

"Science, especially chemistry, takes a long time to work its way through ... It's something we've been working on for 30, 35 years," he said.

He said a sports equipment company sells a baseball bat that is made using

metathesis, and that the process is also used to convert seed oils into products that are normally made from petroleum.

Chauvin, in Tours, France, said he felt "embarrassment, not joy" and told reporters that "I had a quiet life, now I see that that is no longer the case."

He praised fellow winners Grubbs and Schrock.

"I knew that my research was important. I opened the way but it is my American colleagues who also worked on my research who are enabling me to get this prize today," Chauvin said.

"It took 30 years of laboratory work to show that what I found was interesting. Today I live alone and my first thoughts go to my wife who passed away barely a year ago," he said.

Chauvin explained in 1971 how metathesis reactions work and what kinds of metal compounds can be used as catalysts to make the reactions happen. Schrock was the first to produce an efficient metal-compound catalyst in 1990. Two years later, Grubbs developed the first in a series of improved catalysts that have found many uses.

The three men share the \$1.3 million award, which will be presented Dec. 10 in the Swedish capital.

On Tuesday, Americans John L. Hall and Roy J. Glauber and German Theodor W. Haensch won the 2005 Nobel Prize in physics for their work in advancing the precision of optic technology, which could improve communication worldwide and help spacecraft navigate more accurately to the stars.

The prize was given to the three for their work in applying modern quantum physics to the study of optics.

On Monday, Australians Barry J. Marshall and Robin Warren won the 2005 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for proving, partly by accident, that bacteria were the main cause of painful ulcers of the stomach and intestine.

The award for peace will be announced on Friday in the Norwegian capital, Oslo. The economics prize, the only one not named in Nobel's will, will be announced Oct. 10.

The Swedish Academy, which awards the literature prize, has not yet set a date for its announcement, which is always on a Thursday and could come next week.

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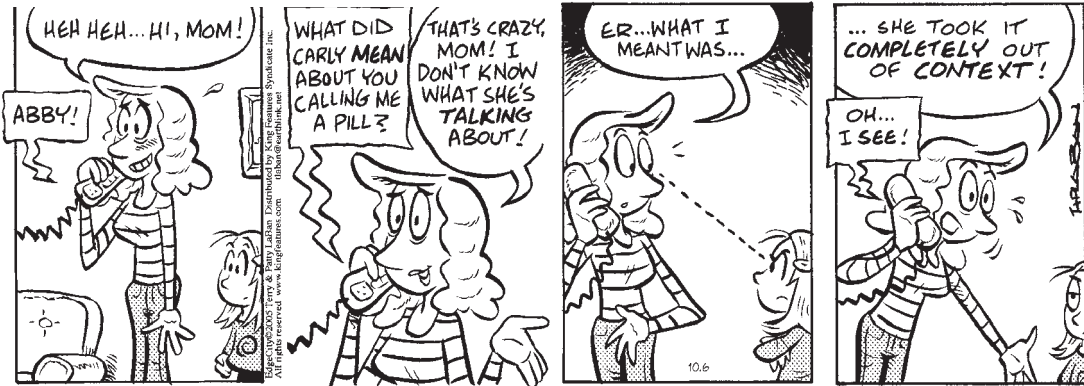


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