

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ A 20-year-old woman died in a one-car collision in Bridgewater, Mass., in November; according to police, she lost control of her car while talking on a cell phone and crashed into the Cingular Wireless store on Route 106. And a 16-year-old student in Indianapolis was killed in November on his morning school bus ride when he stuck his head out of a window to see a dead raccoon in the road and was clipped by a tree.

■ And Stephen P. Linnen, 33, an assistant to Republican legislators in the Ohio House, was indicted on 56 counts stemming from an 18-month spree in which a naked man jumps out from hiding and photographs startled women's reactions (Columbus, Ohio, November).

■ And Japanese men's fetish for schoolgirls' used underwear is such a problem, concluded a civic panel, that shops that cater to them are proliferating, thus enticing more and more girls to become suppliers (Tokyo, October).

■ Steve Danos, 24, was arrested as allegedly the man who had been sneaking into young women's apartments to watch them sleep and to snuggle with them (and, sometimes, to fold their laundry) (Baton Rouge, La., October).

TODAY IN HISTORY

ON OCT. 7, 1765, the Stamp Act Congress convened in New York to draw up colonial grievances against England.

■ In 1777, the second Battle of Saratoga began during the American Revolution. (British forces under General John Burgoyne surrendered 10 days later.)

■ In 1849, author Edgar Allan Poe died in Baltimore at age 40.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Character consists of what you do on the third and fourth tries."

JAMES MICHENER
AMERICAN NOVELIST (1907-1997).

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Council hopefuls amass campaign war chests

(Editor's note: This is the second article in a series this week covering campaign expenses before the Nov. 2 election. A Wednesday article detailed the first seven of the 14 City Council candidates.)

CAMPAIGN 2004

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — The 14 candidates running for four open seats on the Santa Monica City Council have amassed war chests ranging from nothing to more than \$100,000, according to disclosure documents filed this week.

Leading the pack is Kennedy-family descendant and 17-year local resident Bobby Shriver, who has raised more than \$80,000 in cash donations and lent his cam-

paign an additional \$25,000. At the other end of the spectrum are a handful of candidates who have declared they won't be raising any money at all.

Most candidates fall somewhere in between, with many commanding relatively small budgets as of the end of September.

In addition to their individual holdings, candidates will rely on financial backing through endorsements from political groups like the Santa Monicans for Renters Rights organization and a new political action committee formed by the local chamber of commerce.

By law, candidates are not

See WAR CHESTS, page 4

Last known SM mountain lions become parents

By The Associated Press

MALIBU — It's quadruplets for the last known mountain lions in the Santa Monica Mountains.

The pumas met last May in the dry hills, and now P-1 and P-2, as they are known, have a litter of four kittens.

Both adults wear radio collars that allow a National Park Service team to keep tabs on their whereabouts. Two weeks ago, the team found the litter through the mother's transmitter. The cubs are believed to have been born in late August, said Seth Riley, wildlife ecologist for the Park Service in the Santa Monicas.

After waiting for P-2 to leave her den, the team finally found the tawny colored spotted kittens.

"We're real excited about this," said Ray Sauvajot, chief of planning, science and resource management for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

The team implanted transmitters in the babies' abdomens so

researchers can track their progress, part of a study begun two years ago to look at the effect of urbanization on mountain lions.

The two cats almost didn't meet. In December, a property owner in Malibu got a permit from a California Fish and Game warden to have the 150-pound P-1 killed, because evidence showed the cat had killed several of his goats. The request alarmed researchers, and the man called off the hunt. He later said he meant only to have the lion scared.

As is common with pumas, P-1 hasn't visited P-2's den, researchers said, and it isn't likely P-1's relationship with the young cubs will be a close one.

Males are extremely territorial, and scientists say the offspring have only a 50 percent chance of surviving a year because P-1 will see them as rivals as they grow. In about four months they may be forced to find new turf in an increasingly limited wilderness.



Photos by Daily Press staff
Proceeds from the "Dolphin Change Program" help the local homeless population. The idea, officials say, is to deter panhandling downtown.

Loose change adds up to thousands for local homeless

BY KATHLEEN BISHOP

Special to the Daily Press

Sparing a dime for the homeless has translated into more than \$100,000 for social service programs in the past decade.

The latest recipient from what's known as the "Dolphin Change Program" is the Venice Family Clinic, which will receive \$5,000 this week from the Bayside District Corp., a nonprofit organization that manages downtown Santa Monica with City Hall.

In an effort to deter panhandlers from the downtown area,

officials started the dolphin program in 1993. The idea was to give passersby a place to put money for homeless people, other than in the hands of the vagrants themselves.

Five dolphin sculptures throughout Santa Monica serve as donation banks. The money taken from them goes to organizations that provide services for the homeless.

Bayside awards the donation annually at the Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition Success Breakfast, which will be held

See CHANGE, page 5



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You're the lead actor, Scorpio

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)**
★★★★ Count today as a mixed bag. The good news is, the day gets better and better as the hours pass. In the afternoon, your true self bubbles forth, renewed, energized and creative. Your popularity soars to a new level. Tonight: Pretend it's Friday night.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**
★★★★ You might be overly stern and serious. Is that possible? Unfortunately, you might need to be in order to complete an important project or task. Just recognize how others might interpret your responses. You might need to use a softer tone with someone, or he or she will over-react to your directions. Tonight: Head on home.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**
★★★★ Take stock of your finances and plans. Make appropriate changes when making plans. Your creativity and vitality surge as you end the workday. Understand what makes you tick, and tune in to your needs. Tonight: Have a romp wherever you are.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)**
★★★★ Use the early part of the day for anything that might be dependent on your creativity and imagination. You score. A domestic matter or change with a roommate puts a huge grin on your face. Tonight: Snuggle in at home.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**
★★★★ Lie low, knowing that your time will come — as soon as this afternoon. You might feel the energy change around you. Your popularity soars, as others, even work associates, cannot get enough of you. How nice! Make calls and network in the p.m. Tonight: Cruise on out the door.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**
★★★★ You gain acceptance and see the end results of your hard-earned efforts. You still might want to use your intuition when it concerns finances. The money wild card drops on you. Just don't risk more than you can afford to lose. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**
★★★★ After all your responsibility and work, you actually might be looking at a home run. Postpone more leisurely activities until later in the day. Network and touch base with those who make a difference in your life. Tonight: Where your pals are.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**
★★★★ You might not be totally satisfied with the information you are getting. It is quite clear: You aren't going to get any more specific facts. Digest what you have, and follow your instincts. Others respond to your leadership. Tonight: You're the lead actor.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**
★★★★ Spend a good part of the early day dealing with joint finances and associates individually. You'll get the big picture by late afternoon, especially if you detach from the here and now. Get tickets to a concert or a play. Tonight: Think "weekend."

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**
★★★★ Others seek you out. You might need to take a serious look at what is going on, especially with a friend; you will want to listen more than you process. Work individually with others in the p.m. Tonight: As you like it.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**
★★★★ Work and plow through as much of your to-do list as possible. Investigate different ways to handle a problem. Yours might not be the only solution. Brainstorm with others, and you'll break down a barrier. Tonight: Do accept an invitation!

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**
★★★★ Your upbeat manner might be rained on by someone you care about. You opt to throw yourself into your work. Be more understanding of this person. Walk in his or her shoes. Nurture a discussion. Tonight: Be kind to yourself too!

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LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Three strikes law focus of discussion

By Daily Press staff

Laws passed in response to public outcry and done in haste could cripple the country.

That's the topic of "Cruel Justice: Three Strikes and the Politics of Crime in America's Golden State," a free lecture that will be given at 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 8 at Santa Monica College.

Joe Domanick — award-winning journalist and senior fellow at the USC Annenberg Institute for Justice and Journalism — will give the talk in room 214 of the SMC Art Complex, 1900 Pico Blvd. Seating is limited and is on a first-arrival basis. Parking is free.

The lecture is co-sponsored by the SMC Associates, a private organization that funds speakers and special programs on campus, as well as the University of California Press Associates, which provides support to the prestigious University of California Press.

The lecture's title comes from Domanick's book of the same name that was recently published by UC Press.

In his book, Domanick reveals that California's "three strikes" law has put thousands of nonviolent men and women in prison for 25 years to life, for crimes as minor as shoplifting \$2.69 worth of batteries, or forging a check for \$94.94. Domanick argues that laws passed in haste, without deliberation and in reaction to public hysteria, can have unforeseen consequences as tragic as those they were designed to thwart.

For information, call (310) 434-4303.



JOE DOMANICK

Eat, drink and be merry in Brentwood

By Daily Press staff

Get a taste Brentwood this weekend.

Every second Sunday in October, Los Angeles-area foodies take to the great outdoors of Brentwood for the annual "Great Tastes in Brentwood" for the chance to experience restaurants and chefs in Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Westwood, Bel Air, Beverly Hills and more.

Now in its 17th year, the "Great Tastes in Brentwood" allows gourmands to sample cuisine from a plethora of restaurants and discover new favorites, while strolling along the tree-lined San Vicente Boulevard.

The afternoon also will feature a silent auction for exciting and exclusive travel prizes, including a chance to win accommodations at the Four Seasons Hotel George V in Paris, entertainment offerings, gourmet cooking demonstrations, children's activities and live jazz entertainment. To complement the food selections, a margarita bar and wine tastings from local wineries will be available for the connoisseur and novice alike.

The event benefits local schools within the Palisades Charter Schools Foundation, which supports Kenter Canyon Elementary, Paul Revere Charter Middle School, Palisades Charter High School, Brentwood Science Magnet and Canyon Elementary. In addition, proceeds will benefit the Brentwood Green, a public park located in the Brentwood Science Magnet School.

Admission is free and tasting samples will range from \$2 to \$6.

For more information, contact Carole Schiffer at (310) 442-1384, or visit www.GreatTastesInBrentwood.com.

See BRIEFS, page 5



SURF REPORT

On Thursday look for a mix of NW wind swell and slow rising S/SW Southern Hemi. Northern LA breaks see inconsistent surf in the knee-waist high range at the good SW/combo breaks. Average South Bay spots will average knee high waves while the best SW/combo spots in the north half of the bay hit waist high. Some more SSW and NW swell moves in on Friday. Winds are light in the morning, turning WNW 8-12 knots for the afternoon.

Today the water is:

66°

Write us at wood@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
SATURDAY	5:14	2.2	6:49	0.8	12:12	3.9	(11:35	5.5)
SUNDAY	5:28	2.7	7:53	1.0	1:15	3.4	12:04	5.2
MONDAY	N/A	N/A	9:26	1.2	N/A	N/A	12:42	4.8
TUESDAY	N/A	N/A	11:03	1.1	N/A	N/A	1:49	4.5
WEDNESDAY	10:20	3.7	N/A	N/A	8:03	3.8	3:50	4.3
THURSDAY	12:08	0.8	12:04	3.4	7:44	4.0	5:22	4.5
FRIDAY	12:50	0.6	12:48	2.9	7:51	4.2	6:20	4.8

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The Q-Line

The City Council recently adopted a new law that limits the size of storefronts on the Third Street Promenade to 50 linear feet as a way to discourage more chain stores from coming to Santa Monica's outdoor mall.

Chain stores typically need a lot of space and by limiting how much they can have on the Promenade might deter new corporate stores from coming here. The City Council has been concerned for years about the homogenization of the street — there aren't enough independently owned retail stores and restaurants, they say. But critics

argue the Promenade is thriving and constantly attracting shoppers, making it a significant sales tax revenue generator for Santa Monica.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Should the city government get involved in regulating the free market?"

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

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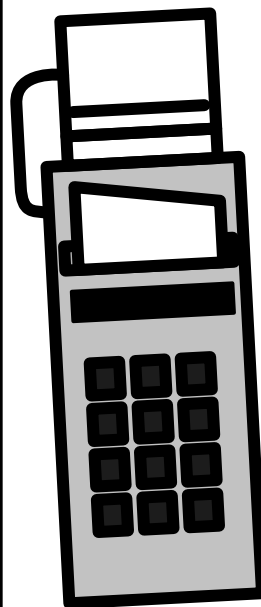
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LOCAL

City Hall keeps tabs on campaign contributions

WAR CHESTS, from page 1

allowed to collect more than \$250 from any one individual. They also are required to regularly report where their money comes from and what they spend it on. The first pre-election reports had to be postmarked by Tuesday. By the end of Wednesday, all but one were filed at City Hall. The candidates must file reports again on Oct. 21, and every 24 hours after that.

Backed by the chamber, City Councilman Herb Katz reported \$42,520 in money raised and a little more than \$21,000 spent so far this year. Katz faced a small fine imposed by City Hall because his report was delivered late.

The donations to Katz's campaign came from a wide array of sources, including local businesses Bubba Gump Shrimp Co., Chez Jay, Le Merigot Hotel, Ocean Lodge Hotel, Readers Fine Jewelers, Rick's Tavern and Santa Monica Seafood; prominent chamber of commerce members Ann Greenspun, Mike Gruning and Bob Gabriel; Santa Monica College officials Piedad F. Robertson and Herb Roney; and fellow candidate Shriver.

Much of the money Katz reported having spent went to his campaign consultant, along with election mailings "California Voter Guide," "Parents Ballot Guide" and "The Early Voter." Several thousand dollars also went to signs, banners and literature.

Pico neighborhood activist Maria Loya, who is endorsed by SMRR, reported \$6,155 in cash raised, along with \$600 borrowed and another \$350 in non-monetary contributions. Of that, Loya spent \$2,900, according to her filing.

Contributing to Loya's campaign were Santa Monica College union organizer Phil Hendricks; hotel and restaurant worker union organizer Kurt Petersen; the local Teamsters; Sen. Sheila Kuehl; former State Sen. Tom Hayden; and 2002 City Council candidate Abby Arnold, according to documents.

Loya's money spent so far has gone towards an election mailer consultant and three mailers, titled "Parents and Teachers for a Better California," "Democratic Voters Choice" and "Voter Information Guide."

Database analyst and Pico neighborhood resident Kathryn Morea, who is backed by the chamber, reported \$5,628 in earnings over the last three months and \$4,205 in expenses. Among her contributors were fellow candidate David Cole, commercial real estate agent Barbara Tenzer and landlord attorney Rosario Perry.

Morea has spent her money so far on a newspaper ad, lawn signs, a Web site, campaign literature and two election mailers. One of the mailers is listed as "Republican Voter Checklist," the other as "Your Ballot Guide."

Cole, a resident of the Mid-Cities neighborhood who belongs to a slate called the "Team for Change," reported

\$4,636 in money raised, including contributions from both Morea and Perry. He listed expenses to date as a newspaper ad, a Web site, campaign literature and more than \$700 for "campaign paraphernalia."

Mayor Richard Bloom, who is backed by SMRR, reported just \$1,099 in money raised, and no money spent so far. Bloom said Wednesday he got a late start in fundraising but more contributions were coming in now, adding he anticipated he

**"When I tell people in
other communities that
that's the kind of money I
need to raise to win a
council seat in Santa
Monica, they're
astonished ..."**

— MAYOR RICHARD BLOOM

would raise between \$65,000 and \$70,000 to supplement his SMRR endorsement.

"I'm a strong finisher anyway," Bloom said. "When I tell people in other communities that that's the kind of money I need to raise to win a council seat in Santa Monica, they're astonished at the amount of money."

Nurse Leticia Anderson filed papers indicating she will not be raising money for her campaign. The only candidate yet to file papers with City Hall is flight attendant Jon Mann. The other seven candidates reported the following:

■ Bobby Shriver
Cash raised: \$80,100
Loans: \$25,000
Spent: \$97,000

■ Matt Dinolfo
Cash raised: \$37,100
Loans: \$17,000
Spent: \$10,100

■ Mike Feinstein
Cash raised: \$19,600
Loans: \$36,700
Spent: \$24,300

■ Patricia Hoffman
Cash raised: \$7,800
Loans: \$1,500
Spent: \$3,600

■ Bill Bauer
Cash raised: \$4,500
Spent: \$2,000

■ Ken Genser
Cash raised: \$1,200
Spent: \$500

■ Linda Armstrong
Not raising money

INTERESTED IN YOUR DAILY FORECAST?
CHECK OUT THE HOROSCOPES ON PAGE 2!

LOCAL



Success stories to be told at annual breakfast

CHANGE, from page 1

this Friday. The award is part of the Marianne Dorn Memorial Grant. Dorn's trust left a significant donation to the program in 1998 after her death, and the money is given in her honor.

"The dolphin program was the brainchild of the board of directors of the Bayside District Corp.," said Kathleen Rawson, Bayside's executive director. "When the first dolphin went up it really was to bridge the gap between people who wanted to give and people with needs."

Bayside officials believe the Venice Family Clinic is meeting those needs. The clinic serves about 20,000 patients a year, 18 percent of them homeless.

"We are delighted to receive these funds from the dolphin change program," said Liz Forer, CEO of the Venice Family Clinic. "All of the money will go directly to our homeless health care program that includes medical as well as social services."

Some of those services are HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and substance abuse screening, medication, and access to local agencies that help the homeless with food, permanent housing and job training.

About one-third of the clinic's funding is government subsidies and grants. The rest is community and private support, service and equipment donations, and third party reimbursements such as Medicare, according to the clinic's 2003 annual report.

Many of Santa Monica's non-profit organizations have been honored at previous Success Breakfasts, including Step Up on Second, Chrysalis and The Upward Bound House.

Though the clinic is the only recipient this year, three \$5,000 grants were awarded in 2002, and two last year.

Rawson said there is no trend on how much money the dolphins collect each year, so the number of grants given out fluctuates. She also said marketing for the program is difficult since there is no fund for it. Bayside relies only on downtown district maps, the visitors' bureau, hotel concierges, and the sculptures themselves to attract donors.

There are two dolphin sculptures on

the Third Street Promenade, and the other three are located on the Santa Monica Pier, Main Street and Ashland Avenue and the Canyon Charter School.

While the program has been successful, it's unclear what impact it's had on curbing panhandling in the area.

"It would be impossible to create a program that would be a proportional response to homelessness," Rawson said. "It is a huge issue nationally and Southern California has a significant regional problem. The dolphin program is simply an effort to give people who might not make regular charitable donations to homeless services an easy alternative to handing a dollar to a transient."

There are some in the community that have criticized area social service organizations and City Hall for not being held accountable on their programs. Some say day drop-in centers that dole out free food and clothes without any requirements or counseling services attached attract transients to Santa Monica and they serve as enablers.

The dolphins are emptied about once every three months, and are full of things besides cash.

"We find all kinds of things," Rawson said. "Bathroom tokens, prize tickets from the pier, trash, a lot of sand. One time we found letters from homeless people."

One anonymous donor makes his generous contribution regularly.

"Each time we empty the banks, we find two or three rolls of five \$20 bills," Rawson said. "This is someone who truly wants to give anonymously."

Formerly homeless people who have become self-sufficient will be honored at the Success Breakfast, along with students of Canyon Charter School, who donated \$2,000 of their lunch money and allowances to the dolphin.

The two-hour breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m. Friday, Oct. 8 at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel. It is the ninth annual breakfast hosted by the Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition, a group of human service and faith-based organizations and government agencies that has provided education and advocacy for homeless and hungry people in western part of Los Angeles County for 20 years.

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LETTERS, from page 3

Educate yourself on early childhood learning

By Daily Press staff

Mark your calendar for "Play's the Thing," a morning workshop for the community that will provide the latest information about the importance of play in a young child's life and how it serves as a foundation for building social and physical skills, problem-solving as well as reading, writing and math.

The morning workshop will feature Renatta Copper, a professor in early childhood development from Pacific Oaks College. At Pasadena's Pacific Oaks College, she is the founding director of the Jones/Prescott Institute-Hixon Center for Early Childhood Education, a teacher in early childhood education classes and frequently presents on a wide range of topics, including "Play and the Acculturation Process" and "Cultural Sensitivity in Infant and Toddler Care." Cooper is currently co-authoring "Playing to Get Smart" with Betty Jones.

Early childhood educators, parents and others interested in young children's development will gather to hear Cooper provide new insights about childhood, play and early learning. The morning will begin with a continental breakfast and registration at 8 a.m. The presentation and discussion will begin at 9:30 a.m. All participants will receive a backpack with a book and materials from the ReDiscover Center.

The event will be held Saturday, Oct. 9, from 8 a.m. to noon at the First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica, 1008 11th St.

For more information, call (310) 434-4456.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Apartment ownership an idea ...

Editor:
Santa Monica renters, beware. Council candidate Bobby Shriver, who emerged from decades of local anonymity only when his privacy was threatened, is a foe of renters' rights, tenants and their protection.
In a letter to me responding to my recent letters to the editor about the council race, Chamber of Commerce endorsed candidate Shriver wrote, "I am totally with you on our rent control. I am interested in actually exploring ways for people to be able to buy these units."
No, no, no! Doesn't Mr. Shriver know Santa Monica has already been there, done that and it didn't work before?
Only a candidate who has just come out of the political woodwork would be unaware that the idea of buying one's own apartment was tried for several years: The ill-fated TORCA program.
Only a candidate without his pulse on recent city issues would be unaware that the idea of buying one's own apartment was a landlord-sponsored measure in the city's 2002 election, aimed at diluting the power of renters by reducing our numbers. Thankfully, that proposition was overwhelmingly turned down by Santa Monica voters.
Only a council candidate living on Santa Monica's ritziest street would be unaware that the vast majority of rentals in town are poorly built, haphazardly maintained units that no tenant would realistically want to buy. We live here for the moderate rents, great weather, beach and freeway access, and fine schools — not the claustrophobic apartments.
Bobby Shriver shows himself to be a political dilettante, absolutely unsuited to serving the interests of a city long dominated by renters.

Rufus Baker
Santa Monica

Get a clue, Ron

Editor:
I'm normally not much for writing letters to newspapers or their Op-ed authors, but Ron Scott Smith's column (SMDP, Sept. 30, page 4) could not be left unanswered.
First, I agree with you about the debates. What a joke. What a shame they can't get someone like Chris Matthews and Bill O'Reilly to hammer at each candidate. Now that would be fun.
The rest of your column, unfortunately, shows a lack of understanding of terrorism. Your partisanship has blinded you. You need to be corrected on some of the facts.
I find it ironic that you blast the president for his policies, yet fall into the trap of

the media and the administration for a poor choice of words. "War on Terror?" Come on, you know perfectly well that proper word usage would be war on terrorism.
There is a war going on and there must continue to be, because free societies cannot let the threat go unchecked. Terrorism is, and will continue to be, this century's world war. Neither the president, nor anybody else, can define when this war will end. For as long as ideology exists, there will be terrorism.
Your understanding of terrorism, as I alluded to earlier, is simplistic. Terrorists are not "desperate statements made ... by desperate people afraid of losing all that is dear to them." This sentence is flat out irresponsible, because it humanizes murderers. Terrorists are almost universally driven by ideology. Al-Qaeda is driven by a desire to see a Pan-Islamic state spread across the Middle East and the world, and 9/11 was an attempt to press this cause by showing how vulnerable and "weak" the West was. That, of course, failed.
I advise you to check out the HBO documentary "Death in Gaza." I think only a moron would fail to realize that Palestinian militants are savage killers, who willingly and carelessly use children to aid them.
The sooner you realize this, the better. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for presenting terrorists in the manner you have, in a public forum.
Three other things. I will not commence an argument with you over the invasion of Iraq. However, you made one comment of interest: "He (the president) will not be asked about ... the numbers of dead and maimed Iraqi children"
Whether or not you intended it, you omit the tens of thousands of murdered and maimed citizens under Saddam Hussein's regime. Let me ask you now to clarify your stance. This is a "yes" or "no" question: Would you rather Saddam still be in power?
You also state, "If you squint through the smoke, the blood, the rubble of all the Bush Wars ..."
This appears to be a statement that opposes all military action so far conducted by the Bush Administration. Once again, I'll put a "yes" or "no" question to you: Would you rather the Taliban still be in power, and offering a safe haven for al-Qaeda?
Finally, you are off in outer space as you claim that Bush appointees are driven by a "fundamentalist social-engineering divine mission." This is an oft-stated criticism of the current administration, but I ask you: How has the religious beliefs of the president or his administration ever translated into policy or passed legislation?
I really cannot believe the SMDP would offer you a half-page column on views that are so simplistic and display such an astonishing level of ignorance.
Ron, do us and yourself a favor: Educate yourself before you run off at the mouth in public again.

Matthew Huemor
Santa Monica

See LETTERS, page 7

He works hard for the money, so hard for the money

NEWS ON
THE EDGE

BY RON SCOTT SMITH

"There's something about the way he's been leaning those elbows on podiums where he speaks. Something about those elbows looking all too familiar in that position." I wrote that in a column entitled "Falling off the wagon and marching on to war" way back in the run-up to the Iraq debacle a couple years ago. Time flies when you're having fun. I was worried about the president then, and am starting to worry about him again. Is he back to hitting the bottle?

You know what? It's hard work to do what he does. If you didn't know it was hard work before last Thursday's first presidential debate, you know it now.

"There's enormous pressure on the president. You can't wilt under that pressure," Bush argued, both elbows propping him up as he slouched over the podium from which he spoke.

The president alerted us to the difficulty of his task throughout the lashing he took from Sen. John Kerry, but the following passage stands out — not only for the frequency with which he referred to how hard the work is — but because of how he said he knows: "No doubt about it," he said, "it's tough. It's hard work. It's

incredibly hard. It's — and it's hard work (sic). I understand how hard it is. I get the casualty reports every day. I see on the TV screen how hard it is. We're making progress. It is hard work."

Now, we all might guess that putting back together something you've blown apart is indeed hard work. And to listen to the man in charge, this is some really, really hard work. And the president of the United States can verify it by seeing it on the TV screen. If it's hard work watching it on Fox News, we might imagine how excruciating the work is for those soldiers who daily provide the images seen on his oval-office television. But we won't go there. He won't go there, and we won't.

More "hard work" from the debate:
Kerry: "We can't leave Iraq ... but that doesn't mean it wasn't a colossal mistake."
Bush: "It's hard work to go from a tyranny to a democracy."
Kerry: "We've got to win the peace by rapidly training the Iraqis themselves."
Bush: "Uh ... it's hard work. We're getting the job done. Everybody knows it's hard work."
Kerry: "I'll never give another country a veto over our security."
Bush: "I wake up every morning thinking about how to protect America. That's my job. It's hard work."
Jim Lehrer (moderator): "Has the war been worth the 1,052 American lives lost?"
Bush (citing Missy Johnson, who lost

her husband, P.J., in Iraq): "Saddam Hussein was a threat. Missy understood that. And it's hard work to try to love her as best as I can."
Bush (in his closing statement): "We've done a lot of hard work together over the last three and a half years."

The president also would not let us forget his favorite thing to be called:

Kerry alluded to U.S.-appointed, interim Iraqi leader, Allawi, as a puppet.
Bush: "That's no way to treat somebody, calling them a puppet. That's not what a Commander-in-Chief does."

Kerry explained his down vote on the \$87 billion supplemental funding for the war's aftermath.
Bush: "That's not what a Commander-in-Chief does."
Kerry: "Don't confuse the war — ever — with the warriors."
Bush: "I understand what it means to be the Commander-in-Chief."
Kerry: "It's one thing to be certain. But you can be certain, and you can be wrong. Certainty sometimes can get you into trouble."
Bush: "I never waver. A Commander-in-Chief doesn't waver."

And to show off his grasp of the facts:

Kerry: "Saddam Hussein didn't attack us. Osama Bin Laden attacked us."
Bush: "I know Osama Bin Laden

attacked us."
Kerry (on the scant coalition that rushed to war with us): "When we went in, there were only three — the U.S., Britain and Australia."
Bush: "You forgot Poland."

What are the prerequisites again for becoming president of the U.S.? Only that you must be at least 35 years old and an American-born citizen, right? Might it be time to upgrade the standard? To qualify for college, every student in America must pass an S.A.T. test. Might there be a P.A.T. — a Presidential Aptitude Test, required of anyone with aspirations to the highest office in the land? Enough already about how it's good to have a leader who's just like one of us. How about a leader who has a little better grasp than we do of the complex issues that shape the future of this planet? Hard work indeed.

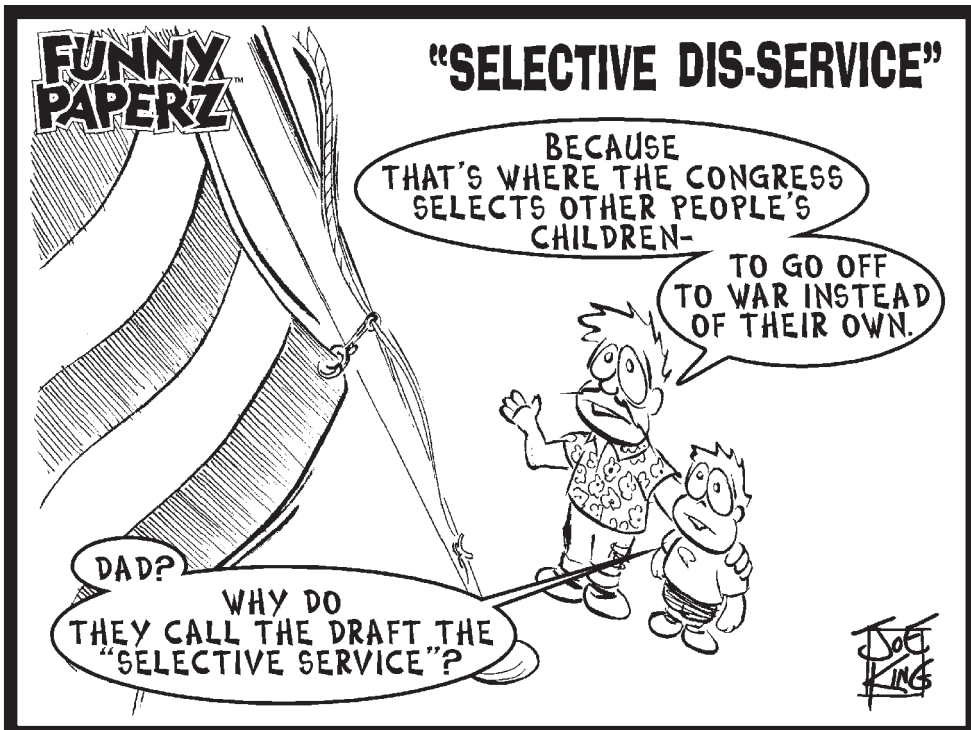
That column I referred to earlier, ended like this:

"Guy walks into a bar. Uh oh — it's the president. Smacks a hornets nest with a golf club, shouts out: 'You're either with me or against me.' Nations scatter, run for cover. In the corner, barely visible in the shadow of Iraq, sits Iran, North Korea — nervous, loaded."

Two years later, there's still no punch-line.

(Ron Scott Smith isn't laughing. To reach him, e-mail to edgeofthewest@aol.com).

OPINION



Why doesn't the feudal class start a feud?

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS, from page 6

Jury system not efficient

Editor:

I read your article on the crackdown of jury dodgers. (SMDP, Sept. 8, page 1). Years ago in Santa Monica, when you were called to jury service, you were usually sent to Santa Monica court. Now when we're called, we Santa Monica residents are usually sent to downtown LA.

Many of us abhor the morning traffic mess, or transferring for hours on several over-crowded buses. When we request a transfer to Santa Monica, West LA, or even LAX courts, our requests are usually denied. This further adds to the smog and traffic congestion. The jury system should be made as simple and easy as possible.

Marty Liboff
Santa Monica

No foreigners for president

Editor:

Even though I'd like to see California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger be able to run for president, there was a reason why the founding fathers who wrote the U.S. Constitution preferred that only persons born in the United States can run for office of the president of the United States. No foreign-born person can run for the office of the president of the United States. I support the U.S. Constitution and whatever reason the founding fathers had for preferring only persons born in the United States can run for office of the president of the United States.

I would like to see a site promoting support for the U.S. Constitution as it presently stands and campaigns against promoting any foreign-born person to run for the office of the president of the United States.

I have nothing against Gov. Schwarzenegger. I think he's a fine Governor. However, I must oppose his bid for president in 2008 because he was not born in the United States and the U.S. Constitution prohibits foreign-born persons from running for the office of the president of the United States.

Robert K. Tarquinio
Santa Monica

What about the 'other' religious sect?

Editor:

In response to "Dr. Ivan's" unbridled support for the local bigot, Ed Silverstein, (SMDP, Sept. 30, page 4), you need to lay off the hookah pipe as well, sir.

While the 76 percent of Americans who call themselves Christians try to accommodate the rest of the 14 percent of Americans (and roughly 10 percent consider themselves secular or non-religious) who fall into other religious and other religious/ethnic categories, it seems odd that little is mentioned in the press about the non Judeo-Americans who fall in the "other category" and their discrimination. In fact, a thorough content analysis of U.S. newspapers will show an overwhelming percentage of articles being devoted in some way shape or form to the 1.3 percent of Judeo-Americans and their plight.

Enough already. Give the other discriminated against religious groups a fighting chance for Peter's sake.

Maria Bell, A.A., B.S., M.A., Ph.D., and oh God, Christian
Santa Monica

Fifteen days left for debates about debates



HERE'S THE THING

BY LARA M. BROWN, Ph.D.

Debate talk hasn't stopped since before last Tuesday, and you can bet it won't cease until next Thursday, after the final presidential debate in Arizona.

Very little time is spent on the debates themselves. This year, the presidential candidates will share the spotlight for under five hours, while the vice presidential candidates duelled for only 90 minutes. Yet the chattering class will have spent most of the other 354 hours of the 360 hours in this 15-day time span explaining to the American people (a) what to expect to see; (b) what we saw; (c) whether it was good or bad and (d) who did better or worse.

In each debate, the candidates made cogent points about the substantive issues that face our nation, but what was more interesting to me were how the stories about what they said moved through the media and how the public perception about the debates seemed to change over time. It's like one giant game of "operator," where you whisper in the ear of a friend some message, and they pass it along to the next person in the row, and by the time it reaches the last person, the original message is completely distorted.

To a certain extent this has always happened in politics, but between televised debate-watch focus groups, online unscientific polls, instant-response statistically significant polls, web-logging (blogging), and the 24-hour cable news networks, the feedback loops have never been so vigorous. Within minutes of the debate, winners and losers are declared, but more importantly, over time these perceptions snowball. They take on a momentum of their own.

In the presidential debate last Thursday, it was widely thought that Sen. John Kerry did better than President Bush. Most instant polls — the scientific ones with the random samples — tended to have Kerry leading between eight to 12 points, about 47 percent to 38 percent. The ABC News, CBS News, and Gallup Organizations all showed a clear, but not an overwhelming victory for Kerry.

By Monday, you would have thought that Kerry had scored a knockout punch. Not only were the pundits talking about how Kerry had beat up on Bush, but they were also saying that Kerry was on an upswing. Several of the follow-up polls released on Sunday and Monday showed that people believed that Kerry had won the debate on average by about 20-25 percent points, about 60 percent to 40 percent.

Kerry won both the debate and the spin. He also won the debate recall —

what people remember, and what people are told happened in the debate.

The vice presidential debate couldn't have been more different. It was brutal. The only moment of compassion came when Sen. John Edwards acknowledged Vice President Dick Cheney and his family's love for their lesbian daughter, which served to extract all the venom from the fight. Their genuine exchange on a personally difficult issue deflated the last 20 minutes of the debate, and by the end, both candidates seemed worn down, and ready to call it a draw, which was exactly how the media portrayed it.

Most television pundits said things like, "Edwards hung in there and got in some jabs, but Cheney who is skilled in the art of debate, made a much better case for the administration than did President Bush last Thursday."

The people saw this debate very differently. Online polls that were not scientific were hugely in Edwards favor, about 90 percent versus 5 percent for Cheney. The blogs were mostly focused on how cruel the debate was, while they were trying to assess the divergent facts that were espoused. The scientific polls had contradictory results. The ABC News poll, which had more Republicans in the sample than Democrats, said Cheney won — 43 percent to 35 percent — while the CBS News poll that did not have sample issues declared Edwards the winner — 41 percent to 28 percent.

This debate was not a tie — no harm, no foul — the way the pundits were talking about it. According to the people, this debate was lop-sided, inflammatory and partisan. Both men were sliced up.

The only reporter who seemed to capture the night's events the way the people felt was Keith Olbermann, who kept score of the debate "question round by question round." He noted the hits, points and misses, and like a boxing match he was able to assess a winner even through all the blood (<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6133222/#Olbermann>).

HERE'S THE THING:

Memory has a way of changing over time — the facts fade, yet the image becomes clearer. Whether a candidate wins or loses has more to do with expectations and recollections, than with substance or style.

Recall a winner, and you'll make a winner, which means you can control the outcome as much as your candidate. Never lose sight of the fact that perception is reality in politics.

(Lara M. Brown, Ph.D., is a political scientist from Los Angeles, and is teaching this semester in Arkansas, at Hendrix College and UALR. She can be reached at larambrown@aol.com).

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Santa Monica Daily Press

Business

Dealing with volatile stock market can be dicey



MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

BY COREY K. QUINN, BRETT A. BROWN

Periods of increased stock market volatility, when securities prices tend to sharply rise or fall within a relatively short period of time, make many investors understandably uncertain. Whether you are currently "in the market" or are considering entering, you've probably been wondering: "What's the best course of investment action to take during periods of unsettled market activity?"

It's somewhat of a cliché to say that two emotions — fear and greed — are the driving forces behind a good deal of stock market activity. During a bull market, as share prices rise, some investors develop a false sense of confidence regarding future price levels and believe that nothing short of catastrophe will stop the continuing upward trend. In their zeal, they erro-

neously project their short-term gains into an uncertain and long-term future.

On the other side of this coin lies the disappointment that may set in whenever market values start to drop within a relatively short period. During these bear markets, some investors overreact and begin imagining a loss of their nest eggs due to lower share prices. They may even begin selling their holdings in the fear that prices may fall even further.

It's important, however, for individual investors to view market volatility in its proper perspective. Swings in stock market prices, even those lasting a few months or years, generally should not be allowed to disrupt your long-term investment strategy. Why? It's simple. Historically speaking, long-term investing

has tended to smooth out many of the things that can cause investors so much short-term discomfort.

Setting a middle course, one that avoids both bullish euphoria and bearish despair, can help individual investors keep their long-term financial objectives in sight. A focus on long-term objectives also helps avoid the temptation of trying to predict what the financial markets will do tomorrow, next week or next month. Long-term investors realize that even investment professionals cannot always accurately predict short-term market movements.

Adopting a long-term investment philosophy also helps guard against overreacting to business stories that appear in the newspapers, or other media. Regardless of whether such news is generally thought to be "good" or "bad," always consult with a financial advisor to evaluate the potential impact of these developments on your overall investment plan.

Reviewing your financial strategy at

least yearly is yet another way of helping you cope with market volatility. As you review, make sure your investment plan takes into account your age and investment timeline, as well as your financial resources and tolerance for risk.

At least for the foreseeable future, occasional spells of stock market volatility are probably unavoidable. However, following a long-term financial plan can help you weather the storm.

(This article does not constitute tax or legal advice. Consult your tax or legal advisors before making any tax- or legal-related investment decisions. Any particular investment should be analyzed based on its terms and risks as they relate to your circumstances and objectives. Morgan Stanley is a service mark of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Co. Services are offered through Morgan Stanley DW Inc., member SIPC. To contact Corey K. Quinn and Brett A. Brown, you can reach them at their Santa Monica office, (310) 319-5210.)

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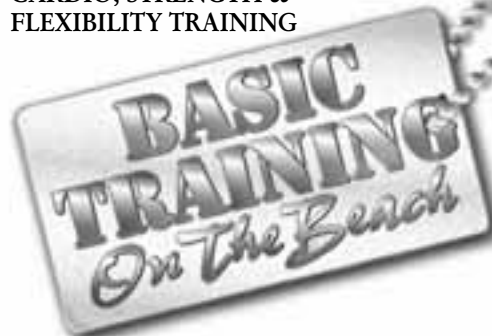


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STATE



House passes \$395M CalFed bill, sends it to president

BY ERICA WERNER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — After a decade of debate, Congress passed a sweeping \$395 million California water bill Wednesday, sending the milestone legislation to the president for his signature.

The bill to authorize the California Federal Bay-Delta Program, better known as CalFed, aims to restore California's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and ensure a reliable water supply for millions of users. It represents the first major changes to California's water systems since the 1960s.

"This historic bill is a giant step forward in resolving California's water supply problems," said Rep. Richard Pombo, R-Calif., chairman of the House Resources Committee.

The CalFed bill seeks to satisfy often-warring groups of farmers, environmentalists and residential users with provisions on storage, restoration and recycling.

It authorizes feasibility studies for several major new storage projects, among them enlarging Los Vaqueros reservoir in Contra Costa County and raising the Shasta Dam.

It authorizes \$90 million for ecosystem restoration programs, contains provisions to expedite approvals of 49 recycling projects, and includes an Environmental Water Account to ensure water for fish-

eries.

Final approval came in the House after Pombo and other House members decided they could live with the version of the bill passed by the Senate last month. The bill leaves out so-called pre-authorization language that would have allowed the secretary of the interior to approve specific water storage projects without congressional approval.

Some California House Republicans believed the pre-authorization language was necessary to ensure needed storage projects would get built. In the end they were satisfied with language in the bill that requires Congress to act quickly to approve the projects once feasibility studies have been conducted.

If Congress doesn't act, the interior secretary would have to declare the CalFed program "out of balance" and recommend ways to regain balance between environmental and storage measures.

The bill "creates storage as the lynchpin for implementation of all CalFed elements," Pombo said. "This bill ensures that the program will be carried out in balance with new water storage or else the program will simply not exist."

Rep. David Dreier, R-San Dimas, added, "I am extraordinarily happy that everyone else is relatively happy over this very important piece of legislation. I think it'll go a long way toward addressing the very important agriculture needs and the economic needs of our state."

STATE BRIEFS

The 'Pres-inator'?

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It's not about Arnold, lawmakers indicated.

But the California governor was certainly one of the rising stars on many minds Tuesday as a Senate panel talked about amending the Constitution to let immigrants occupy the White House.

Measures discussed by the senators would remove the prohibition against foreign-born presidents, opening the job to Arnold Schwarzenegger and Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm, along with millions of others.

"This restriction has become an anachronism that is decidedly un-American," said Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. "Our citizens should have every opportunity to choose their leaders free of unreasonable limitations."

Hatch and other lawmakers barely mentioned the Austrian-born Schwarzenegger, a Republican, or the Canadian-born Granholm, a Democrat. But both have said they support changing the Constitution, and Schwarzenegger's starring role at the Republican National Convention left Republicans buzzing about getting him into the White House.

"This hearing would certainly not be complete if the name of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was not mentioned at least once, but of course he is just one famous example," said Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif.

Schwarzenegger uses, targets same law

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is backing a campaign to limit lawsuits filed under the state's unfair competition law, has used that law to file suits to stop the use of his image in ads and bobblehead dolls.

That makes the governor a hypocrite, said opponents of Proposition 64, the Nov. 2 ballot measure that would limit unfair competition suits.

"If the governor feels it's OK to file lawsuits under this law to protect his image, why isn't it OK to file a case under the statute ... when water and air are threatened with contamination but no money has been lost?" asked Jamie Court, president of the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights, a Santa Monica-based consumer group. "The governor is being very two-faced."



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NATIONAL

A soldier promises to save Iraqi informant

BY ANGIE WAGNER

Associated Press Writer

FORT CARSON, Colo. — First Sgt. Daniel Hendrex was getting ready to leave the war when he went to see the Iraqi teenager one last time. He roused the boy from sleep and gave him his floppy camouflage hat and a promise.

Stay safe, Hendrex said. We will do what we can to get you out of here.

The 13-year-old clutched the hat and held out his arms. They hugged, teary-eyed. And then Hendrex was gone.

It had been four months since the skinny, street-smart Iraqi blurted out to American soldiers at a border checkpoint in Husaybah, Iraq, that he wanted to turn in an insurgent — his father.

The 100 Army soldiers of Fort Carson, Colo.-based Dragon Company, 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, had seen informants before. Some were helpful, but many just wanted reward money.

Something was different about this one, though. He was willing to turn in his own father.

With that one decision, the teenager's life, so full of horror and abuse, would change forever, and so would the lives of the soldiers around him.

He became an informant, giving the soldiers the best information they had yet.

He ate with them, slept next to them, dressed like them.

They protected him like a brother.

And now they were leaving him.

He was known as Steve-O to the soldiers; the Army keeps his real name confidential, to protect him. He grew up in Husaybah, a town of about 100,000 near the Syrian border. The oldest of his three brothers and two sisters, Steve-O and his siblings lived with their parents in a small, dirt-floor house.

His father was once an army captain in the Republican Guard, the core of the Iraqi military. His father beat him and Steve-O's body bears the scars.

His left eye is misaligned, a result of his father kicking him in the head. Once, his father took a red-hot spoon and pressed it on top of Steve-O's left hand.

"My father," the teen said, rubbing the scar.

After America invaded Iraq in March 2003, his father led a 40-man insurgency group. The beatings, Steve-O said, got worse, and his father became withdrawn.

"He would sit by himself. If I would go talk to him, he would hit me, beat me up," Steve-O said through an interpreter. "He wouldn't let anyone come near him."

His father wanted him to fight the Americans.

Steve-O, who only has a third-grade education, tried to run away to Fallujah, but was caught and reluctantly accompanied his father on four missions.

He couldn't bring himself to fire the AK-47 his father had given him, so he would hide, once in a stream, as American soldiers passed by him. They didn't seem so bad. He had seen soldiers giving candy to Iraqi children, and they had never done anything to him.

He knew he couldn't tell his father that. So, he would empty the ammunition from the rifle and tell his father he shot Americans.

"My father was very happy. He was very pleased. He gave me money," Steve-O said.

Steve-O feared for his life and those of his brothers and sisters.

One day last December, Steve-O told his family he was going to Syria to find work. Instead, he walked to the border checkpoint, where Dragon Company was stationed, and said he wanted to turn in his father. He told them he had information on a 40-man insurgency cell and knew where a weapons cache was.

First, he asked to be arrested, so no one would suspect he was a traitor.

The soldiers, not sure what to think, complied, handcuffing the teen and putting a sandbag over his head.

The tank company was the only U.S. force in the area and was being attacked up to 10 times a day.

But the soldiers were leery.

"My thought was, he very well could be setting us up for an ambush," said Capt. Chad Roehman, 29. "That's always one of the concerns — they're baiting us into something."

Steve-O started naming names, and some matched names on a wanted list the soldiers had.

Maybe Steve-O was the real deal.

Either way, they would find out during the raid that night.

Two tanks and two Humvees carrying about 20 soldiers headed out into the town. Steve-O rode in a Humvee, wearing fatigues the Army lent him and a black ski mask so he wouldn't be recognized.

The teen was nervous. Briefly, he wondered about his father.

When they arrived at Steve-O's house, his father and a Syrian man were there, along with Steve-O's mother and siblings. Both men were blindfolded and arrested.

The teen pointed to an empty lot next to his home, and the soldiers and Steve-O started digging. Rockets, grenades, a land mine and a weapons system were all there.

"It was great intelligence," said Hendrex, 35. "What it really did was validate Steve-O's story."

Steve-O was legit.

A few days later, Steve-O, who slept on a cot on base, asked to see his mother.

He went home in the morning, but quickly returned and told soldiers his mother had been beaten. She told her son she had a week to turn him over to an insurgent or his family would be killed.

"She said, they know it was you and you're the one who turned everybody in," Hendrex said the teen told him.

Go back to the Americans, Steve-O's mother told him. She knew what would happen to him if he stayed.

Several days later, Hendrex was going through pictures of captured insurgents while Steve-O sat nearby.

Steve-O casually looked at the computer screen and said he knew the person. He did it repeatedly, naming insurgents as Hendrex clicked through the pictures.

Steve-O had connected the dots. He seemed to know everyone in the town, what they did and where they lived. He knew from the highest levels to the lowest. His father had taken him to numerous insurgent meetings, and Steve-O had

See IRAQ, page 11

NATIONAL



Iraqi informant lost mother, brought to US

IRAQ, from page 10

soaked up everything he heard.

"He knew who was bad and who was n't," Hendrex said. "He probably ID'd that day 20 people."

Other soldiers were still skeptical.

"How much can he really know?" wondered Sgt. Roy Johnson, 31.

But, as they would come to find out, Steve-O would become their most successful informant.

Steve-O was barely 5 feet tall then, and in the crowded Humvee, he rode between the legs of the gunner, watching out the window for people he knew. He went on 20 missions and raids with his new American friends, several times coming under attack.

"Mujahadeen! Mujahadeen!" he would yell, tugging on the pants of the gunner when he saw an insurgent.

He spoke only Arabic, so a translator usually traveled with him.

The squadron that was usually attacked up to 10 times a day was now only attacked two to three times a week.

On one raid near his mother's home, soldiers stopped to give her money. They told her to take her children and leave Husaybah the next day.

Eventually, some 40 insurgents were caught by Steve-O identifying them and the soldiers comparing the information to their own.

Steve-O was happy living with the soldiers. They were all he had.

The Americans were getting to know the Iraqi so willing to help them. They taught him to play football and English words for "cot" and "blanket." They watched movies together, played video games and wrestled.

Steve-O still wore his too-big fatigues, just like the soldiers, and even got his dark hair cut like them. He was eager to help the cooks, take out trash, sweep floors.

The soldiers couldn't help but smile at his big, silly grin.

"He was one of us," Roehrman said.

In late February, while on a mission near Steve-O's home, the teen wanted to make sure his mother and siblings had left.

Steve-O stayed in the Humvee while Hendrex went inside.

The tiny, three-room house had been ransacked. Rotten food was on the stove, furniture was overturned and a rancid smell permeated the air.

An uncle said Steve-O's mother had been shot in the stomach, killed by the same insurgent who threatened to kill the family. The children had made it to Fallujah.

Hendrex, a 14-year Army veteran whose wife is pregnant with their first child, was closest to Steve-O, always making sure he was with him. He was his protector, a big brother, even a surrogate father to the teen.

Early the next morning, Hendrex took Steve-O and the translator outside base headquarters and told the teen his mother was dead.

Steve-O tried to keep his emotions in check, but tears rolled down his face. Hendrex embraced the teen and cried with him.

By late March, Dragon Company was preparing to hand off the area to Marines. Hendrex and Roehrman, now with another company, were already trying to figure out what to do with Steve-O. Hendrex hoped to bring him to the United States.

They contacted the U.S. embassy in Kuwait, inquiring about political asylum, humanitarian parole or relocation to another country, but Steve-O's options were running out.

Dragon Company was going home to Fort Carson, and he would have to stay behind. The Marines agreed to take care of the teen, but that was only temporary.

Hendrex told him: "We have to leave, but we will not forget you. I will try until the end of my days to get you out of here. Do not lose faith in us."

Hendrex gave Steve-O the note promising to get him out of Iraq, and his floppy hat with "Hendrex" stitched in the back, in English and Arabic. Keep it, he said, until we see each other again.

Hendrex didn't know if that would happen.

Steve-O stayed with the Marines, but didn't go on any more missions because it was too dangerous.

"You have this emptiness because you left one guy," Hendrex said.

Once back in Colorado in April, Hendrex contacted congressmen, the office of the secretary of defense, the Army surgeon general's office, news reporters, anyone who would listen.

Months passed without any word.

Steve-O never lost hope. He trusted Hendrex, the man he calls "my brother," and believed he would come for him.

"I've been with them for so long," said Steve-O, who dreams of joining the U.S. military and becoming a doctor. "These guys never lie to me, they never hurt me."

Finally, Hendrex learned Steve-O would be granted a special parole to come to the United States for a medical evaluation and intelligence debriefing. Beyond that, the military is reviewing options. Several Arabic-speaking families have volunteered to adopt Steve-O, and Dragon Company has been raising money for his education.

Steve-O's father remains in jail, as does the man who reportedly killed his mother. The teen doesn't know the fate of his brothers and sisters.

Just weeks ago, Hendrex got the call he had waited for for six months. He traveled to Frankfurt, Germany, and met Steve-O as he stepped off the plane, holding Hendrex's hat and the note.

The next night, before Steve-O went to the East Coast for his evaluation, the soldiers of Dragon Company gathered at the Colorado Springs Airport to welcome the Iraqi teenager who had done so much for them and had become part of their company.

He was 14 now, and had grown taller and more muscular. But here he was, in America, flashing that infectious smile.

The last member of Dragon Company was finally home.



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STATE

Big changes planned at Napa's Mondavi winery

BY MICHELLE LOCKE

Associated Press Writer

OAKVILLE — With its famous Mission-style bell tower and elegant arched entrance, the Robert Mondavi Winery looks every inch the Napa Valley landmark it has been for four decades.

Behind that gracious exterior, there is momentous change. The company plans to sell the luxury side of the business, including the Robert Mondavi Winery in Oakville, and use the money to build its \$15-and-under brands like Woodbridge, which face stiff competition from Australian imports and domestic brands like California's Two Buck Chuck.

Mondavi company officials cast the sale as a chance to put the luxury business back in private hands and away from shareholders' short-term expectations. They believe there's more room for growth in the cheaper, high-volume "lifestyle" brands and expect to realize \$400 million to \$500 million from the sale, which would be used to develop the lifestyle business.

"There's no question in my mind that this is a major opportunity for us as a company," said Dennis Joyce, chief operating officer of Robert Mondavi Corp.

Outside the company, opinions differed on what lay behind the plans to sell.

In August, when restructuring changes were announced that had the net effect of lowering the Mondavi family's voting stake to 39.5 percent from 84.9 percent, Prudential Equity Group analyst Jeffrey Kanter said in a written report it was possible the action was prompted by an outside offer to buy part of the company. Or, conversely, an offer by a competitor to sell out to Mondavi.

After the planned sale was announced in September and founder Robert Mondavi's son Michael resigned from the board in disagreement with the strategy two weeks later, Kanter wrote that "our belief that Michael

and his family wind up 'cashing out' of the business is a little more visible now."

Others theorized that the plan was to put the luxury business back into the hands of the Mondavis, speculation that grew when Michael Mondavi said a family bid was possible.

Still, after Michael Mondavi resigned — company officials said they asked him to, he said he quit — analyst Tim Ramey of D.A. Davidson, who had been among those expecting a Mondavi bid, said a family buyback looked less likely.

Under the divestiture plan, the company is selling the business that makes the signature Robert Mondavi Winery and Robert Mondavi Winery Reserve wines that can go as high as \$125 a bottle. Also for sale is Mondavi's stake in the high-end Opus One winery, a joint venture with the Rothschild family of France, as well as other winery operations.

In Napa Valley, where the 91-year-old Robert Mondavi has spent a lifetime championing California wine, news that the empire was splitting up was a blow.

"The emotional thing of course is big here in the valley because we all love Robert so much," said Agustin Huneeus, owner of the upscale Quintessa winery.

Adding interest to the story was the whiff of dynastic drama that has followed the Mondavis since Robert Mondavi had a stormy falling out with his brother Peter nearly 40 years ago. It was that split which ousted Robert from the family's Charles Krug Winery and, after a legal battle, found him starting over with the Robert Mondavi Winery in 1966.

"The wine business isn't that big a business and everyone in a sense knows everybody and the Mondavis are a fascinating story," said Harvey Posert, a wine industry consultant and former public relations director for the Robert Mondavi Winery.

Michael Mondavi and his brother Tim, the company's vice chairman, have also clashed over management

styles, although Michael Mondavi told The Napa Register that despite their disagreements over timing and scale, they are in "lockstep agreement" most of the time.

After the plan was announced, Michael Mondavi said in published reports the family may bid and also said he, Tim and their sister, Marcia Mondavi Borger, voted against breaking up the company.

Company officials said they subsequently asked Michael Mondavi to resign, contending that his statements violated the confidentiality of board discussions. However, Michael Mondavi said in his letter of resignation he was leaving because "I fundamentally disagree" with the board's strategy for the company's future.

Tim Mondavi remains as vice chairman and winegrower, and he and Borger are still on the board.

Stock prices dropped a bit on news of the divestiture in mid-September, but were trading near \$40 as of early October, up from the \$30.15 of 52 weeks previously. Meanwhile, 360 employees, mostly at the Oakville winery, have received layoff notices.

It was unclear how big an effect the changes would have on wine drinkers.

Lou Kessler, co-owner of a wine and spirits store in Manhattan Beach, who was having lunch recently in Napa's popular Bistro Don Giovanni, doubted the changes would have much effect on people who buy brands like Woodbridge, which goes for around \$8.

"People that are slightly into wine know where it comes from. The majority don't," he said. "Woodbridge is Woodbridge. People that care about labels will buy something more expensive."

Retired businessman Jack Treskes, also at Don Giovanni's, admires the Mondavis and hoped they would be able to buy back the high-end business. But as a consumer, he wouldn't stop drinking the Mondavi luxury wines he likes just because there's no Mondavi behind the bottle.

"I'd feel bad," he said. "Other than feeling bad, no, as long as I'm satisfied with the winemaker's capabilities."

On the other hand, chef Donna Scala, who with her husband owns Don Giovanni's, thought Mondavi wines sans the Mondavis could be a problem for some high-end consumers, especially in Napa Valley.

"I know just in cooking that if we're here things always seem to be better, at least in people's minds, than if we're not here."

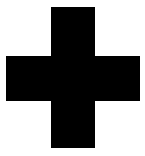
Speculation was rife on what would happen next. Analysts noted that Michael Mondavi and his wife have begun making small amounts of a new wine called I'M.

And vintner Huneeus isn't counting out the man who started it all.

"Bob is very optimistic and it's amazing," said Huneeus. "At first, he was a little depressed, I think. But recently I've seen him with his eyes sparkling."

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NATIONAL

Japan thirsty for Hawaiian sea water

BY JAYMES SONG
Associated Press Writer

KAILUA-KONA, Hawaii — Known for its \$30-a-pound Kona coffee beans, posh \$1,000-a-night hotel suites and \$1 million ocean-view condos, the Big Island’s west coast is now cashing in with another pricey offering: \$6 bottled water from the bottom of the ocean.

Desalinated deep-sea water from Kona is the state’s fastest-growing export with demand soaring in Japan. Super-cold water sucked up from thousands of feet below the Pacific Ocean’s surface is being marketed as healthy, pure, mineral-rich drinking water.

Koyo USA Corp. already is producing more than 200,000 bottles a day and says it can’t keep up with demand in Japan, where it sells 1.5 liter bottles of its MaHaLo brand for \$4 to \$6 each.

“We couldn’t ask for better sales,” spokesman John Frosted said. “At this point, we can’t make enough. We have no surplus.”

Four other companies are hoping to cash in on the deep-sea water craze, and so is the state, which collects royalties and rent from the bottlers based at the state Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (NELHA) property next to the Big Island’s Kona International Airport.

The state pumps the chilly water from 2,000 feet beneath the sea, and the companies pay a few cents per bottle to use the official NELHA logo on their label, certifying the deep-sea water was collected at the state facility.

Koyo, the only company currently selling the deep-sea water from Hawaii, is expanding its plant and has applied to sell the water in the United States. It will sell for much less than in Japan.

In addition to Koyo, Asia’s thirst for Hawaiian seawater also has attracted Los Angeles-based Deep Sea Water International; Japanese-owned Enzamin USA; Korean-owned Savers Holdings Ltd.; and Japanese-owned Hawaii Deep Marine Inc.

The companies, located on the 870-acre

NELHA site, spent a combined \$65 million turning black lava fields into parking lots and factories in 2003. This year, they are investing another \$85 million to \$100 million.

Besides the startup costs and the expensive desalination process, the companies will spend millions on shipping tons of water to Asia.

“Why Hawaii and pay so much transportation? Because Hawaiian water is best,” said Yoshiyuki Furuno, general manager of Enzamin USA.

He said Hawaiian products have strong brand recognition in Japan for being high-quality, natural and pure.

“Japanese people have a very good image of Hawaii as a beautiful place with azure skies, clear seas and gentle breeze,” he said. “They have a very good image for Hawaii.”

Savers General Manager Guy Toyama said bottled sea water has been around in Japan since the mid-1990s but the Japanese product cannot match the depth, quality and purity of the water from the middle of the Pacific.

Savers plans to begin construction this month and will sell primarily in South Korea before expanding to China and the United States. Its 2-liter bottles will retail for about \$4 and half-liter bottles for about \$2.

The company will desalinate its water using reverse osmosis and electrolysis and produce as many as 12 million bottles a year.

Toyama acknowledges that competition with five bottlers in Kona will be fierce since they are all targeting Asia. However, he hopes they will work together to market Kona water worldwide.

The state pumps the water using two pipes that go down 2,000 feet and then transports it to the companies, which do the desalination, filtering, bottling and packaging. The state will soon complete construction of a new 55-inch pipe that goes 3,000 feet deep.

Koyo claims deep-sea water contains ionized sodium, ionized chlorine, magnesium and calcium, which can help with everything from circulation to metabolism. The depth also protects the water from modern contaminants

from industry, farming or humans, the company said on its Web site.

Koyo’s 100,000-square-foot facility feature a windowless factory filled with modern stainless-steel machinery, conveyer belts and pipes. Most of the process is automated and runs 17 hours per day.

Light-blue plastic bottles are blown and stacked by a robotic arm before being rinsed, filled, capped and labeled. The bottles are taken to a large room where employees wearing face masks and hair nets inspect them for loose caps, misplaced labels or damaged bottles.

“This is a sterile, phenomenally modern, robotic, well-run place,” said former NELHA Executive Director Jeff Smith, who was interviewed just before he left NELHA last month. “It looks like a hospital, it’s so clean.”

Smith was first approached three years ago by a company that wanted to bottle and sell ocean water, he thought it was a joke. Now, government and business leaders from around the world have visited NELHA to study the deep-sea water bottling phenomenon.

Smith said he realized there was a need for clean drinking water, especially with the world’s expanding population and fresh water sources being polluted by industry or humans.

“Many people have said, ‘Hey Jeff, that’s a fad.’ I’m thinking, so was the car,” he said. “People need water.”

Smith, who has left NELHA to work for Deep Sea Water International, said the bottlers diversify Hawaii’s tourism-dependent economy.

“No matter what the tourism industry does, these guys will keep running,” Smith said.

Mark Anderson of the state’s Foreign-Trade Zone Division said Hawaii always had difficulty creating new export industries because Asia and the West Coast have more resources and cheaper labor.

But Hawaii may have discovered an inexhaustible gold mine.

“There’s a lot of water out there. I don’t think they’re going to run out,” Anderson said.



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NATIONAL

Scientists drop alert level at Mount St. Helens

BY GENE JOHNSON

Associated Press Writer

MOUNT ST. HELENS, Wash. — Scientists dropped the alert level for Mount St. Helens on Wednesday, saying occasional steam blasts and possibly some eruptions of fresh volcanic rock could last for weeks or months.

"We no longer think that an eruption is imminent in the sense of minutes or hours," Willie Scott, a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, said after announcing the alert level had been lowered to level two, down from level three, the highest level.

A spectacular cloud of steam and old ash delighted visitors Tuesday but gave an unwanted dose of the gritty, abrasive dust to areas to the northeast, and scientists said more molten rock could push upward to enlarge the lava dome in the crater of the volcano.

Some have feared that the latest activity at the southwest Washington peak could portend a major eruption.

On Tuesday, geologists said a less explosive performance seemed more likely. "There's not necessarily going to be a big one," said Jake Lowenstern, a U.S. Geological Survey volcanologist. "People have to get that out of their minds."

Earthquake activity remained relatively low Wednesday morning, USGS spokesman John Clemens said from the agency's Cascades Volcano Observatory in Vancouver, Wash.

"Overnight we've seen seismicity remain at very low levels," he said. "After the big show yesterday morning seismic activity has dropped off, with individual earthquake events becoming smaller."

Unlike the clear skies Tuesday, the mountain was shrouded in clouds Wednesday, making it difficult for visitors to the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument to see the crater.

Carl Thornber, a USGS scientist, said the latest steam burst opened two small vents in the floor of the crater, one west of the lava dome and another beneath the glacier beside the dome.

Another USGS scientist, Jon Major, said the crater floor continued to rise, indicating a continuing buildup of magma, or molten rock.

In the last several days, part of the roughly 1,000-foot-tall dome and the crater floor, a total area about the size of a hundred football fields, has risen by about 150 feet, creating a deformation scientists have dubbed "The Loaf," The Seattle Times reported.

Scientists believe there is about an 80 percent chance that potentially explosive fresh magma will reach the surface, The Times reported.

Mount St. Helens has been venting steam mixed with small amounts of ash daily since Friday. The hour-long blast Tuesday morning was the largest, sending a roiling, dark gray cloud thousands of

feet over the 8,364-foot peak and streaming miles to the northeast.

The plume contained "a significant amount of ash," Lowenstern said.

"There was some jetting of ash down in the crater ... and the material was observed coming up from several different vents in the crater, so that could mean things are starting to break up," he said.

Ash fell on the small town of Randle, home to roughly 2,400 people about 25 miles northeast of the mountain. The town's two schools kept students with asthma inside, and postal workers were given face masks in case they encountered ash.

Skamania County Undersheriff Dave Cox said there was also concern about potential health risks to elk hunters.

Several dozen volcano watchers at the Coldwater Ridge Visitors Center, 8 1/2 miles north of the mountain and the closest that visitors were allowed, were rewarded for arriving early Tuesday — or in some cases, spending the night.

It was just what Ken Marshall had hoped to see when he drove up from Valley Springs, Calif.

"It's almost like clockwork," Marshall said. "It blows in the morning and then there are earthquakes and rockfall all the rest of the day."

Geologists continued to emphasize that there is little chance of anything similar to the devastating blast that blew 1,300 feet off the top of the peak, killed 57 people and paralyzed much of the inland Pacific Northwest with gritty volcanic ash on May 18, 1980.

Before 1980, Mount St. Helens had been silent since a 57-year period of intermittent steam bursts and eruptions of ash and lava that ended in 1857.

Since Sept. 23, thousands of tiny earthquakes have shaken the mountain and several steam eruptions have occurred, the most seismic activity at the peak since the months following the 1980 blast.

Earthquakes dropped in magnitude and frequency after the steam burst Tuesday, said Steve Malone of the University of Washington seismology laboratory in Seattle. Quakes of less than 1 magnitude were being recorded only about "once a minute or so," he said.

"We're a little perplexed," Malone said. "It may have lost its oomph ... or it may have lost a lot of its obstructions, but between those two we just don't know."

Another scientist at the seismology lab, Bill Steele, said the drop-off "could mean the plug (in the volcano's magma channel) is real up there near the surface right now, that it's not resisting anymore. We're watching very closely."

Areas closer than Coldwater Ridge, including the Johnston Ridge Observatory, about five miles from the crater, have been closed since the weekend, and most air traffic has been prohibited below 13,000 feet and within five miles of the volcano.



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NATIONAL

Al-Qaida chieftain eludes capture: Does it matter?

BY GEORGE GEDDA

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — As usual, al-Qaida's latest message to the world was delivered not by Osama bin Laden but by a subordinate.

The messenger was Ayman al-Zawahri, No. 2 official in the terror organization headed by bin Laden, heard via an audiotape aired last week on the Arab TV station al-Jazeera. He exhorted Muslim youths to carry out pre-emptive strikes against the United States and its allies.

According to the State Department, bin Laden has not been seen on videotape since December 2001. His voice has not been heard since a recording broadcast in April.

The Bush administration believes the world's most wanted man is still alive but can't rule out the possibility that he may be dead, wounded or incapacitated.

Bin Laden brushed aside the importance of his own mortality in his video statement of almost three years ago.

"I am a poor slave of God. If I live or die the war will continue," he said.

That view is shared by many. But Peter Bergen, one of the few Westerners who has met the man blamed for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, says it would be "dangerously wrong" to assume that it doesn't matter whether bin Laden is apprehended.

"Finding bin Laden remains of utmost importance," says Bergen, a fellow at the New American Foundation, a Washington think tank.

Bergen cites the "matter of justice" for the nearly 3,000 people killed on Sept. 11, not to mention al-Qaida's other victims.

"Also, every day that bin Laden remains at liberty is a propaganda victory for al-Qaida," says Bergen, writing in the October issue of The Atlantic Monthly.

Bergen says bin Laden and al-Zawahri, while relinquishing day-to-day control, are believed to provide guidance to followers across the Muslim world.

Brian Jenkins, a terrorism expert at the California-based Rand think tank, believes bin Laden's movement is here to stay.

"I don't see that the absence of bin Laden will mean the demise of the global Jihad," says Jenkins, author of several books on terrorism.

Jenkins says that al-Qaida, though badly damaged by arrests and relentless American attacks on their Afghan hideouts, can plausibly claim that the future is bright, irrespective of whether bin Laden is a part of it.

As Jenkins sees it, if a bin Laden lieutenant were to address fellow jihadists at an al-Qaida base, he might say the following:

"We see operations at a greater tempo than before 9/11. We continue to recruit. American actions have outraged the Muslim community. The invasion of Iraq is a gift. It makes American forces vulnerable to kind of warfare that we wage best."

Jenkins believes al-Qaida recruiters have a salable message: "By joining this jihad you are striking back, protecting the devout, demonstrating your courage and convictions."

He says this is a powerful message for young jobless Muslims.

So what of bin Laden's health?

Bergen wrote that bin Laden suffers from low blood pressure, diabetes and a foot wound that he sustained while fighting in Afghanistan in the late 1980s.

"Although all these conditions are debilitating, none is likely to cause bin Laden's death anytime soon," Bergen wrote in the Atlantic Monthly article.

He also pointed out that Zawahri, bin Laden's side-

kick, is a doctor.

Bergen said an "obsession with security" has enabled bin Laden to avoid capture.

He offered this account, based on personal experience in 1997, of the lengths to which al-Qaida members protect bin Laden:

"My colleagues and I were taken to bin Laden's hide-out in the middle of the night; we were made to change vehicles while blindfolded; we were aggressively searched and electronically swept for tracking devices; and we had to pass through three successive groups of guards armed with submachine guns and rocket-propelled grenades."

Bin Laden also evades capture by carefully choosing the company he keeps.

Said Bergen: "Only three people outside al-Qaida and the Taliban are known to have spent any time with bin Laden after 9/11. Two are journalists and the third is a doctor."



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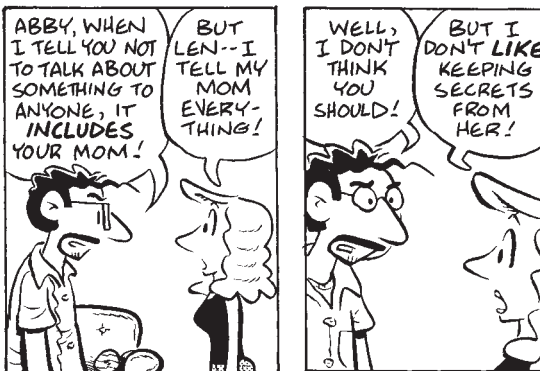


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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Rapper Ja Rule to face assault charges in Canada

By The Associated Press

TORONTO — Rapper Ja Rule will return to Toronto next spring to face a charge of assault causing bodily harm, a Canadian court ruled at a pretrial hearing.

A trial for the 28-year-old performer, whose real name is Jeffrey Atkins, has been tentatively set for March 7-11 in Ontario Court. The rapper didn't attend Wednesday's hearing.

Ja Rule, known for hits such as "Holla Holla," is accused of being part of a June 5 altercation at La Rouge Nightclub in the heart of Toronto's club district.

A publication ban has been placed on evidence and details surrounding the charge to prevent prejudicing the jury pool before the trial, a standard move in Canadian courts.

Lawyers will return to court Tuesday to finalize the date. Co-counsel Marie Henein asked for time to contact her New Jersey-based client to ensure that he'd be able to attend the duration of the Toronto trial.

His lawyers have said the rapper will plead not guilty.

LAS VEGAS — Hugh Hefner is coming to Las Vegas, where he'll have a vertical version of his Playboy mansion — a nearly 12,000-square-foot love shack on top of the Palms hotel-casino's 40-story tower that's under construction.

The two-story suite will be named the Hugh Hefner Sky Villa. It will have its own glass elevator that overlooks the Strip, along with indoor and outdoor pools.

"He's going to make it his home away from home," Palms owner George Maloof said. "He's got plenty of room to play. It's a perfect fit."

Maloof said he completed a long-term licensing agreement with Playboy Enterprises Inc. on Monday.

The deal will allow the Palms to use the iconic brand in Nevada and in the tower's new nightclub, boutique casino and lounge, along with a retail Playboy store, said

Bill Farley, Playboy's vice president of marketing events.

The 300-room tower opens in early 2006. Chicago-based Nine Group and the Palms will own and run the new spots. The Nine Group operates four other venues at the Palms, including the popular Rain nightclub and swanky rooftop Ghostbar.

Playboy said it expects to report a seven-figure revenue increase, starting in 2006, as a result of signing the licensing deal. Financial terms of the agreement weren't disclosed.

LONDON — A middle-class family. Four marriageable daughters. Tension between romantic love and social duty.

These are elements fit for a Bollywood epic — and the plot of "Pride and Prejudice," Jane Austen's sharply observed portrait of English society at the turn of the 19th century.

Austen aficionados and Indian film fans alike gathered in London's West End Monday for the premiere of British director Gurinder Chadha's "Bride and Prejudice," which transposes Austen's comedy of manners to modern-day India.

It is, Chadha says, a perfect match.

"Once I started adapting the novel, I was convinced Jane Austen was Indian in a previous life," said Chadha, whose last movie was the cross-cultural soccer comedy "Bend It Like Beckham."

Dozens of fans gathered outside London's Palladium Theater to see the film's stars including former Miss World and Bollywood star Aishwarya Rai and Martin Henderson, the film's leading man.

"Bride and Prejudice," which opens in Britain and India on Friday, transforms Austen's Bennet family into the Bakshis of Amritsar. Rai plays spirited small-town girl Lalita Bakshi, drawn into a sparring relationship with Mr. Darcy, the wealthy heir to an American hotel chain, while courted by a pompous accountant (Nitin Ganatra).

The movie features Bollywood-style song and dance and a mixed Indian, British and American cast in a hybrid romantic comedy. Elements of the film, Chadha told The Guardian newspaper, "feel like the movie 'Grease.'"

But Chadha said her ultimate goal was to stay faithful to Austen's book and its timeless dissection of social mores.

"The book's themes have all been brought out, but with an Indian twist," said Chadha, who is lined up to direct a big-budget Hollywood prequel to the 1960s sitcom "I Dream of Jeannie."

"Script editors told me to move away from the book, but I said no. I wanted to come back to the book at every turn."

ANAHEIM, Calif. — A 5-year-old swimmer got an Olympic-size helping hand from three of the country's most celebrated swimmers.

Paul Lovely, of Lake Forest, was the youngest member of a team racing in Disney's Swim with the Stars tour, which featured Michael Phelps, who won six gold and two bronze medals in the Athens Games, and teammates Ian Crocker and Lenny Krayzelburg.

The five-week tour across the country culminated Tuesday at Disneyland, where a three-lane pool was built on Main Street.

Lovely, who swam the first leg of a relay, was struggling to finish when the Olympians jumped in to help, piggybacking the youngster to the end of the pool.

"It was cold," the boy said. "I could go all the way through sometime."

The Olympians took a moment to congratulate Paul for completing the race.

"We wanted to help. It's exciting for us to get into a pool ... with the swimming stars of tomorrow," Phelps said. "These kids come out and they were really trying."

Paul was with the Lake Forest Dolphins, who competed as three separate teams with an Olympian anchoring the final leg. Phelps beat Krayzelburg and Crocker to the end of the pool.

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