

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

The system failed murdered young mother

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

Leticia Pedilla Vasquez did everything the system told her to do and still she ended up dead.

The 21-year-old woman was murdered by her abusive husband in front of their 6-year-old son last Saturday morning outside Santa Monica City Hall.

The young mother was there that morning to hand over their son to her estranged husband, Juan Carlos Vasquez, for a day-

long, court-ordered unsupervised visit. She was so scared to face her husband that she asked a domestic violence counselor to accompany her.

They arrived early, circling the block in search of Juan Vasquez, 27, to avoid a confrontation before the scheduled exchange in the lobby of the Santa Monica Police Department. She never made it.

Instead, as Leticia Vasquez, her son and the counselor walked up the sidewalk toward the police station, Juan Vasquez suddenly appeared out of a large group of near-

by homeless people brandishing a knife. He stabbed her repeatedly through a restraining order, which she clutched to her chest.

The counselor tried to separate them but failed. The counselor then grabbed the 6-year-old boy and ran. Juan Vasquez turned the knife on himself, stabbing repeatedly until he was dead.

Santa Monica Superior Court Commissioner Bobbi Tillmon had issued the restraining order two days before. The piece of paper was found lying on the ground with multiple holes in it from the knife.

The court's decision to grant visitation between the child and father dumbfounds some advocates who say the laws must be changed. They question how the system failed a woman who went through all the proper steps to protect herself.

"Don't put the woman back in harm's way and don't give the little kid back to someone who is deemed dangerous," said Kathie Mathis, executive director of the Domestic Violence Center of Santa Clarita, where Leticia Vasquez and her son

See MURDER, page 7

Activist fights city's camping law with lawsuit

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Only in Santa Monica does eating a muffin on a sidewalk constitute a criminal act.

That's the claim levied by a local homeless activist, who is suing Santa Monica because he

says his constitutional rights were violated after police arrested him for allegedly breaking the city's anti-camping law.

Santa Monica police officers arrested David Busch on June 1, 2001, for violating the city's prohibition against camping in public spaces and leaving unattend-

ed belongings in public for more than 10 minutes, both of which are misdemeanor charges.

Busch, a 45-year-old, longtime Santa Monica homeless resident, was sitting next to a small cart containing his possessions, directly underneath a sign on Seventh Street that stated camping and loiter-

ing is forbidden. Busch was outside the Ocean Park Community Center, a homeless shelter off Colorado Boulevard.

SMPD Officer R. Thurston wrote in his police report there was trash scattered around Busch, indicating he had been there for a while. Thurston also wrote that Busch was camping in public because he was "wearing multiple layers of clothing, having food and miscellaneous food wrappers around him, (and) having a sleeping bag and toiletries next to him."

A photo taken by the police department's Homeless Liaison Program, or HLP team, is included in the report that shows Busch sitting in front of a fence next to a neatly packed luggage cart with newspapers stacked underneath it.

"So here's David minding his own business eating a muffin when this cop in his squad car pulls up and points to him and then to the sign he's sitting under," said Paul Mills, Busch's attorney. "This is supposed to let David know it's time for him to move along."

Busch told police he was not breaking any laws. He refused to leave, according to the police report.

"I pointed to a metal sign, which was posted directly above Busch's head and I told him to read it," Thurston wrote in his report. "Busch read the sign then looked at me and said, 'I'm not leaving.'"

The incident quickly escalated once back-up officers arrived and recognized Busch as a

See ACTIVIST, page 6

Lawyer takes on Santa Monica

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Santa Monica's downtrodden, picked-on and poor have a new ally in town.

Paul Mills, an attorney who works out of a mid-Wilshire office and lives in a West Los Angeles apartment, is representing three, high-profile civil rights cases against the city.

"First Amendment cases traditionally attract interesting people," he said. "And there just happen to be a lot of interesting people in Santa Monica."

Mills successfully negotiated with the city to drop seven of



Paul Mills

eight misdemeanor charges against Henna artist Luke

Chanthadara for operating a business without a city permit on the Third Street Promenade.

Chanthadara had racked up the citations because, in protest, he continued to practice Henna after the city council forbid it from public streets in November 2001.

Mills also has taken the case of Stewart Lamle, a local game inventor, who is facing multiple charges of operating a business on the Promenade without a license. Unlike Chanthadara, Lamle's case seems destined to go to a jury trial. A court date will likely be scheduled next month.

Lamle argues the city is

See LAWYER, page 6

Workers dump debris on state beach

By The Associated Press

SANTA MONICA — Days after county workers cleaned up Will Rogers State Beach, jagged concrete, glass and pipe fragments were dumped on the beach as part of a sand replenishment program.

The discovery prompted outrage by local residents, and officials with the county's Department of Beach and Harbors have launched a review of its beach replenishment procedures.

"Whenever you do a sand renourishment project

... there's foreign debris that's in the sand," Kerry Gottlieb, deputy director of the department, said Saturday. "We're out there cleaning it now."

Pacific Palisades resident Mindy Marin, 42, said she scooped out a chunk of brick and a 6-inch-long glass shard in two shovels of sand.

"We want our beach back," she said.

Resident John Neidlinger discovered the debris last weekend, when he and his 15-year-old son went

See DEBRIS, page 5



Photo courtesy

This is a photo of David Busch that was taken by Santa Monica police officers just before they arrested him for violating the city's camping law on June 1, 2001.

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

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Know when to hand over a project. If you do just that, you allow people who have different expertise to finish off a job. Confusion surrounds a friendship and/or long-term goal. Keep sorting through what's what. Tonight: Spend quality time with a loved one.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Others seek you out left and right. It appears that your expertise and feedback might be needed. Even a boss or authority figure could be confused. Others ask for help. They seek out your financial knowledge. Take the lead at work. Tonight: Where your friends are.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Make that additional effort to get your job done. Pressure builds left and right. Ease up when dealing with a loved one or someone you care about. Information from a distance only confuses what is happening. Stay clear of a problem. Tonight: Off to the gym.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Your imagination takes you down many strange paths, but don't allow it to affect a partnership. Your sense of humor, and perhaps your attitude, help you wade through work. Fatigue marks your actions right now. Take a walk at lunchtime. Tonight: Pretend it's the weekend.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Once more, others appear to be working against you. You could wonder what gives, but your best bet is to focus on what you want. Unexpected developments from others keep you on your toes. Don't worry about someone else's attitude. Tonight: You can't get home fast enough.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Reach out to those around you. Deal with unexpected developments with the normal finesse and style that marks your decisions and actions. Keep communication flowing, even with a difficult boss or associate. Tonight: Invite a pal for dinner.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Creativity flourishes when you deal with a money matter head-on. Reach out for others. Take a risk. Imagine more of what you would like, and start taking the path toward that goal. As always, use caution with a money risk. Tonight: Your treat.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ You're more than used to dealing with a glum personality. Carefully consider your options that revolve around family and a domestic matter; perhaps you're considering a move or a home office. Trust your judgment. Tonight: Do something for yourself.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★ Take your time when communicating and dealing with people in general. Others might be more prone to misunderstanding, and you, too, might not understand another's intent. Concentrate and think through decisions. Tonight: Take time for yourself.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Incorporate your desires into your plans. You might be concerned about achieving or meeting certain goals. Schedule a meeting with associates. Ask for help. Don't assume the entire burden. Others enjoy working with you. Tonight: Hook up with a friend.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Take charge. Listen well to a loved one who means a lot to you. A child might be overly serious. Tighten up a project before you present it. You might miss a detail or two on the way. Ask for feedback from someone you respect. Tonight: In the limelight.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ An overview proves to be helpful, especially with a very stern family member. Loosen up and focus on your priorities and what might or might not be important to you. Sometimes your imagination gets carried away. Understand that an idea could be a bit far-fetched. Tonight: Take in a movie.



QUOTE of the DAY

"Gray hair is God's graffiti."

— Bill Cosby

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LOCAL

Gavel II Gavel

From the people's court in the Byron Y. Appleton Honorary Courtroom in Santa Monica.

By John Wood

Ferrari gift ends up costing

Friends of a Santa Monica man, Carlos Rivera, rented him a Ferrari F355 for his 40th birthday. Unfortunately for him, Rivera ended up with a bill.

The \$2,500, two-day rental, claimed Beverly Hills Rent-A-Car in court, had new damages to the sports car that exceeded \$1,000, which the rental car agency held Rivera responsible for.

Rivera, an auto body repairman who used the car to zip out to Vegas, celebrate and zoom back in time for a trip to Cabo San Lucas, told the court he hadn't caused the alleged damages.

"That's my living. That's what I do. I recondition cars," explained Rivera. "From one to 10, this car was a seven."

But a representative from the exclusive Beverly Hills car shop claimed the car "had a lot of new damage" when it was returned and said Rivera "refused to cooperate."

The representative was seeking \$5,000, the maximum allowable amount in small claims court, saying the damages kept them from renting the car to other customers.

Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Pro Tem Jane Dubovy awarded Beverly Hills Rent-A-Car \$1,097, plus court costs. She denied the agency's request for reimbursement for missed rental opportunities, saying they failed to prove there was a specific demand for the sports car.

House demolished before family left

Wrecking crews last March leveled a Santa Monica home before the family moved out. Landlord Stan P. Sowa must now reimburse the family up to \$15,000 for property that was lost or damaged in the 33rd Street home.

After being served with a 30-day notice and successfully lobbying for an extension, the Takedas, whose house was torn down, said they were halfway done with their move when the rental house they had lived in for years was demolished — two days before the agreed upon date.

Ms. Takeda said 90 percent of their belongings were lost or damaged as a result. And at least one item was adopted by the wrecking crew.

"The demolition guys were surprised (when we showed up looking for our belongings)," Takeda said. "But one of them was wearing my flannel shirt."

Peeved by the workman's poor manners and angered over the early destruction of her old home, Takeda called her landlord and demanded answers.

But Takeda said Sowa wasn't cooperative.

"He said, 'I asked the demolition guy if there was any stuff (in the house) and he said no, so I went ahead.' But (Sowa) broke in because I had new keys and locks made," Takeda told the court. She explained that Sowa had a history of entering the property without notice.

Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Pro Tem Jane Dubovy awarded Takeda's daughter and son \$5,000 each, plus court costs, the maximum allowable amount in small claims court. Ms. Takeda also filed a small claims lawsuit against her old landlord which will be heard later this month.

Sowa did not appear to defend himself.

An expensive car wash

Lincoln Car Wash must pay William Mammarella nearly \$1,000 for damages it caused to his 1999 Cadillac Seville.

When an attendant at Lincoln Car Wash drove Mammarella's car into another patron's car, Mammarella asked owner Aryn Jivani to reimburse him for repairs.

Mammarella said Jivani refused, though Jivani did arrange for repairs to the other patron's car — a friend of Jivani's, according to Mammarella.

So Mammarella filed a lawsuit against the car washer in small claims court.

Santa Monica Superior Judge Pro Tem Jane Dubovy ruled against Jivani, who was not present, for the \$800 repair bill as well as the \$121 cost of hiring a car, plus court costs.

surf report

Information compiled by Jesse Haley

Swell activity borders on nonexistent today.

Extremely minor windswell from the northwest has Los Angeles County in ankle- to knee-high surf at the most exposed of breaks.

Forecasts are predicting some new building swell due Thursday, but for now conditions look flat.

Tides are high, winds are low, and water is showing low pollution levels.

Today's Tides:

Low-	4:11 a.m.	0.38'
High-	10:19 a.m.	6.29'
Low-	4:51 p.m.	-0.38'
High-	11:00 p.m.	5.17'

Location	Monday	Tuesday	Water Quality
County Line	1-2'/Poor	1-2'/Poor	A
Zuma	1-2'/Poor	1-2'/Poor	A
Surfrider	1-2'/Poor	1-2'/Poor	A
Topanga	1-2'/Poor	1-2'/Poor	A
Breakwater	1-2'/Poor	1-2'/Poor	B
El Porto	1-2'/Poor	1-2'/Poor	A

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The Q Line

Santa Monica certainly isn't without its challenges and controversies. And while there is frequently a lot of negativity highlighted in the local news and public debate, there must be some things that are positive about this place.

Even though there are a lot of homeless people messing up the place, and the cost of living is really expensive, we all have chosen to live here for a reason. We want to know why. Consider this week's question a

challenge to come up with something positive about Santa Monica and we'll be happy to print it.

This week's Q-line question is:

"What's so great about living in Santa Monica?"

Call (310) 285-8106 with your response before Thursday at 5 p.m. We'll print them in Friday's paper. Please limit your comments to a minute or less; it might help to think first about the wording of your response.



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OPINION

LETTERS

Columnist doesn't see it clearly

Editor:

In Friday's "As I See It" column, Bill Bauer seriously confused pedestrian safety with traffic calming. They're not at all the same thing.

It was my accomplishments for pedestrian safety I spoke proudly about at last week's Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce luncheon. I advocated for the recent improvements on Montana Avenue, including more new visible crosswalks, curb extensions to shorten the crossing for children and the elderly and embedded flashing lights at a particularly dangerous crossing.

Bill's history is confused as well. I did not narrow Montana Avenue. It changed from four lanes to two lanes a number of years ago, while I was still on the board of the Wilshire/Montana Neighborhood Coalition. As a resident living less than a block south of Montana, I actually opposed the city on that change — until after it was completed, and I was convinced by the reality of a better, friendlier street.

Yes, traffic in Santa Monica continues to increase, but we cannot just surrender to ever more cars, letting our streets become unsafe for pedestrians, particularly seniors and children.

I know Bill has long disagreed with me on pedestrian safety, but I'm sure your paper remains committed to getting the facts straight.

Kevin McKeown
Mayor Pro Tem
Santa Monica

Traffic calming measures not working

Editor:

I completely agree with Bill Bauer's article about traffic calming in Santa Monica. As I try to move around the city on foot, via bicycle and car, I have noticed my trips are longer and definitely not safer. In fact, many of these calming measures are not even greening our streets by encouraging people to ride bicycles.

These traffic calming measures like the roundabout on Fourth Street have narrowed the lane and forced bicyclists to merge with traffic. Fortunately, it's a temporary measure, and bicyclists can avoid merging with traffic by riding through the cones. When the city makes them permanent, I predict there will be a terrible accident there. So, to add to Bill's piece, the city is not making it any safer to ride your bicycle in the city, which will discourage riders to get out of their cars further polluting our air.

Dan Kolhoff
Santa Monica

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Santa Monica's homeless need dose of tough love

While I am sympathetic to the suffering of the homeless population, particularly those afflicted with mental illnesses, I believe the current policies endorsed by the City of Santa Monica are reckless and irresponsible.

They have had a terribly negative impact on the city's finances, on the quality of life and ultimately on the homeless people themselves.

In the 10 years my wife and I have lived in Santa Monica, we have had our car broken into four times, our two bicycles stolen twice and the garage burglarized on five occasions. I have often skidded through vomit on the sidewalk and have had to clean up after vagrants who have defecated on our lawn, in the garage and in our elevator. I was slammed and nearly knocked to the ground in an unprovoked attack by a deranged man and had to chase off a transient pedophile from a beach bathroom. I can't remember a month when we have not been awoken in the middle of the night by the hysterical screams of a schizophrenic meltdown or a day when I have been able to walk eight blocks to the Promenade without being solicited, often aggressively, by 10 or more panhandlers. It is no longer possible to navigate through Santa Monica without being assaulted by the sights, stench, foul language and rage of drug addicts, alcoholics, untreated schizophrenics and miscreants of every ilk.

What is a mystery is that a government that is as intrusive as Santa Monica in regard to construction, signage, planters, liquor licenses and a myriad of supposed quality of life issues, and that has spent millions of dollars to beautify the city, neglects what can only be called a blight,

which has defeated all their efforts. Not only does the existence of the huge homeless population sully the city, but as Malcolm Gladwell points out in his book, "The Tipping Point," when a society overlooks petty crime and quality of life problems, it can produce an epidemic of both minor and major crimes. Santa Monica has been sending a message that antisocial behavior is acceptable.

Litter and graffiti have become a plague, and petty and major crimes are increasing. The police spend almost all their time dealing with homeless-related crimes and issues.

Santa Monica is a city that at times seems overly obsessed with safety, as was evidenced when a pedestrian was run down and killed in a crosswalk. The city council determined that it had to make the streets safe for pedestrians with a frenzy of proposals, despite the fact that the driver was 90 years old and likely had no business behind the wheel of a car. Yet this same city council has systematically ignored the danger inherent in a vagrant population filled with criminals and substance abusers. Recently a man in Santa Monica was stabbed after witnessing a transient attempting to steal his roommate's car. Transients are responsible for sexual assaults on women and children, including one homeless man who raped four women over 75 years old.

Another panhandler fatally beat an 84-year-old woman to death when she refused to give him money.

Though most mentally ill people are

harmless, even those that are seemingly benign can become dangerous. Mark Volpa Jr., who was deemed not to be a danger to himself and others by the psychiatric hospital that released him, shot and killed a 47-year-old deputy who was a father of two. Twice in the last year, I nearly ran over a disturbed Santa Monica woman who suddenly darted into traffic. She not only endangered her own life, but the lives of myself and any passing motorist that I might have hit when I swerved to avoid her.

What is ironic is that in their rush to compassion, Santa Monica has likely exacerbated the problems of the very people they are trying to help. The therapeutic community generally agrees that alcohol and drug abusers rarely seek help until they have hit bottom. This "tough love" approach cannot work if the abuser's family and friends, or society, ignores or supports their destructive behavior. Santa Monica sends the message that substance abuse is acceptable. By taking away the need to find food and clothing, they leave the addicted with the greater financial resources to buy the drugs and alcohol that keeps them on the streets and destroys their lives. By preventing substance abusers from reaching a crisis, Santa Monica has become an enabler and precipitates a lifestyle that is little more than a slow, dehumanizing suicide.

In addition, by feeding, clothing and removing the stigma of addiction and homelessness, Santa Monica has attracted an inordinate share of the Los Angeles

area's transient population. I spoke with one Beverly Hills cop who told me that the day Santa Monica started feeding the homeless at City Hall, nearly their entire transient population packed up and moved west. This influx has not only overtaken many of the city services such as the police and sanitation, but also totally overwhelmed the city's already limited social services. The consequence is that rather than developing programs that could actually help the most needy, such as those suffering from mental illness, families and the elderly, the city's resources are diverted into what is essentially outdoor warehousing of an indigent population that has far surpassed existing health and sanitation facilities.

Santa Monica is at a point of crisis. The community has been overburdened with a disproportionate number of homeless to a great extent lured by caregivers from outside communities who have foisted their own vagrant problem onto Santa Monica. It is no longer possible to ignore or live with the current population. The quality of life is being degraded and the health and safety of Santa Monica's residents are at risk, as well as those of the homeless themselves.

Businesses are being negatively impacted and ultimately the entire economy of Santa Monica will suffer. The city council must deal with reality rather than a failed ideal. It is essential that Santa Monica pass laws that limit the number of homeless in the city and create programs that help and cure rather than enable their problems.

Ed Silverstein is a resident of Santa Monica.

Guest Commentary

by Ed Silverstein

Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

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LOCAL



Local Sports

Samohi loses tough one to Claremont Wolf Pack

BY JESSE HALEY

Special to the Daily Press

Santa Monica High School came into Friday night's road game against Claremont with a healthy head of steam thanks to last week's down to the wire victory over Venice.

Samohi inside linebacker Abraham Bideo made clutch stops on defense, and tailback Adrian Gonzalez pounded repeatedly through Claremont's secondary, but the defending league champion Vikings still came up short this week.

Wolf Pack running back Jamal Boyd slashed his way up field consistently for Claremont, breaking two and three tackles a carry before being brought down by Samo's secondary.

Samo quarterback Ricky Johnson struggled to connect with receivers, though he found Paul Helmy open on the corner route for big gains in the second half including a fourth down conversion

for a first at the Wolf Pack 19-yard line. The 11-yard pass set up a Johnson to Helmy touchdown with 2 minutes left in the third quarter, making the score 12-7.

The fourth quarter remained scoreless going into the final minutes of play, when the Vikings took possession at their own 1-yard line with 1:36 remaining. Johnson threw 2 incomplete passes before an unorthodox play call for a run on third down was stopped in the backfield by Claremont for a safety.

Vikings attempted the onside kick without avail, and the Wolf Pack kneeled the ball twice to run off the remaining time and take home the win 14-7.

It was a well-matched, well-played game that came down to a few key possessions, and Samohi failed to convert on offense. Claremont's dynamic rushing by Jamal Boyd and strong pass protection and good defensive pass coverage helped seal the victory.

The Vikings are 2-2 this season.

Turnovers and penalties plague Corsairs in loss

BY JESSE HALEY

Special to the Daily Press

Allan Hancock College, a notoriously strong junior college football program, steamrolled the Santa Monica College Corsairs 45-0 in Saturday night's heavily penalized home game.

Two plays into the first Corsair possession, the Bulldogs recovered a fumbled snap for a touchdown to get out to an early lead, 7-0.

A sack and interception later, and a 32-yard Bulldog field goal made it 10-0. Then a fumbled kick off deep in Corsair territory gave the Bulldogs the ball on the Corsair 1-yard line, which resulted in Hancock's first of three offensive touchdowns.

SMC's offense did their best to stay in the game, but penalties for holding, illegal procedure, an illegal block and illegal contact to the helmet cost SMC crucial yards.

Third string quarterback Mike Haley,

who threw for 3 touchdowns in 9 minutes against El Camino two week prior, went 5 of 17 for 92 yards and 2 interceptions before leaving the game at half time with a strained calf muscle.

In the absence of leading rusher James Jackson, who is out with a strained MCL, SMC struggled to establish a running game against Hancock's defense, gaining only 26 net yards on the ground.

The bulldogs also scored on a safety and a 19-yard field goal in the first half to go up 28-0.

SMC lost more yards on penalties, 140, than they gained in total offense, 57. They gave up 2 interceptions, 3 fumbles, 7 sacks and 2 safeties.

"I don't know what happened," a quiet coach Taylor said after the game. "But I'm going to find out."

The Corsairs are scoreless in their last two games.

Residents fuming over bricks and glass in sand

DEBRIS, from page 1

for a run on the beach.

"To grow up on this beach all my life and see this happen, I was just hysterical," Neidlinger said.

Gottlieb acknowledged the county should have warned the public about potentially dangerous materials in the sand. "We really need to figure out a way the public can be protected while we're in the middle of a renourishment job," she said.

County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky has asked the department for explanation and for additional tests to ensure

the new material is not toxic, his spokesman Joel Bellman said.

"There was stuff in there that was just not appropriate," Los Angeles City Councilwoman Cindy Miskowski said. "They have to be there posting (signs about) it and making sure it is as clean as when they started."

The sand, which came from a construction site in Playa del Rey, was initially tested for compatibility and toxicity and found to be appropriate, Gottlieb said.

The Environmental Protection Agency and California Coastal Commission both signed off on the project, she said.

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LOCAL

Activist seeks repeal of city's ban on public camping

ACTIVIST, from page 1

homeless activist, Mills said.

Busch is well-known for running a Santa Monica homeless newspaper and his work with the Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger & Homelessness.

In 1997, Busch organized a much-publicized, non-violent protest when 100 homeless persons chained themselves to a vacant hotel for a week. Many homeless used the hotel as shelter to escape the El Nino storms. They disagreed with the city's decision to board up the building.

Two years later Busch was named — along with Congressman Tom Hayden and architect Frank Gehry — in a list of "Most Influential People of the Westside" by the Los Angeles Times for his homeless activism, according to court documents.

Busch made headlines again in 2000 for winning a \$29,000 settlement from Los Angeles after he was unfairly arrested a year earlier for running a food program in Pershing Square on Christmas Day, according to court documents.

Deputy City Attorney Carol Rohr said she's not interested in seeking headlines on the Busch case.

"To argue the case in the media ... well, that's not the best way to go about this," she said. "And we won't do that."

She added that the police enforced the city's laws appropriately.

"Our position is there was probable cause

"He wants them to pay so they have to admit they're wrong, and that if they do this in the future, it's going to cost them."

— PAUL MILLS
Attorney

to arrest him," Rohr said. "My opinion is that he wasn't expressing a First Amendment right sitting there eating a muffin."

Santa Monica officers spent more than five minutes "politely" asking Busch to move, according to the police report.

Thurston then told Busch if he did not leave the area, he would be cited for breaking the city's camping law. Busch then told the officers even if he was cited, he wasn't moving, according to Thurston. "I told Busch that if he did not move, I would have to place him under arrest and take him to jail," Thurston wrote.

Thurston said Busch responded, "take me to jail, I'm not leaving."

He was taken to the Santa Monica Jail and held for about four hours before being released. Four months later, the city dropped all charges against him.

"They were contradictory charges," Mills said. "The whole thing is ridiculous. Busch was unavailable for comment."

Rohr said the arresting officers have

not yet been deposed, and it is inappropriate to now explain why the officers felt the need to arrest Busch.

The loitering provision of the sign posted where Busch was sitting has been taped over because there are no loitering laws in Santa Monica, officials said. Loitering laws have been deemed unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, officials said.

Busch argues his arrest highlights an unjust and unconstitutional city camping ordinance that leads police officers to think they can arrest residents for little more than sitting on a sidewalk.

"Mr. Busch intended by his actions to reduce or eliminate the climate of fear and hostility that systematic, government-sanctioned violations of human rights — including the right to choose where to eat a muffin — create in a community such as the city of Santa Monica," wrote Mills in his lawsuit against the city.

Robert Myers, a former Santa Monica City Attorney, said the charges against Busch and the police officers' actions are unjust.

Myers was fired by the city council in 1992 for refusing to write an anti-camping ordinance.

"I wouldn't write a camping ordinance because I knew (police chief James T. Butts Jr.) and the police department would use it in this manner," he said. "Thousands and thousands of dollars will now be spent paying officers to testify ... and city attorneys just to defend the police's harassment of poor people."

SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega said it's the department's policy not to comment on pending litigation. But he did say that it's the SMPD's job to enforce the laws on the books, regardless of whether or not people believe they are fair.

"The police department will enforce the ordinances and state laws equally across the board," Fabrega said. "We take the law to its totality and it's up to the

courts to interpret it.

"We will enforce the law with the direction of the city attorney's office," he added.

Myers said the state already has adequate laws on the books to deal with criminal behavior. He said anti-camping laws are part of an attempt by municipalities across the country to enact piece-meal legislation that will re-instate vagrancy laws, which have been ruled unconstitutional.

"Communities are passing bits and pieces that make it illegal to be a homeless person living on the street," Myers said. "All these laws do is criminalize homelessness and make it a crime to be poor."

The Santa Monica City Council will consider enacting two more ordinances at its Tuesday meeting that would create restrictive guidelines for people sleeping in downtown doorways and for food lines predominantly run by out-of-town religious organizations that are held in public parks.

Some local homeless activists believe both ordinances would likely affect the city's transient population more than any other group, and violate food distributors' constitutionally protected rights of free speech and religion.

Homeless activists have vowed to defeat the ordinances in court, should the council enact them.

Both proposed laws will be considered along with an internal review of city-funded social service programs designed to raise homeless off the streets and into jobs and permanent housing.

Some council members have said they support enacting the ordinances as well as creating a task force to study the homeless situation in Santa Monica.

Busch wants the "no camping" signs taken down. He believes they are misleading and gives the wrong impression about the rights of residents, housed or unhoused.

"I don't know if it's part of the city's master plan, but these signs are targeting the homeless," Mills said.

And while Busch is suing for monetary damages, his attorney argues the lawsuit is about principles, not a cash settlement.

"He wants them to pay so they have to admit they're wrong, and that if they do this in the future, it's going to cost them," Mills said. "They can always get away with it if someone like David doesn't stand up and say 'no.'"

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Many interesting people and cases in Santa Monica

LAWYER, from page 1

unjustly picking on him because he has successfully defeated 38 misdemeanor citations for not having a street performer's permit. He says it's his constitutional right to peddle his game on the Promenade.

And Mills has taken up David Busch's lawsuit against the city, which also is likely to go to trial. Currently attorneys on both sides of the case are in the discovery phase of the proceedings, when lawyers gather evidence to support their case.

Busch is suing Santa Monica because he feels the city's anti-camping laws are used as a quasi no-loitering ordinance, which the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled unconstitutional.

Mills, who grew up on the East Coast, attended Columbia University before heading to UCLA Law School, where he

graduated in 1995.

So far, he is representing most of his Santa Monica clientele for free, or a minimal charge.

Mills said he isn't practicing First Amendment law for the big bucks.

He drives an old gray, beat-up Japanese import with an odometer that has likely spun around more than a Las Vegas slot machine. A sole bumper sticker on the back displays a waving American flag with the phrase "God Bless America."

His suits are not the designer fare commonly found in the high-profile Santa Monica Courthouse. And sometimes the color of his socks are visible through a hole in the toe of his dress shoes.

"All I know is these people got stepped on and they've ended up in court with me as their lawyer," he said.

LOCAL



Tougher laws wanted by domestic violence advocates

MURDER, from page 1

were staying for the past several weeks. "We need to have those laws changed."

Los Angeles Superior Court officials declined to comment on the case, saying it's still pending. The boy is now in protective custody with the state.

According to court records, this was the second restraining order Tillmon issued between the couple in the past year. A temporary restraining order was issued Nov. 27 after Juan Vasquez punched his wife in the face, which brought police to their Los Angeles home and put her in the hospital.

Tillmon allowed Juan Vasquez to visit his son on his days off, and take him to and from school. But after a hearing a few weeks later, a restraining order was issued until July 1 and Juan Vasquez was not allowed to see his son.

Once the restraining order expired, Juan Vasquez was back at home beating his wife and controlling every move she made, according to court documents.

"While driving he punched me in the head with a closed fist and slapped me across the face with the palm of his hand. He also hit me in the leg. He said he would kill me if I went to the police and that it would be my fault if he went to jail again," Leticia Vasquez said in court documents. "While I lived with my husband he never let me leave the house without him. He would take me to work and pick me up from work. He let me make some phone calls, but would always check the phone number to determine who I was calling."

Leticia Vasquez finally escaped from her husband in early September, when she convinced him to allow her to take their son to the first day of school. She instead went to a Venice Beach shelter which placed her in a battered woman's shelter in Santa Clarita.

But she couldn't hide from him for long. Tillmon granted Juan Vasquez' request to see his son every Saturday, the first of which was that day in front of City Hall. Tillmon also ordered Juan Vasquez to attend a certified program for abusers for 12 months. He already had been attending a similar program stemming from a criminal misdemeanor charge of domestic assault and battery when he beat Leticia Vasquez late last year.

Domestic violence judges and attorneys have to keep what's best for the child in mind when ruling on civil cases. Under state law, a parent who has been issued a restraining order is allowed to visit with their child on a specified day and time as long as it limits the child's exposure to domestic conflict or violence, and ensures the safety of all family members.

And because of similar state laws, even parents who abuse their spouses have a right to see their children.

Alicia Cortrite, a deputy city attorney who handles domestic violence criminal cases for Santa Monica, said it's difficult for judges and family law attorneys to determine what an emotionally unstable person will do. Almost 99 percent of domestic violence cases involve the abuser threatening the victim's life, which makes it difficult to assess each situation.

"The courts are not threat assessment agencies. It is impossible to predict when someone is intent on killing their significant other. It's just a matter of where and when," Cortrite said. "It takes a lot to stab yourself ... that's a lot of anger. As long as he had

access to her, he was going to kill her."

Cortrite said Leticia Vasquez' case is baffling because she tried to do everything she could to protect herself, but it wasn't enough. More laws need to be passed so judges' hands are not tied when granting visitation rights for the abusers, advocates say.

It's unclear whether Leticia Vasquez could have had someone else deliver their son to his father. The county's Judicial Procedure Commission is studying a program that would standardize custody drop-offs at sheriff's stations, where exchanges often occur.

Many advocates believe a mandatory "cooling off" period should be in place for abusers before they are granted visitation with their children so the court can review how he or she handles the restraining order and therapy. In Leticia Vasquez' case, only two days had passed.

"It takes a lot to stab yourself ... that's a lot of anger. As long as he had access to her, he was going to kill her."

— ALICIA CORTRITE
Deputy city attorney

"The most dangerous time is when they leave the relationship. But the state is going to believe that it's in the best interest of the child that they see their father," Cortrite said. "Maybe this cooling off period is like giving them a year time-out."

The counter argument is that it could make it worse.

"If everything is taken away from him, that may drive him over the edge," Cortrite said.

Advocates and experts aren't allowed to speak on the victim's behalf in the courtroom. If they were, they could offer their knowledge as to how the abusers act after their control is taken away, the shelter's Mathis said.

"When they know they are losing control, that's when they become the most lethal," she said. "Batterers do not think logically. When there's a threat to their ego structure, it affects them to where they do this kind of act."

Police say that responding to domestic violence calls is some of the most dangerous work officers do. And even though it didn't protect Leticia Vasquez, a restraining order still is effective in most cases.

"They have the most teeth because they are automatically transferred to the police departments and the parties know that," said Richard Bloom, who has been practicing family law for 25 years and is a city councilman. "They know they are under the watchful eyes of law enforcement."

He agrees that it's difficult to predict the actions of people who are overwrought with emotion.

"People in this profession are always looking over their shoulder about what might happen," he said. "The bottom line message here is that the work preventing domestic violence is not done."

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Noah Berger/Associated Press
Steve Ongerth, a member of the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU), pickets in support of locked out longshore workers during a rally Saturday in Oakland, Calif.

Farm products languish as port shutdown continues

BY KIM BACA
Associated Press Writer

FRESNO — A weeklong shutdown of the West Coast's major ports has left stacks of market-bound farm produce to rot on the docks and in the holds of ships that can't reach shore.

As contract talks continued between the dockworkers union and shipping lines late Saturday, about 1.3 billion apples were awaiting shipment to Asia, nearly 8,000 tons of frozen meat from Australia sat in untouched shipping containers, and hundreds of tons of other fruit and food products remained far from intended markets.

About 5 million pounds of yellow, red, pearl and other onions grown in the Northwest are in danger of becoming moldy, said Del Allen, president of Allports Forwarding, a cargo booking business for farm products.

Each day it continues, the shutdown is costing the U.S. economy an estimated \$2 billion, and for many farmers, it comes at the worst possible time — the peak of the fall harvest.

Representatives of dockworkers and management concluded their third consecutive day of meetings with a federal mediator in San Francisco at 11:45 p.m. Saturday and were to resume talks at 10 a.m. Sunday.

The White House warned both sides Saturday to resolve their differences.

"The president's message to labor and management is simple: You are hurting the economy," press secretary Ari Fleischer said while traveling with President Bush in New Hampshire.

Two senior administration officials said Bush was considering appointing a board of inquiry into the lockout, a potential first step toward ordering workers back to their jobs for 80 days under the Taft-Hartley Act. Shippers have urged Bush to use the act, but several unions have spoken out against it.

The contract dispute between shipping lines and dockworkers — largely over benefits, the arbitration process and whether jobs created by new technology will be unionized — has sent ripples through nation's agriculture industry, causing slowdowns of the harvest, and in some cases, layoffs.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway stopped grain shipments to the West Coast

on Tuesday to avoid further congestion at the ports, said Patrick Hiatte, the railway's spokesman.

At sea, much of the chilled beef, lamb and mutton held up on ships could spoil before it reaches consumers, said Dennis Carl, chairman of the Australian Meat Council's shipping committee.

Though most products can be safely refrigerated, storage problems and costs are mounting.

The D.J. Forry Co. spent \$7,200 to bring 1,360 crates of plums from the Port of Long Beach to its warehouse in Reedley, Calif., and will spend \$5,000 more to truck them to East Coast docks before a much longer voyage to Asia.

Sales manager Cary Crum said D.J. Forry also is bringing grapes back from the port and plans to truck them to New Jersey for shipment to the United Kingdom. The company will have to absorb the extra shipping costs, rather than sell the plums and grapes domestically, because they're already packaged for overseas markets.

Other producers are redirecting food to American supermarkets, which could mean lower prices, said Colin Carter, a professor of agricultural resource economics who studies international trade at the University of California, Davis.

Wholesale prices are already dropping for beef, said Chuck Lambert, chief economist for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

"Several of the cattle processors are reducing their purchases of cattle and stopped processing product for the Asian market," he said. "We're seeing cattle prices about \$25 less per animal that could be attributed to this work stoppage."

Between 20 and 30 percent of all U.S. agriculture products are exported, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Pacific Maritime Association, which represents shipping companies and terminal operators, locked out 10,500 members of the longshoremen's union last weekend, claiming the dockworkers had engaged in a slowdown to gain leverage in the contract talks.

The association granted an exemption for cargo going to Hawaii, following a similar one given for Alaska-bound goods, and the union said its members would move the cargo.

STATE



Christian group smuggles Holy Bibles into China

By The Associated Press

SANTA ANA — When they visit China, Orange County residents Tom and Georgia Klebau pray customs agents don't check their luggage.

The Klebaus are Christian smugglers, carrying Bibles to illegal churches inside China through a Santa-Ana based missionary organization called Open Doors USA.

The Klebaus invested more than \$3,000-plus three weeks of Tom's vacation in their first trip to China last year. They made seven smuggling runs from Hong Kong, each time worrying that customs agents would discover their hidden cargo, the Orange County Register reported Sunday.

Meeting a man who came to pick up the Bibles, at a Chinese McDonald's, made them forget their fear.

"He was overwhelmed we would go that far and bring this to him," Georgia told the Register. "I saw the tears in his eyes, and I understood. We caught the vision."

Bible smugglers are part of a flood of foreign Christians flowing into China — missionaries, teachers, tourists — seeking to support persecuted Christians and win converts.

There are five approved religions in China, including an official Catholic church loyal to Beijing. There is also an illegal church loyal to Rome. There are 17 seminaries for China's 12,000 official Protestant churches, and "seminaries on the run" meet at night in cellars and farmhouses, attracting leaders of the Christian underground.

Despite a government campaign to wipe out illegal churches, many continue to draw thousands of worshippers. On Chinese campuses and among intellectuals, religious activism has become a primary method of challenging authority.

Since the late 1970s, China has allowed Catholics and Protestants to worship legally in churches registered with the government, praying with Bibles printed by a state-licensed publisher.

But despite threats of fines, imprisonment and torture, most Chinese Christians attend illegal house churches and seek

support and Bibles from groups like Open Doors USA, the Register said.

Terry Madison, is president of Open Doors USA, a group he and his wife started after spending two decades in Asia working for Christian organizations.

Madison won't reveal all the methods he uses to get Bibles into China but said Christian smugglers are just one way.

"We're able to give Christians with a heart for China a hands-on experience," he said. "They say, 'I can go and do that.'"

One of the ministers Madison works with in China is Rev. Allen Yuan, 88, a legend among the underground ministers in China. Yuan survived 22 years in prisons and labor camps, refusing to denounce his religion and preaching to other prisoners. Since his release in 1978 he has led underground churches, supported by donations from overseas Christians.

Last March, he closed his church rather than register with the government and pledge allegiance to the official Chinese church.

While there is growing economic freedom in China, he said, the country has not really changed when it comes to religion.

"It's not better," he said. "It's a different policy. Only the official church is allowed. They used to put people in prison. Now, they just fine you."

"We still need Bibles," he said. "In the big cities, it's all right. But in the countryside, people need them."

Back from China recently, the Klebaus were already planning another trip.

"I'd definitely go again," Tom Klebau said. "Part is bringing the materials. But part is your experience and coming back and sharing it with people here. People here don't know anything about other places in the world."

The Klebaus don't know where their Bibles ended up. But they met church leaders who were persecuted for their beliefs, and they saw a man weep with gratitude for Bibles.

Delivering Bibles to these Christians, Tom Klebau said, is a calling.

Thousands rally for peace

BY KAREN GAUDETTE

Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — A sweaty throng of thousands of anti-war protesters jammed the city's Union Square on Sunday, beating drums, hoisting signs and proclaiming their opposition to war with Iraq.

It was one of dozens of anti-war rallies across the country organized by the Not in Our Name Project, a grassroots group opposing a range of Bush administration actions. Demonstrations also were held in New York, Chicago, Portland, Ore., and many smaller communities.

Marchers used a thesaurus of adjectives to describe their disenchantment, calling the president a "warmonger," "racist," "irresponsible," and "stupid."

Women in designer jeans and high-heeled shoes marched next to students in tie-dyed T-shirts and Birkenstocks. The driver of a cable car surrounded by the throng clanged his bell in time to pulsating reggae music, joined by the honking of dozens of trapped taxis.

"We don't want war. It's clearly for fabricated reasons," said Taliya Ansari of

Hercules, Calif., who came with her family after hearing of the rally at her mosque. "We don't want people to die. (Iraq is) not doing anything to us."

For the president, the question seemed to be not if, but when, to wage war against Iraq. Stumping in Manchester, N.H., for Senate candidate John Sununu, Bush didn't mention the 50 demonstrators protesting outside, or the gatherings around the country. But he reiterated his stance that the United States must disarm Iraq to protect American lives.

And in his weekend radio address, Bush urged Congress to give him authority to remove Saddam and deal quickly with Iraq's arsenal of chemical and biological weapons.

Still, demonstrators appealed for restraint before the United States enters another war.

San Francisco police added several dozen officers to handle the crowd, which was feisty but peaceful, waving their signs before a backdrop of Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, Tiffany & Co., Levi's and Macy's.

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NATIONAL

Sniper bullet wounding woman linked to four victims

BY DAVID DISHNEAU
Associated Press Writer

ROCKVILLE, Md. — The bullet used to shoot a Virginia woman matches ammunition used to kill at least four of six victims of a sniper spree in Washington, D.C., and suburban Maryland, investigators said Saturday.

Tests conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms confirmed that the same weapon was used in five of the random shootings over the past three days in Montgomery County, Md., and Washington. Tests were still under way to determine any links to two additional shootings in Maryland.

"The round that we collected there is in fact a match to the rounds that were used here in Maryland and also in D.C.," said Maj. Howard Smith, of the

Spotsylvania County, Va., sheriff's office.

The 43-year-old Spotsylvania woman was shot in the back in a parking lot at a craft store in Fredericksburg, Va., about 55 miles south of Rockville, at about 2:30 p.m. Friday.

No arrests had been made in the scattered shootings that began Wednesday. Authorities were talking to one man late Saturday afternoon, but they stressed that he was not a suspect and no weapons were found with him.

In the Washington suburbs where the killings occurred, police still encouraged residents to go about their normal lives and enjoy their weekend.

"The community is safe for the moment," Montgomery County Police Chief Charles Moose said earlier Saturday.

Authorities said late Friday

that .223-caliber bullets used to kill four of the victims came from the same weapon, perhaps a hunting or assault rifle.

But the bullets used in the two other killings "are in very poor shape," Moose said. "We may not be able to link them."

The Virginia victim was hospitalized in serious condition Saturday at INOVA Fairfax Hospital, officials said.

The five victims in the Washington suburbs were gunned down in broad daylight in public places during a 16-hour span Wednesday evening and Thursday morning: two at gas stations, one outside a grocery, another outside a post office and the fifth as he mowed the grass at an auto dealership.

Thursday night, a 72-year-old pedestrian in Washington was shot to death as he stood on a

street corner.

Each victim was shot once from a distance. There were no known witnesses to the killings.

Montgomery County police said about 100 of its investigators were following up on about 600 credible tips. They were working with federal law enforcement to search for two suspects they believe fled in a white box truck with black lettering on the side.

Moose said late Saturday afternoon that a 33-year-old Rockville, Md., man who had been listed as missing and who police wanted to talk to about the case was in custody in Fairfax, Va., on an outstanding auto theft warrant from Florida.

"We're having conversations with the gentleman at this time," Moose said. He stressed that the man was not a suspect.

The News & Observer of Raleigh, N.C., had reported in its Saturday editions that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms had issued a bulletin for the man, who had lived in Raleigh and was described as affiliated with militia and white supremacist groups.

FBI agent Chris Swecker in Charlotte, N.C., could not immediately confirm details about the man.

Late Saturday, police said they were investigating the death of a man whose body was found in Howard County, which neighbors Montgomery County. A fisherman found the man, an apparent shooting victim, police said.

Authorities said they had no indication the death was related to the sniper spree.

Archdiocese to begin training programs for abuse prevention

BY DENISE LAVOIE
Associated Press Writer

BOSTON — The Archdiocese of Boston — where the scandal shrouding the Roman Catholic Church first erupted — is looking to education and training programs to prevent sex abuse by clergy and for healing, a church official said.

"The church family has been hurt," said Anthony P. Rizzuto, a deacon in the archdiocese. "When the family is hurt, you come together and work toward healing the hurt."

Rizzuto's comments Friday came as a commission created by Cardinal Bernard Law prepared to release its final report Monday on protecting children from sexual predators.

Training will begin this month for parishioners, priests, teachers and church staff. The programs come in response to the scandal, which exploded in January when it was revealed that the archdiocese regularly allowed priests to remain in parishes despite allegations of abuse.

Law appointed the 15-person advisory commission after the scandal broke. He said the panel's recommendations will be studied from the viewpoint of church theology and canon law, then turned into guidelines.

The archdiocese has already agreed to many of the recommendations, including shaking up an internal clergy review

board and implementing a child protection curriculum for Catholic schools.

The archdiocese selected Rizzuto last month to enforce the new child protection rules.

Rizzuto said his office is seeking more than 1,800 volunteers to receive training in recognizing signs of abuse, talking with children about abuse and understanding the responsibility to report allegations.

The volunteers will go back to the archdiocese's 364 parishes to train

priests, teachers and others.

The archdiocese is also starting a three-day training program called "Talking About Touching," which is designed to teach parents, teachers and child-care providers how to teach children about personal safety.

On Sunday, Law praised Rizzuto's work, as

well as that of Barbara Thorp, director of the Office of Healing and Assistance Ministry.

"They give expression to our determination ... to reach out as effectively as we possibly can — and we are always willing to do so — to those who are victims of child abuse," Law said during Mass at the

Cathedral of the Holy Cross.

Parishioner Douglas Duboulay, of Boston, said the crisis made him think twice about baptizing his infant daughter. He welcomed the commission's

work, but said it is "obviously late."

"I wonder if (Law) would have done it without pressure from the media," he said. "I look at it as a move in the right direction."

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DID YOU KNOW?: The heaviest domestic cat is a tabby called 'Himmy' who weighed 46lbs., 15oz. at his death in 1984.

INTERNATIONAL



Veiled protest



David Guttenfelder/Associated Press
Veiled Pakistani women protest outside the Karachi Chief Secretariat office in Pakistan Saturday calling for the return of the bodies of their family members killed last Sept. 1, 2002 in a shootout with local police. The bodies of the two men have been held by local authorities since the incident 23 days ago. The sign in front reads: "Our family blood has been sold for U.S. dollars."

Russia, Cuba, South Africa abandon racism conference over vote excluding whites

BY BERT WILKINSON
 Associated Press Writer

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados — A handful of countries — including Russia, Cuba, South Africa and France's overseas territories — withdrew their delegates from an anti-racism conference to protest its decision to exclude whites.

Most of the 250 delegates at the African and African Descendants Conference Against Racism whistled and cheered Friday when chairwoman Jewel Crawford of the United States defended the conference's decision.

"There are some times when we feel that we just want to have a meeting of our own," she said.

Some 200 delegates voted Wednesday for whites and Asians to leave the deliberations, saying slavery was too painful a subject to discuss in front of non-Africans.

Fifty delegates abstained and more than a dozen white and Asian journalists, interpreters and delegates left. Some white interpreters returned Thursday and Friday and were allowed to work.

The 60-strong British delegation introduced the measure, arguing the conference was entirely for blacks to discuss issues from racial profiling to reparations for slavery.

The walkout did not come until two days later, on the fourth day of the six-day conference. It was led by Cuba, followed by South Africa, Colombia, Russia and the French overseas territories of Martinique, Reunion and French Guiana.

"Cuba will never support any action aimed at segregating a group of people. Furthermore, Cuba believes that such a decision is intolerant and contrary to the purposes of this conference," Maria Morales, the Cuban delegation's spokeswoman, told the conference.

The South Africans said the conference had gone adrift and they could not endorse the decision to exclude non-

blacks. It was unclear how many delegates left the conference late Friday.

Crawford said "the motion of exclusion was the will of the majority."

Ghanaian delegate Maya wa Taifa agreed, arguing that Africans often are too generous for their own good and that "our over-hospitality" backfired on the conference.

Also Friday, delegates heard an impassioned plea from Mauritanian Bakary Tandia for the conference to denounce slavery in the African countries of Mauritania and Sudan.

**"There are some times
 when we feel that we
 just want to have a
 meeting of our own."**

— JEWEL CRAWFORD
 Chairwoman

He said such conferences lay too much emphasis on demands for reparations from former white colonizers and "hardly focus on what is happening on the continent, where slavery is alive in some places."

Human rights groups say slavery is continuing in both those African nations. Even though the practice has been outlawed in Mauritania, estimates of the number of people currently in bondage range up to 100,000, with most of them black.

Human rights groups have accused the Sudanese government of abducting civilians and forcing them into slavery. There also are claims the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army is involved in abducting people.

Conference organizers said they planned a resolution of condemnation before Sunday's end to the meeting, billed as a follow-up to last year's U.N. anti-racism conference in South Africa.

Leftist Lula da Silva leads Brazilian presidential race

BY HAROLD OLMOS
 Associated Press Writer

SAO PAULO, Brazil — Former union boss Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva held a commanding lead in Brazil's presidential race Sunday, but appeared headed for a runoff vote, according to preliminary official results.

Silva, of the leftist Workers Party candidate, had 47 percent of the vote, just shy of the absolute majority needed for outright victory, according to preliminary figures from the Supreme Electoral Tribunal.

The tribunal said the tally was based on 24.4 million registered votes counted, or 21.2 percent of the total.

Government-backed candidate Jose Serra was in second with 24.7 percent support, followed by former Rio state Gov. Anthony Gattinho with 15.3 percent, according to the results. Former finance minister Ciro Gomes, a center-left candidate, was in fourth with 12.4 percent.

Silva's supporters thronged Sao Paulo's main avenue late Sunday honking horns, waving flags and singing in anticipation he would lead the vote count. Authorities said long lines and delays at computerized voting stations nationwide had delayed the collection of results.

The burly, former lathe operator, who led his rivals throughout the campaign, surged in the late pre-election polls, fueled by frustration with Brazil's economic downturn and years of free-market reforms.

An exit poll by the prestigious Ibope institute and broadcast on TV GloboNews had Silva winning 49 percent of the vote, followed by Serra with 20 percent support, Gattinho with 17 percent and Gomes with 13 percent. Ibope said the poll had a margin of error of one percentage point.

"If he leads the country as he led the unions, he will be a great president," said Joao de Oliveira, a 54-year-old retired metalworker, who also voted at the same school in Sao Bernardo do Campo. "It is time for a

worker to lead a country of workers."

In his fourth try at the presidency, Silva has softened his radical tone and doesn't alarm Brazil's neighbors. He has promised to honor Brazil's foreign debt and implement no drastic economic policy shifts. He seems more akin to Chile's pragmatic socialist President Ricardo Lagos than to Venezuela's populist leader Hugo Chavez.

"Old style left-wing policies no longer exist, maybe just in words," said Roberto Fantuzzi, president of Chile's Association of Manufacturing Exporters.

Voting was peaceful. Soldiers were stationed in 10 states to guarantee order and some 3,000 soldiers reinforced the police force in Rio de Janeiro, where drug gangs have terrorized the city in recent weeks.

More than 115 million voters are registered in the election, unlike any in decades because of the possibility of a leftist victory in the continent's most economically powerful nation.

Silva, 56, has tapped a national impatience for growth after years of stagnation under President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who was elected in 1994 and re-elected in 1998. Brazilian law prohibits him from running for a third term.

Writing in the daily Folha de S.Paulo, Silva claimed he was the best choice to level Brazil's gaping social inequalities while getting the country's sluggish free markets humming anew in this nation of 175 million people.

Brazil, the world's ninth largest economy, has seen its currency plunge to record lows over financial market concerns about what a Silva presidency would bring.

Brazil's last leftist president, Joao Goulart, was deposed in 1964 by right-wing generals who ruled Brazil until 1985.

Silva was jailed as a subversive for leading strikes protesting the military dictatorship. In this campaign, he has shed his radical image and is now perceived by many as a moderate, attracting votes from the center.

Sinn Fein pickets police stations over raids, arrests

BY SHAWN POGATNIK
 Associated Press Writer

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — Sinn Fein activists protested outside police stations across Northern Ireland on Saturday after authorities raided offices of the Irish Republican Army-linked party in search of stolen British documents.

Detectives continued to question three Sinn Fein activists and a former British government employee arrested during raids Friday on homes in Catholic parts of west and north Belfast. Under British anti-terror laws, the suspects could be held for up to a week.

To the fury of Sinn Fein leaders, police also invaded the party's office in Stormont Parliamentary Building, seat of power for the Catholic-Protestant administration and legislature formed under terms of the Good Friday peace pact of 1998.

In Catholic west Belfast, about 50 Sinn Fein members — including Belfast Mayor Alex Maskey and former IRA commander Joe Cahill — picketed outside a police barracks with car bombproof walls and high netting to deter rocket attacks.

Their placards denounced the police as "storm troopers" who were "attacking democracy," and urged Catholics not to join the predominantly Protestant force, another major goal of the 1998 pact.

Police suspect the former British government employee, who quit his Stormont job in September 2001, of funneling confidential government policy documents to the IRA.

The outlawed group has been largely observing a 1997 cease-fire but remains active on several fronts and, police say, continues to gather intelligence for a potential resumption of attacks.

Friday's operations compound police allegations that the IRA masterminded a March 17 raid on the secret files of Special Branch, the police's intelligence-gathering arm. The IRA insists it wasn't involved in stealing files that listed the addresses, phone numbers and aliases of top detectives and informers.

Gerry Kelly, a top Sinn Fein activist with a legendary IRA background, said police had raided Sinn Fein's office at Stormont simply to bolster Protestant demands for his party to be kicked out the coalition.



SPORTS

Twins defeat Oakland, now face Angels in ALCS

BY GREG BEACHAM

AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND — Not only are the Minnesota Twins here to stay, now they're going home — to open a most unlikely AL championship series.

Brad Radke pitched 6 2-3 dominant innings to beat Oakland again, and the Twins survived a late rally to top the Athletics 5-4 Sunday in the decisive Game 5 of their division series.

The Twins made their first playoff appearance in 11 years despite a tiny payroll and baseball's offseason plan to eliminate them. But facing consecutive elimination games, the Contraction Kids won 11-2 at the Metrodome on Saturday, then crossed half the continent to win the tense clincher about 30 hours later.

Mark Ellis' three-run homer with one out in the ninth inning brought the A's within one, and Randy Velarde singled with two outs before Ray Durham fouled out to second baseman Denny Hocking.

The Twins, who ran away with the AL Central, will face Anaheim in the ALCS beginning Tuesday night in Minnesota. The wild-card Angels shocked the four-time defending AL champion New York Yankees in the division series.

Matthew LeCroy drove home one run and scored another as the Twins got two early runs to support Radke, who got two of Minnesota's three wins in the series. The Twins simply outpitched the A's, who won 103 games and the AL West with their peerless starting rotation.

A.J. Pierzynski hit a two-run homer against Billy Koch in the ninth to finally give Minnesota some breathing room and the Twins leaped out of their dugout to celebrate. They mobbed Pierzynski, their All-Star catcher, in front of the dugout. David Ortiz added an RBI double to make it 5-1.

With consecutive victories against star Oakland pitchers Tim Hudson and Mark Mulder, the Twins stuck

around while big spenders like the Yankees and Arizona went home early this October.

Hocking also had a run-scoring single as Radke, who also won the series opener at the Coliseum on Tuesday, mesmerized the A's and outpitched 19-game winner Mulder.

LaTroy Hawkins dramatically struck out Miguel Tejada to end the eighth with a runner on, preserving a one-run lead.

During spring training, there probably wasn't a soul who would have predicted a meeting between the underfunded Twins and the overlooked Angels.

Oakland hoped the series would turn on its outstanding starting pitching. Instead, Mulder and Barry Zito were good but not great, while Hudson was terrible in two starts.

Radke, on the other hand, was phenomenal in his first postseason starts after eight seasons with Minnesota. He struck out four and didn't walk a batter Sunday.

Durham, who got three hits, had a solo homer in the third, but he was the only A's player to get to second base against Radke, who left with a runner on in the seventh. J.C. Romero then got an easy grounder from Terrence Long, who went 3-for-18 in the series.

But Long wasn't the only lousy Oakland batter. Tejada, the A's MVP candidate, went 0-for-4 — striking out against the hard-throwing Hawkins with two outs and a runner on base in the eighth — to finish 3-for-21 (.143) for the series. He also made several defensive blunders at shortstop, particularly in Oakland's Game 4 loss.

It was a disheartening end for the A's, who had an AL-record 20-game winning streak on the way to their second division title in three seasons. They lost Game 5 of the division series for the third straight year.

Oakland thought this would be the season when its young roster finally showed it was capable of great things. Instead, the A's showed they're still not capable of handling postseason pressure; their lineup managed just

three runs in the final two games of the series after getting 20 in the first three games.

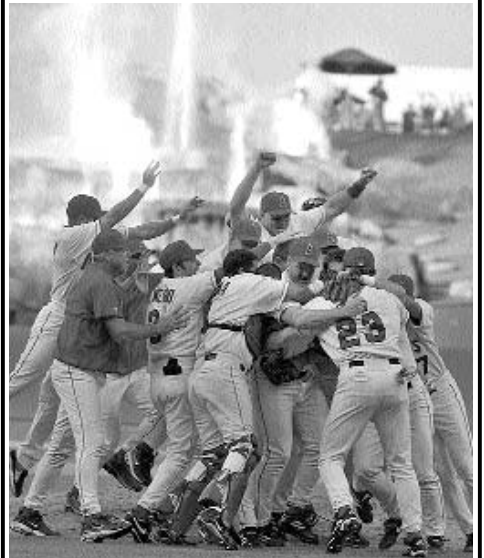
Mulder, the powerful left-hander who won 40 games in the past two seasons, was battered from the start by the Twins, who hit just .252 against lefties in the regular season.

Mulder, pitching on three days' rest, struck out nine in seven innings, but he also allowed nine hits and got into trouble in each of the first four innings. He stranded six runners during that span.

Minnesota scored one run during a lengthy rally in the second inning. Hocking singled home LeCroy for his first postseason RBI, but Jacque Jones struck out with the bases loaded.

The Twins added another run in the third when Cristian Guzman doubled and scored on LeCroy's single.

Angels take flight



Mark J. Terrill/Associated Press

The Anaheim Angels pile onto the field to celebrate their 9-5 victory over the New York Yankees to win their American League Division Series in Anaheim, Calif., Saturday.

turnover and remains the only team that has yet to record an interception this season.

"Our offense scored enough points, but we gave them too many big plays," linebacker London Fletcher said. "I'm sure our offense does feel a lot of pressure, especially the way we've played this season."

Raiders NFL's only undefeated team

BY JOHN WAWROW

AP Sports Writer

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Cornerback Phillip Buchanon wasn't going to miss the same pass twice.

After allowing an attempt by Drew Bledsoe to slip through his hands, Buchanon intercepted the next one and ran it back 81 yards for a touchdown, sparking the Oakland Raiders' 49-31 win over the Buffalo Bills on Sunday to remain unbeaten at 4-0.

Oakland is now the NFL's only unbeaten team, following San Diego's 26-9 loss to Denver. The Raiders have matched their best start to a season in franchise history, last going 4-0 in 1990.

They have Buchanon to thank.

"The first time it happened, I dropped the ball, and I was like, 'Dang, that was the play,'" Buchanon said. "Then something told me, 'Don't worry about it.'"

Buchanon's interception, the second of his rookie career since taking over for injured starter Charles Woodson, was the key in a matchup between two of the NFL's most potent offenses, who combined for 974 yards.

The interception came with Oakland clinging to a 35-31 lead and Bledsoe orchestrating another scoring threat with eight minutes left.

After almost being intercepted by Buchanon on the previous down, Bledsoe tried the same play facing third-and-8 on Oakland's 27. Bledsoe rolled to his right and had Peerless Price open in the flat, when Buchanon leaped and grabbed the ball with both hands and ran it back untouched up the left sideline.

Rich Gannon did the rest on Oakland's next possession, hitting Jerry Rice for a 20-yard pass to seal the victory.

Gannon finished 23-of-38 for 357 yards, while Charlie Garner had 94 yards rushing and scored two touchdowns.

Bledsoe and the Bills (2-3) finally ran out of late-game dramatics after becoming the first team to open an NFL season having three of their first four games decided in overtime.

Bledsoe finished 32-of-53 for 417 yards and two touchdowns, recording his second 400-yard passing game of the season and sixth of his career. But he was undone by three interceptions, two of which led to touchdowns.

"Yes, we have big-play potential, but we have to eliminate some of the mistakes that's allowing the other

teams to score points off us," Bledsoe said. "It was just a poor play on my part."

Price led Buffalo with 126 yards receiving and a touchdown. Dave Moore, Travis Henry and Larry Centers also scored touchdowns, while Mike Hollis hit a 30-yard field goal for a Bills team that's averaging almost 33 points a game.

Buffalo wasn't helped by a defense that has yet to show it can contain an opponent.

In allowing the Raiders 495 yards net offense, Buffalo is giving up an average 358 yards and 36 points a game.

"I look at myself first," Bills defensive coordinator Jerry Gray said. "The Raiders are a good team, but so is everybody else on offense if you let them throw the ball downfield."

Along with allowing the Raiders to convert seven of 13 third-down situations, Buffalo failed to create a

Howell wins Michelob Championship

BY HANK KURZ JR.

AP Sports Writer

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Charles Howell III made a clutch up-and-down birdie on the 15th hole Sunday and beat Brandt Jobe and Scott Hoch by two shots for his first career victory in the final Michelob Championship.

Howell, 23, parred the last two holes for a 4-under-par 67 and won for the first time in his 68th career start with a 14-under 270 at Kingsmill.

"It's hard to put into words. It really hasn't sunk in yet," Howell said, adding that he's heard repeatedly he was overdue for a victory.

"After a while, you start listening to it."

Howell became the 14th first-time winner on the PGA Tour this year, tying the record set in 1991, and the sixth player to break through here.

It was the 22nd and final PGA

Tour event on the 6,853-yard River Course, which will host the cheaper LPGA Tour beginning next year.

Jobe, who matched Howell's birdie at No. 15 but bogeyed the next hole, drove into the rough on the par-4 finishing hole. He hit his second shot into the greenside rough, missed a chip to tie it and two-putted for 72.

"It was just a frustrating day because it was so close to being good and so close to being bad," Jobe said. "It was kind of one of those days."

Scott Hoch rallied for a 69 to match Jobe's 272. Geoff Ogilvy was fourth at 273 after a 70, and Billy Mayfair finished at 274 after a 73.

The ending wasn't nearly as dramatic as the 15th hole, a 506-yard par 5 that often proves pivotal. Tied with Jobe at 13 under, Howell pulled his second shot over the green, chipped and dropped a 24-foot birdie putt.

The former NCAA champion then

parred out, missing a 10-foot putt for par on the 18th hole after a 311-yard drive and a radar-like approach.

"That's probably the best drive I have ever hit in my life, considering the circumstances," he said, adding he thought he was tied and needed to make birdie. "I couldn't feel my arms on that second shot."

It proved not to matter as Jobe hit consecutive shots that came up short on No. 16, parred the 17th, and hit into the rough twice on the finishing hole. It was one last demonstration of how costly the rough could be.

The 16th hole was the killer, Jobe said.

"I'm at 14 under standing in the middle of the fairway and I've got a ball going straight at the hole, perfect," he said. "If it flies two more yards, I'm probably at 15 under and leading the golf tournament."

"For me, that was the difference."

COMICS



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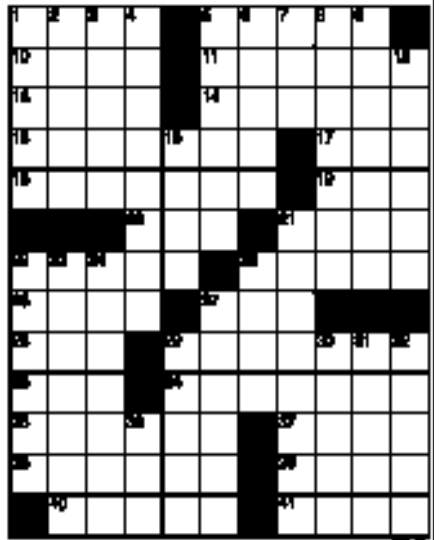
ACROSS
 1 App's art
 8 One showing promise
 10 Opera solo
 11 High points
 13 Close to
 14 Dell meat
 15 Clinging stem
 17 Scandal
 18 High class role
 19 Harbor boat
 20 Com-mo-n
 21 Lion
 22 Surgery
 25 Sudden winds
 28 Chorus
 29 Finish
 30 Fire
 31 remnant
 32 Scottish city
 33 Rich org.
 34 Simple, in a way
 35 Flower
 37 Court worker
 38 Menu choice
 39 Article
 40 Endocrine
 41 Memo

DOWN
 1 "Divine Comedy" writer
 2 Staggering
 3 Kasten of film
 4 African mammal
 5 Gerner's place
 6 Lustful game
 7 Director
 8 Brooklyn
 9 Track beta
 9 Fit a gallery picture
 12 Scorching
 13 Curious
 14 Laundry problem
 15 Paper
 16 Teacher
 17 Theatrical job
 18 "Foolish" singer
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Himalayan mountains hit up with ad graffiti

- Coca-Cola and Pepsi signs were painted on many rocks on a 35-mile stretch in the picturesque Manali-Rohang area of the Himalayan mountains in India; the India Supreme Court took supervision of the cleanup in August.
- Vancouver (Wash.) Mazda-Dodge agreed to make restitution to settle charges that it sold a string of 18 new cars (in 14 months) to a 70-year-old, mentally impaired man (August).
- California's program to encourage mothers to turn in unwanted babies to hospitals has drawn widespread praise, except from Waste Management Inc., which objects to the state's signs on its Dumpsters ("If we (have to tell people) not to throw babies in Dumpsters, (we) have reached the lowest point we can get to as a society") (August).





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For Rent

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Houses For Rent

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SANTA MONICA \$1350.00 Lovely Dplx, r/s, crpts, patio, pkgng, a must see! Westside Rentals. 395-RENT

SANTA MONICA \$1450.00 Dplx, r/s, hrdwd flrs, patio, lrg clsts, Indry, pkgng. Westside Rentals 395-RENT

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ADVERTISE FOR A
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Santa Monica Daily Press
310.458.7737

Calendar

Monday, October 7, 2002

Today

Community

Santa Monica Strutters, a FREE program sponsored by UCLA Healthcare's 50-Plus Program! Walking programs for adults 50 or older looking for safe, low-impact exercise in a comfortable environment. The Santa Monica Strutters meet Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., at Santa Monica Place, Fourth St. and Broadway Ave. in Santa Monica.

Senior Suppers - Discounted meals for people AGE 55 or older are served daily, from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., in the cafeteria at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, 1250 16th Street in Santa Monica. \$3.69 Info only: (310)319-4837.

Toddler Time, 10 a.m. Barnes & Noble at the Promenade and Wilshire. (310)260-9110.

Music / Entertainment

Monday Nights the UnUrban Coffee House presents: Hot Topics Night Hosted By Ali . Open Panel Discussion and Open Forum. Signup is at 8 pm . 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. (310) 315-0056.

14 Below, 1348 14th St., Santa Monica. If the band stinks, take advantage of commodious booths, pool tables, and fireplace. Full Bar. Over 21. (310)451-5040.

LUSH 2020 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. Three bars, plenty of booths, sofas, leopard-print carpet and a sunken dance floor. Mexican grill serves dinner after 5 p.m. Full bar. Over 21. Cover \$5 - Free. (310)829-1933.

The Joint, 8771 W. Pico Blvd., W. LA. One of the most exotic rooms in the local rock-facili-

ty pantheon. Pizza. Cover \$10 - \$5. Full bar. Over 21. (310)275-2619.

Patrick Ney makes with the ha-has, at Flint's. 3321 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. FREE! 9 p.m. (310)453-1331.

Tuesday

Community

The Westside Walkers, a FREE program sponsored by UCLA Healthcare's 50-Plus Program! Walking programs for adults 50 or older looking for safe, low-impact exercise in a comfortable environment. The Westside Walkers meet Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., at Westside Pavilion, Pico Blvd. Between Overland Ave. and Westwood Blvd. In West LA. For more information about the program, call (800)516-5323.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS AT SMC'S EMERITUS COLLEGE. Santa Monica College offers free bereavement support groups in the summer session through it's Emeritus College, a widely praised program designed for older adults. Two support groups will meet Tuesdays on an ongoing basis. One group will meet from noon to 1:50 p.m. and the other from 7 p.m. to 8:50 p.m. For information and registration, call Emeritus College at (310) 434-4306.

Music / Entertainment

Stitch 'n' bitch at the UnUrban Coffee House - chicks, yarn, coffee & chat. 7:30 to 9:30 pm. 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. (310) 315-0056

LUSH 2020 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. Three bars, plenty of booths, sofas, leopard-print carpet and a sunken dance floor. Mexican grill serves dinner after 5 p.m. Full bar. Over 21. Cover \$5 - Free. (310)829-1933.

movies

Loews Broadway Cinema
1441 Third St. at Broadway
The Tuxedo (PG-13)
12:15, 1:30, 2:45, 4:00,
5:15, 6:30, 7:45, 9:00,
10:15, Igby Goes Down
(R) 12:00, 1:15, 2:30,
3:45, 5:00, 6:15, 7:30,
8:45, 10:00.

AMC Theatre SM 7
1310 3rd Street
Ballistic: Ecks vs. Sever
(R) 2:25, 5:25, 7:00, 7:45,
9:15, 9:55. Barbershop

(PG-13) 11:00, 11:30, 1:40,
2:15, 4:30, 5:00, 7:10, 7:50,
10:00, 10:30. The Banger
Sisters (R) 11:10, 12:00,
1:50, 2:40, 4:40, 5:10, 7:15,
7:45, 9:50, 10:20. The Four
Feathers (PG-13) 12:15,
3:30, 7:00, 10:15. My Big
Fat Greek Wedding (PG)
11:40, 2:10, 4:50, 7:20,
9:45.

Landmark Nu-Wilshire
1314 Wilshire Blvd.
Moonlight Mile (PG-13)
10:30, 1:15, 4:00, 7:00,
10:00. Mostly Martha (PG)
1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:30.

Laemmle Monica
1332 2nd St.
The Good Girl (R) 1:00,
3:15, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10. The
Man from Elysian Fields
(R) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:40,
10:10. Secretary (R) 12:00,
2:30, 5:00, 7:35, 10:05.
Spirited Away (PG) 1:00,
4:00, 7:00, 10:00.

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
The Kid Stays in the Picture
(R) 5:30, 7:30, 9:30.

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KEEP YOUR DATE STRAIGHT

Promote your event in the Santa Monica Daily Press Calendar section.
Fax all information to our Calendar Editor: Attention Angela @ 310.576.9913



BACK PAGE

Group works to preserve scary amusement rides

BY LAURA JOHNSTON

Associated Press Writer

GENEVA-ON-THE-LAKE, Ohio — Rick Davis fiddles with wires connected to a fluorescent-painted mad scientist, trying to get the figure to rock back and forth with a neon orange brain in its hand.

The figure is just one of characters in The Fright Zone ride in Erieview Park, but for Davis and other members of the Darkride and Funhouse Enthusiasts, the real horror is that traditional scary rides are disappearing from amusement parks.

"We'd like to preserve something for future generations," he said. "Darkrides are something different. They're the last thing in a park you can still see some artwork in."

Davis and friend Joel Styer formed DAFE (pronounced daffy) two years ago to document and rescue darkrides. Although many of the older rides are scary, the group defines the amusement attraction as any enclosed ride in which a vehicle carries passengers past scenery.

Some companies also are restoring the old rides. However, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions is unaware of any other volunteer group dedicated to the effort, spokesman Jason Kemp said.

DAFE, which works for free, says it has 200 members in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and India.

In June, the group began working on The Fright Zone, which was built in 1963. Six members from northern Ohio and western Pennsylvania have cleaned, painted and patched up papier-mache mannequins and scenes.

"They've really proved themselves hard workers," said Erieview owner Don "Woody" Woodward, who

"We'd like to preserve something for future generations. Darkrides are something different. They're the last thing in a park you can still see some artwork in."

— RICK DAVIS
DAFE member

bought the ride in 1978. The attraction has been operating, but most of its gags haven't been working.

"Over the years, things had been broken and filthy," said Davis, an electronics technician for the FAA who lives in Vienna, Ohio. "We're talking probably 30 years of dust, ever since it was put together."

The DAFE volunteers are working on the mechanics of the ride exhibits, many of which have not functioned in decades. Davis installed a garage door track on a table to make it — and a papier-mache female victim — slide toward a whirling saw.

His wife, Sue Davis, gave the "Laughing Sal" mannequin a new hat and a fresh set of blond braids.

"They're rare rides that aren't common anymore, that our parents and grandparents would have ridden," member Sarah Windisch said as the volunteers worked on a

recent Saturday at the park 45 miles east of Cleveland. "They're little pieces of the past sprinkled among parks."

Tunnel of love-type darkrides debuted in the early 1900s, and classic darkrides with scary scenes and sound effects had their heyday between the 1930s and '70s, Davis said.

Only about 35 traditional darkrides remain in America. However, interactive darkrides are spreading in the amusement industry.

"Darkrides are making a kind of comeback as a family ride, an inside ride," said Eric Minton, a writer for "Amusement Today" magazine and editor of an online newsletter called "The Loop."

Sally Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., has been manufacturing interactive darkrides for 10 years, said Jan Sherman, assistant vice president and creative director.

The company has built four Scooby Doo and four Ghost Blasters rides throughout the country, in which riders shoot at targets from their cars and accumulate points.

"That makes it a game, and that's really why our rides have done so well," Sherman said. "This is a whole new generation of darkrides."

Sally Corp. has also restored a traditional darkride in Rye, N.Y., and Sherman said the company expects to continue doing renovation work.

"I don't think that roller coasters are going to go out of fashion, but we offer a product to parks that really meets their needs for a family ride," she said.

DAFE members say the key to the darkride is its simplicity: the darkness.

"Sometimes it's not what you see; it's what you don't see," Windisch said. "Your mind fills in the blanks."

DID YOU KNOW?: 13% of Americans actually believe that some parts of the moon are made of cheese



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