

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues



DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

8 13 19 22 40

Megamember: 17

Jackpot: \$9 Million

FANTASY 5

12 18 33 37 38

DAILY 3

Daytime: 9 3 1

Evening: 3 7 3

DAILY DERBY

1st: 08 Gorgeous George

2nd: 07 Eureka!

3rd: 01 Gold Rush

RACE TIME: 1:48.95

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

In July, envelope-pushing strip club owner Howard White changed the main sign for his joint on Century Boulevard near Los Angeles International Airport from "Live Nude Nude Nudes" to "Vaginas R Us." Neighboring merchants immediately complained, but city officials said that "vagina" is simply not an obscene word. However, the city did cite White's sign for being made of illegal combustible vinyl. At press time, opponents of the sign were trying to encourage the Toys R Us company to force White to abandon the name as too similar to its own protected trademark.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 280th day of 2005.
There are 85 days left in the year.

Twenty years ago, on Oct. 7, 1985, Palestinian gunmen hijacked the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in the Mediterranean with more than 400 people aboard. (The hijackers killed an elderly Jewish American tourist, Leon Klinghoffer, and threw his body overboard; they surrendered two days after taking the ship.)

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel."

SAMUEL JOHNSON
ENGLISH LEXICOGRAPHER (1709-1784)

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Honda whistle-blower hits back

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

MID-CITY — The former general manager of Honda of Santa Monica who blew the whistle on alleged consumer fraud by the dealership's sales and finance departments is suing his former employer for wrongful termination.

James Alexandre, who was general manager at the dealership until April 2002, is suing North

Carolina-based Sonic Automotive, which owns car dealerships across the country. Sonic reportedly bought Honda of Santa Monica in 1999 from Kramer Motors Incorporated.

Alexandre claims that once he learned that six employees were allegedly overcharging customers to pad their own commission sales, he went to Sonic managers to alert them of the scam. But they did nothing, Alexandre claims.

"He reported it and they put

him off," said Mike Goldstein, a Beverly Hills-based attorney who is representing Alexandre. "He got more vocal about it ... he was wrongfully terminated because he knew that there were wrongdoings at the dealership and they forced him to resign."

John Boggs, a Northern California-based attorney who is representing Sonic Automotive in Alexandre's claim, didn't return calls seeking comment.

Alexandre, who still lives in the

Los Angeles area and works for himself, is seeking unspecified damages for loss of earnings and emotional distress, Goldstein said.

"He was out of work for a long time," Goldstein said, adding his request for a jury trial was recently denied by a Los Angeles Superior Court judge.

Because Alexandre signed an arbitration agreement in his employment contract, it binds him

See WHISTLE-BLOWER, page 8

Even Jesus needs a hand



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Pastor William Miles of the First Christian Church of Santa Monica tries to put the pieces back together after a statue depicting Christ was vandalized sometime Tuesday night. The figure's hands — one of which was recovered in a nearby bush — were both broken off.

City Hall attempts to quell cart concerns

Third Street Promenade operators aren't buying it

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — City officials hoped a recent report would smooth out controversy over Third Street's new vending cart program, but operators aren't rolling over for the rhetoric.

The program, intended to

improve the consumer experience along the Promenade, has been taken over by a new management company.

A city staff report issued last month responded to issues raised at a Sept. 13 City Council meeting, during which a dozen cart operators requested City Hall address abuses they feel are being admin-

istered by Provenzano Resources, Inc. (PRI), the firm signed to handle the Promenade's cart service.

Meanwhile, cart operators contend the Sept. 22 staff report is seriously flawed and misguided. They are set to formally address their concerns at the Tuesday, Oct. 11, City Council meeting.

See CART CONCERNS, page 9

'Dreadlocks Bandit' has his freedom shaved off

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

TORRANCE — A jury on Thursday convicted the "Dreadlocks Bandit" on 19 counts of robbery and three counts of attempted robbery for holding up banks throughout the Los Angeles area, including Santa Monica.

David Lee Robinson, 54, was found guilty on 22 counts of robbery. The jury, comprised of 10 women and two men, deliberated for three hours before reaching their verdict. They deadlocked on one of the counts of robbery.

In Santa Monica, Robinson robbed Encino State Bank, located at 720 Wilshire Blvd., on Sept. 20, 2004 and Pacific Western Bank, located at 120 Wilshire Blvd., on Oct. 22, 2004.

Robinson — a career criminal with several previous convictions — faces life in prison, said Deputy District Attorney Warren Kato. He is scheduled to be sentenced Nov. 16 by Judge Eric Taylor in Torrance Superior Court.

Robinson was on federal probation after serving 14 years in prison for robbing 30 banks during a two-year crime spree in the 1980s, when he became the suspect of more than two dozen hold-

See BANDIT, page 8

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HOROSCOPE

Accept dinner, Taurus

Santa Monica Daily Press

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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Sweet dreams could inspire you to explore a different attitude or style. Know that everything isn't black-and-white. Some friends or associates might have such imaginative ideas that they are difficult to harness. Tonight: Opt for an adventure.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Others look at you much differently than you think. You could be a bit hard on yourself. A friend has a very screwy way of demonstrating his or her feelings. Right now, work with a boss who is inspired. Tonight: Accept a dinner invitation for just you!



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Your ability to relax will help many relate to you. Unfortunately, you might have to respond to someone who is quite unpredictable. You can do it. Take the high road. Understand this person better. Tonight: You might have too many invitations to sort through. Poor you.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ News could jolt you. Be a troubleshooter, a solution-finder. Your creativity and imagination can bounce over a problem. An associate, friend or partner strongly supports you. He or she can be quite imaginative too. Tonight: Ease out of work slowly.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ You wake up on the right side of the bed, ready for today and the oncoming weekend. A partner or associate could do the unexpected, especially with funds. Remember, this could be good too. Flow. Tonight: Love the moment.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Knowing when to keep a low profile might be more important than you realize. Others express their unusually erratic behavior. Plug into what you enjoy and feel successful at. Tonight: Close to home.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ You have a way with people that draws in much more of what you want. You might need to make the first move, especially with an unpredictable co-worker or associate. You can find solutions. Trust yourself. Tonight: Out and about.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Knowing when to retreat and when not to dominate or push a project could be important. Avoid any risks right now, financial or emotional. You could have a backfire. Stay within the playing field you know. Tonight: Decide how much you have to spend first.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Though the cards are in your hands, you might feel a bit uncomfortable with a family member who continually upsets the apple cart. You aren't going to change this person, so go off and enjoy yourself. Tonight: The world is your oyster.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Knowing when to vanish might be critical to your well-being. A friend means well, though somehow might be party to some unexpected news or events. Know that this too will pass. Ignore what is going on. Tonight: Follow a financial hunch.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Friends play a huge role in the Water Bearer's life, and today is no exception. You find that you need to be careful with how far you stretch your finances. Find more creative and dynamic ways to enjoy your pals. Tonight: Where the party is.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ You tend to create uproar wherever you go, whether it is intentional or not. Recognize the impact of this behavior on you in the long run. Others make judgments. Problems could ensue with a boss or someone you need to please. Tonight: Don't count on being in early.



AUDIT PENDING

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CRY provides relief for children

By Daily Press staff

Nearly 100 people gathered at Santa Monica Beach this past weekend to walk for children’s rights.

The Southern California chapter of Child Relief and You America Inc. (CRY), conducted its countrywide annual fundraising event. It was the first event of its kind in Southern California, held at Crescent Bay Park in Santa Monica, which is among the six venues across the country where the walk was conducted this year.

Organizers say that half the children in India between the ages of 6-18 years do not go to school; half the children in India are malnourished and 17 million Indian children are child laborers. CRY America aims to build a community of volunteers who work towards a common goal: To give a child his or her right to a childhood.

The date of the walk was one of marked significance — Oct. 2, the birth date of Mahatma Gandhi. Against the azure blue backdrop of the Pacific Ocean, more than 78 participants walked two miles on Ocean Front Walk. Children were entertained at the kids craft booth, while their parents participated in the walk. At the end of the walk, participants relished samosas (spicy Indian potato pastries) and enjoyed music performances by local talent.

The CRY Southern California Chapter was started by two volunteers in 2004. Today, the local chapter is rapidly expanding with more than 40 volunteers, a diverse group of working professionals and students who have come together for the cause of child rights. CRY SOCAL plans to organize various events throughout the year to raise awareness of the plight of underprivileged children, and to help raise funds to support child projects supported by CRY America. For more information, go to www.america.cry.org, www.crysocal.org, or write to cryamerica.socal@cry-mail.org

It's time to eat

By Daily Press staff

Get a taste of Brentwood this weekend as Los Angeles’ longest-running food festival returns on Sunday.

The festival will go from noon to 5 p.m. Now in its 18th year, the event will feature more than two dozen restaurants from across Los Angeles, including the Westside communities of Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Westwood, Bel Air and Beverly Hills.

During the event, held outdoors on tree-lined San Vicente Boulevard between Barrington and Bringham avenues, attendees can sample “great tastes” from favorite restaurants, discover some new ones, enjoy live entertainment and benefit a cause in the process.

The afternoon will feature live music, a silent and live auction with vacation trips and one-of-a-kind items, a beer and wine garden, a margarita bar and cooking demonstrations by Chef Eric’s Culinary Classroom and L.A. Food Works, and pizza making demonstrations from San Gennaro Café. Admission to the event is free and proceeds from food, beverage, and auction sales will benefit the Palisades Charter Schools, Brentwood Science Magnet and University High School.

Participants in this year’s event include: 310 Lounge and Bistro; Baja Fresh; Chef Eric’s Culinary Classroom; Chin Chin; Coffee Bean; Compartes; Coral Tree; Daily Grill; East/West Sandwich; Hamburger Hamlet; Jamba Juice; Jodi Maroni Sausages; L.A. Food Works; Luxe Hotel Sunset Boulevard–Bel Air; Mahatma Rice; Mrs. Beasley’s Muffins; Il Palmeri Ristorante; Robeks Juice; San Gennaro Café; Sky Meals; Takao Sushi; Tanino Ristorante; and Tongdang. More restaurants and wineries will be announced as the event nears.

Admission to the event is free, and tastings range from \$2 to \$6. For more information, visit www.GreatTastesinBrentwood.com. To see what is available at the live and silent auction go to www.GreaTastesinBrentwoodAuction.com.

Run for a stress-free life

By Daily Press staff

Los Angeles youth and young at heart will take to the streets in Santa Monica on Sunday, along with thousands of people in cities throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico in the first annual “5K Run — for a Stress-Free, Violence-Free Society.”

The event is organized by the Art of Living Foundation. An immediate focus of Art of Living Youth Programs is the populace affected by the Hurricane Katrina.

The Art of Living Foundation is committed to empowering young people to live life to their highest potential by providing them with the tools and knowledge needed to release stress while keeping an unwavering smile, no matter what the circumstance. It is a non-profit educational and humanitarian organization with programs in 152 countries, uniting people of diverse cultures, religions and backgrounds. Founded 25 years ago, the foundation has worked toward creating a stress-and-violence-free society in which values such as peace, love, compassion, enthusiasm for life, and service toward others are nurtured, organizers said.

The event, which will be held from 8 a.m. to noon, aims to raise awareness of the urgent need to foster such values, especially among young people. The run starts in Palisades Park at Ocean and Idaho avenues, and continues to San Vicente Boulevard.

The event also will raise money to allow the foundation to continue and expand. Proceeds will go to Art of Living USA youth programs and services.

For more information and to register in the event as a runner (5K) or walker (3K), visit <http://www.artoflivingyouth.org>



SURF REPORT

Friday into the weekend, we have a combo of noteworthy southern hemi SW, and some NW swell from the Aleutian Chain region. The SW will hit first on Friday, and the NW on Saturday. The SW is from a significant development in the southern hemisphere we've been monitoring over the past couple of weeks that peaked near New Zealand, making for an ideal angle of about 210 degrees.

For Friday, size should be around chest-high, plus for the dawn patrol as this swell starts to fill in, then build to near head-high during the morning into early afternoon.

Today the water is:

64°

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

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The Q Line

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

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

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

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CRIME WATCH

By Daily Press staff

Car thief took the fast lane to Malibu

At 2:10 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 30, the Santa Monica police responded to the 2600 block of the beach parking lot regarding a vehicle that had just been stolen. While officers were taking the information about the stolen vehicle, an additional call was received regarding an assault with a deadly weapon which just occurred in the 2000 block of Ocean Avenue. According to the victim, the suspect in the stolen vehicle crossed the median and tried to strike the victim's vehicle for an unknown reason. The victim was able to escape the collision and the suspect fled. At 2:25 p.m., the suspect was involved in a traffic collision on Pacific Coast Highway and Temescal Canyon Road, where the suspect rear-ended a vehicle and fled the scene on foot. The suspect was chased by a lifeguard and taken into custody. Stanislav Safonov, 24, transient, was booked for assault with a deadly weapon and auto theft. Bail was set at \$30,000.

At 2:13 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 23, Santa Monica police responded to the 1200 block of Third Street, the Apple store, regarding a theft suspect being detained by store employees. When officers arrived to the scene, the employee said suspect No. 1 walked into the location, removed some iPods and placed them in the bag, dropped the bag and walked away. Suspect No. 2 then entered and picked up the bag and left the store failing to pay for the items. Suspect No. 2 was apprehended. The loss was estimated to be \$1325. Eduardo Calderon Torres, 25, of Panorama City, was booked for commercial burglary. Bail was set at \$20,000. The outstanding suspect is described as a Middle Eastern male, age 35 to 40, about five feet eleven inches tall, with a slim build, wearing a green shirt and dark pants.

At 3:15 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 23, Santa Monica police responded to the 1300 block of the Third Street Promenade, at the Abercrombie & Fitch store, regarding a suspect with a fraudulent check. When officers arrived to the scene, they spoke to the employee, who said the suspect purchased \$1,244.99 worth of clothing and were attempting to pay with a fraudulent check, which the employee had checked with the bank. Lolisa Roeshene Fields, 29, of LA, and Eddie James Pugh, 26, of New Orleans, were arrested for commercial burglary and possession of a forged check. Fields bail set at 20,000. Pugh had no bail.

At 8:30 a.m. on Friday, Sept. 30, the Santa Monica police responded to the 1300 block of Euclid regarding an assault with a deadly weapon investigation. When officers arrived to the scene, they spoke to the victim who said the suspect knocked on the door and when she opened it the suspect entered and produced a razor. The victim was able to grab a stick and strike the suspect several times in the head as he attempted to cut her. Two friends present came to the victim's aid, at which time the suspect attempted to stab them with the razor. The victims were able to control the suspect until police arrived. Darryl James Young, 49, of Santa Monica, was placed under arrest for assault with a deadly weapon. Bail was set at \$110,000.

At 5:25 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 1, the Santa Monica police responded to the 1000 block of 24th Street regarding two suspects in a vehicle. When officers arrived to the scene, they saw the two occupants in the vehicle and while they conducted their investigation, they found the driver was in possession of two small tubes of methamphetamine. Alex Tronik, 20, of Santa Monica, was placed under arrest for a controlled substance. The passenger, Marcos Caloca, 19, of Santa Monica, was arrested for interfering while officers were conducting an investigation. Bail was set for \$10,000 each.

This police report was prepared by staff writer Ryan Hyatt.

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COMMENTARY



Men are like weather, when it rains it pours

PISTACHIO PERSPECTIVE

BY SUSAN ANN CONNOR



He knocked at my door, or rather tapped. Tap-tap-tap. Sort of an apologetic love-tap, if you will. And I tiptoed, tip-tip-tip, down the looming dark hallway to let him in. Carrying a flaming cinnamon scented candle, I could feel my blood speed up as I got closer.

Once at the door, I abruptly halted. My heart was ready to lunge, but my head needed a preliminary peek before I opened. So raising the candle, Winkie style, I laid a single eye over the peephole. "OHMYGOD," I screamed indiscreetly.

The landscape of his face was schmushed and in terrible error. He'd shrunk. And he'd grown a tail, which he was twirling profusely.

I woke up gagging. Sweat dripping everywhere. Sheesh. I should never eat before I go to bed ... especially a whole pint of strawberries.

Drifting into the kitchen, I poured myself a glass of water. Oh yeah, now I remember. Colin called. That stinker. That cad. That cause of my nasty nightmare. It's just like him to know precisely when I might be interested in somebody else. And come lurking about, twirling his tail.

Actually, he wasn't a cad. I shouldn't say that. He had many lovely qualities.

In fact with Colin, everything seemed perfect. Except for one small issue. He was clinically uncommitted. His motto was "live in the moment." And my response to his motto ... "exactly whose moment are we living in, yours or mine?"

Of course, the relationship was complicated. All are. I know it takes two to tango. I'm aware of the dance. And I honestly thought we could work it out. But the deal breaker came, the final memo reached my blocked brain, and I ended it. Kerplunk.

Though labor intensive, my heart healed and I moved on. Now, out of the blue, five years later, Mr. Tail-Twirler resurfaces. And on the very same evening I have a romantic dinner with the sweetest man I've met since.

I felt sick. I had a bauble in my tummy, besides that entire pint of strawberries. And now I had to decide if I would call

him back. Gee whiz.

The next day I went over to Clare's for consultation. I needed perspective. She listened as I recapped the previous evening. Since I played back Colin's mushy message 14 times, I was able to repeat it verbatim and with proper inflection. We were both truly awed at Colin's timing.

"Ya know, when it rains, it pours. And it usually pours in threes. So beware of one more," Clare warned smiling.

That would be more like a tsunami, I thought, already soaked.

Many questions still remained. Do I call him back? Do I let it go? Do I send him a ribbon for his tail? I mean, what does he really want anyway?

Then my friend calmly asked, "Well, do you want to call him back?"

Life can be so simple. Naturally, I wanted to call him back. I am ... kinda curious. And maybe it's the universe giving me the opportunity for completion. I would just have to live in my moment, but with caution.

So I decided three things by the time I left Clare's. I would call Tail-Twirler back. He would have to wait a week. (Don't want to rush that completion.) And I would follow my current bliss and see Mr. Strawberry before the week concluded.

On my way home, I cheerfully munched on some secret chocolate stash that I carry for special occasions. Then I checked for messages. There were two. One work related, and one from Strawberry. The sound of his voice made me blush. He told me he had a great time last night and hoped I liked the flowers.

Flowers? Really? Sweet.

I love flowers. Unless, of course, they're delivered inverted ... in which case, as in Victorian times, means you've just been dumped. I'm pretty sure mine will be upright.

As I drove into my parking space, I noticed a tall man standing outside my door. Though his back was to me, I could see he was holding a bouquet of callililies. Delivery guy, I thought. But when the man heard me pull in, he turned. And I freaked! May I have my moment please!?! Lalalala ...

(Susan Ann Connor can be reached at pistachiocolumn@aol.com. Follow her Strawberry stories on the first Friday of each month. Names have been changed to protect the innocent ... and the guilty.)



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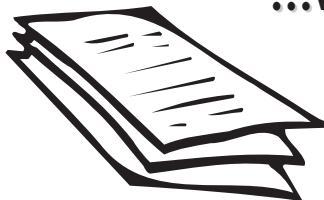
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OPINION

EDITORIAL



Big changes are happening at City Hall. But one would never know that elected leaders are about to fill one of the most important jobs in Santa Monica — the city manager. Unfortunately, Susan McCarthy, who has held the position for the past six years and is a 24-year veteran of public service in Santa Monica, will retire in November.

There has been virtually no public discussion about what kind of person should fill the shoes of McCarthy, who has been a tremendous leader through some of the most difficult times in the city's history.

City Hall has hired a headhunter to help in the search, but it shouldn't be left up to seven elected leaders — behind closed doors — to make such a crucial decision without properly asking the question in public of what kind of leader will be needed to lead us into the future.

A lot is happening in city government these days. A new development plan to guide Santa Monica as it builds out over the next 20 years, as well as how to handle the corresponding traffic, is being contemplated. A new planning director will be hired, as will a new "homeless czar" to address Santa Monica's growing problem of vagrancy and all of its correlating social ills.

So, should the next city manager be an existing resident who is familiar with the issues or should that person hail from elsewhere, possibly offering a new, fresh perspective? Should he or she have a background in development or come from a financial background? These are questions that elected leaders should get input on before making any decision.

Luckily, a few city councilmembers have decided to put the issue on next week's meeting agenda.

It's imperative that Santa Monicans feel they have a say in the process.



Visitors coming to the Third Street Promenade hoping to get a taste of what this world-class tourist destination offers oftentimes leave with a poor taste in their mouths, made fully aware of what city grit can do to a place.

That's the case with downtown alleys, which city officials like to call "passageways" in their best public relations spin. But one stroll through them and it becomes painfully obvious that these passageways are nothing more than dirty, smelly and sometimes dangerous urban alleys.

Most visitors park their cars in one of the city's several garages, which abut the alleys behind the Promenade. In their effort to find the Promenade, the public is forced to walk by overflowing dumpsters and homeless people relieving themselves. The stench of urine and garbage permeate the air here.

Santa Monica should be a memorable place, but not like this.

City Hall this year has committed to spending more than \$3 million in the downtown area, mostly to address maintenance issues that need immediate attention. But that will only scratch the surface for what's needed to overhaul the alleys.

Better signage is needed to lead people to passageways connecting to the Promenade. The dumpster rooms need to be centralized and put away from heavy pedestrian traffic areas. More lighting must be put in to ensure nighttime safety, and more police patrols are necessary. Individual businesses must be more vigilant in keeping the homeless from loitering and relieving themselves behind their establishments. And those same businesses need to do a better job of keeping the dumpsters they are responsible for clean.

Downtown officials are considering an ambassador program which would involve hiring individuals to serve not only as watchdogs for illegal activity, but also as concierges to guide visitors through the district and help manage the bustling area.

It's a great idea and one that should be funded by City Hall. With a budget of \$383 million, City Hall should have enough money to invest into one of its most important assets and not coincidentally, one of its highest sales tax revenue generators.

Demo-zoic Era could be the stuff of history



HERE'S THE THING

BY LARA M. BROWN, PH.D.

While the Republicans are visibly in trouble — former majority leader Tom Delay has been indicted on several criminal counts involving campaign contributions, Senate majority leader Bill Frist is under investigation for a questionable stock sale, and President Bush has earned some of the lowest approval ratings of his entire presidency (they're hovering around 38-40 percent), their issues look minor compared with the Democrats.

The Democratic Party is structurally in trouble, which if it doesn't overcome shortly, might lead to its demise as a functioning political party in the American system.

How can I predict such a dire outcome for one of the two major political parties? Because Democrats don't appear to be learning from their electoral losses. And in politics, like in nature, species that don't adapt to new circumstances, eventually become extinct.

What makes me say this? Mostly, two articles, which interviewed different leaders about the state of the Democratic Party.

One article on the Newsweek site, written by Howard Fineman was entitled: "Beltway vs. Blogosphere." Fineman interviewed Simon Rosenberg, the director of the New Democratic Network, about the "mood" on the blogosphere. Rosenberg explained that most of the people on the Internet were disappointed with those in the Beltway. He said that generally they believe that the Democrats in Washington are not confrontational enough and that they compromise too often with the conservatives. While it is not purely a "liberal-not liberal enough" dynamic, much of the frustration stems from those in the blogosphere believing that those in the Beltway do not defend liberal issues courageously enough.

Fineman sees a civil war brewing. I see the end of the Democratic Party as we know it. Why?

Because of the other article I read, which was in Boston Globe and written by Scott Lehigh. Lehigh interviewed Al From, CEO and founder of the Democratic Leadership Council — the moderate faction of the Democratic Party from which President Bill Clinton rose to national leadership in the early 1990s. From explained that the ideological make-up of the electorate has changed dramatically over the past 40 years and now, "only 21 percent of the electorate ... considers itself liberal, as opposed to 34 percent who call themselves conservatives. Forty-five percent say they are moderates."

This is important because there are very few "flaming moderates" in the

world. Not many moderates feel intensely passionate about being ideologically moderate (I'm an exception to the rule). As a result, intense debates — ones that are passionate and confrontational — scare most moderates. They tend to associate insanity with intensity. They tend to distrust passion and they tend to believe that underlying emotion is irrationality.

And this is important because ideologies at both ends of the spectrum tend to exhibit intensity towards the issues they believe in. Moreover, it is the lack of intensity among Beltway Democrats, which has got the Blogosphere Democrats in an uproar. However, if the Beltway Democrats capitulate to the Blogosphere Democrats, then they will surely turn off the moderates whom they need to win elections — 21 percent is not enough for a victory. Yet, if the Beltway Democrats ignore the Blogosphere Democrats, then they will likely lose at least some of their activist base, though it is doubtful that they would lose all 21 percent of it because where would they go?

Hence, irreconcilable differences exist between these factions of the party. The Blogosphere Democrats refuse to believe that there is anyone else in the country besides them, even while the Beltway Democrats are working towards winning a majority by appearing more temperate. The Republicans, of course, can get away with more heated rhetoric (read: ideologically extreme) because they have larger numbers and they don't have to attract as many moderates to win a majority. Democrats need nearly twice as many moderate as Republicans to put together a majority — 29 percent versus 16 percent of moderates to reach the 50 plus 1 percent mark, given the above distribution.

The basic problem is that the Democrats are like the Whig Party in the 1850s. Prior to 1856, the Whigs were a vital party that stood for national improvements and programs. They had elected presidents, they had a nationwide presence, and they were the major opposition party to the Democrats. But they could not reconcile their Northern and Southern factions' stances on slavery and they disappeared from politics when the Republican Party was created and most Northern Whigs (Abraham Lincoln included) joined them in 1860.

Here's the Thing:

If the Democrats don't pick up seats in 2006 and they manage to lose the presidency in 2008, don't be surprised if the Beltway Democrats leave the Blogosphere Democrats to themselves to form another "moderate" party that can win elections. Survival in politics is what matters. Adaptability, not ideology is king.

(Lara M. Brown, Ph.D., is a political scientist from Los Angeles, and teaches at California State University, Channel Islands. She can be reached at larambrown@aol.com)



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GUEST COMMENTARY BY THOMAS A. BOWDEN

Columbus reminds us why we're worthwhile

Celebration of Western Civilization reminds Americans why they deserve to win the war against Islamic totalitarianism

On Oct. 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus discovered the new world, opening a sea route to vast uncharted territories that awaited the spread of Western civilization. Centuries later, the ensuing cultural migration culminated in the birth and explosive growth of the greatest nation in history: The United States of America.

On Sept. 11, 2001, that nation came under attack by Islamic totalitarians who hate the distinctive values of Western civilization that America so proudly embraces — reason, science, individual rights, and capitalism — and who targeted the World Trade Center and the Pentagon as symbols of those values.

These attacks could not be dismissed as aberrant acts by a lone band of zealots, not after it became clear how widely that same festering hatred of Western values is felt in the Muslim world, where Osama bin Laden is embraced as a folk hero, terrorists continue to receive help from sympathetic governments, and the United States is perpetually damned as the Great Satan.

America has responded since Sept. 11 with various military and political maneuvers. Notably missing, however, has been any clear principled statement of what we are defending, and why we deserve to win.

Without moral certainty, America cannot prevail.

We cannot win a war in which Islamic totalitarians loudly proclaim that their way of life is superior — while liberals trot out the clichés of multiculturalism, claiming that there is no objective standard by which to judge a society good or evil, and conservatives downplay the religious motives driving Islamic terrorism, clinging to the notion that religion promotes peace despite blood-soaked centuries of evidence to the contrary.

This moral uncertainty has divided Americans into two equally ineffectual camps. Liberals, mortified by world opposition, want to build coalitions, demilitarize the conflict, and address the “grievances” of Islamists who hate the West. Meanwhile, conservatives squander America’s military resources pursuing the false hope that religious totalitarians can be rendered harmless by forcing them to cast ballots.

Americans can escape this quagmire of moral vacillation only by becoming fully, rationally convinced that our values are objectively worthwhile — that they are worth pursuing, worth upholding, and worth defending, by force if necessary. One way to attain such moral certainty is to understand, with full clarity, why we celebrate Columbus Day.

On one level, Columbus Day honors the explorer himself, for his many virtues. Columbus was a man of independent mind, who steadfastly pursued his bold plan for a westward voyage to the Indies despite powerful opposition

— a man of courage, who set sail upon a trackless ocean with no assurance that he would ever reach land — a man of pride, who sought recognition and reward for his achievements.

We need not evade or excuse Columbus’s flaws — his religious zealotry, his enslavement and oppression of natives — to recognize that he made history by finding new territory for a civilization that would soon show mankind how to overcome forever the age-old scourges of slavery, war, and forced religious conversion.

On a deeper level, therefore, Columbus Day celebrates the rational core of Western civilization, which flourished in the new world like a pot-bound plant liberated from its confining shell, demonstrating to the world what greatness is possible to man at his best.

On Columbus Day, we celebrate the civilization whose philosophers and mathematicians, men such as Aristotle, Archimedes, and Euclid, displaced otherworldly mysticism by discovering the laws of logic and mathematical relationships, demonstrating to mankind that the universe is knowable and predictable.

On Columbus Day, we celebrate the civilization whose scientists, men such as Galileo, Newton, Darwin, and Einstein, banished primitive superstitions by discovering natural laws through the scientific method, expanding the reach of man’s scrutiny to the farthest galaxy and the tiniest atom.

On Columbus Day, we celebrate the civilization whose political geniuses, men such as John Locke and the Founding Fathers, showed how bloody tribal warfare and religious strife can be supplanted by constitutional republics devoted to protecting life, liberty, property, and the selfish pursuit of individual happiness.

On Columbus Day, we celebrate the civilization whose entrepreneurs, men such as Rockefeller, Ford, and Gates, transformed an inhospitable wilderness populated by frightened savages into a wealthy nation of self-confident producers served by highways, power plants, computers, and thousands of other life-enhancing products.

On Columbus Day, in sum, we celebrate Western civilization with the utter certainty that it is good according to an objective standard: man’s life. America therefore deserves to prevail against the religious totalitarians who would destroy industrial civilization and return mankind to the Stone Age.

(Thomas A. Bowden is a senior writer for the Ayn Rand Institute and the author of “The Enemies of Christopher Columbus.” The institute promotes objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand, author of “Atlas Shrugged” and “The Fountainhead.”)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What a drip! Detect the sarcasm

Editor:

With all due respect to Mr. Charles Springer, (SMDP, Oct. 5, page 4) my original comment letter regarding prison as a solution to homelessness was pure and simple “sarcasm.” Please reread the letter I wrote and understand that I do not endorse this solution. However, it is a fact that it appears to be the current solution, albeit not the appropriate one.

Dr. Lisette Bauersachs
Santa Monica

A field of parking dreams

Editor:

So the Samohi seniors are having trouble securing on-campus parking every semester (SMDP, Oct. 3, page 1). Maybe an extra 60 or 70 parking spaces might help?

I hope it doesn’t cause a campus riot if we let these students know that at one time there used to be such an on-campus lot for student parking right next to the science and technology buildings ... the administration just built a softball field on the lot before the current seniors were even born.

Chalk one up to effective long-term planning

And there the softball field sits for most of the year, little more than a convenient place to hang the crude softball sponsor’s advertising signage while the students have to jockey for parking in the nearby neighborhoods, or pay hotel rates across the street.

In all fairness, this might have been a Title IX issue and we all know how loath the men’s teams are to share their testosterone-soaked turf. Possibly this was the administration’s only choice.

Let’s hope that Councilman Bloom can bring some parking sense back to the Samohi area and replace the convenient student parking that quietly disappeared so many years ago, or we could just follow the lead of Pasadena’s Rose Bowl and park the seniors’ cars on the softball field for most of the school year.

Richard Firth
Santa Monica





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Whistle-blower's case to be settled out of court

WHISTLE-BLOWER, from page 1

to settle the matter out of court with Sonic representatives, a mediator and a retired judge. That binding arbitration hearing is scheduled for Nov. 28 through Dec. 1, Goldstein said.

Goldstein also is representing seven other former Honda of Santa Monica employees who left the dealership after the scam was reported. That arbitration hearing is scheduled for June 2006.

The alleged scam, which occurred from 2000 to 2002, involved the car dealership's sales representatives tacking on charges of "theft etch" to customers' contracts without them knowing it. Theft etch marks a vehicle's parts with traceable numbers in the event of a theft.

After reporting the alleged scam to Sonic managers, Alexandre went to the Santa Monica Police Department, as well as to an Assistant U.S. Attorney, who apparently was a customer of Honda of Santa Monica.

"He reported to a number of different authorities," Goldstein said.

Alexandre wrote a letter to the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office detailing the allegations, which was received July 9, 2002. The following day, the investigation was launched. The dealership was raided by investigators, including FBI agents, who seized boxes of files from the finance and sales departments on Sept. 25, 2002.

After a three-year investigation, the

DA's office one week ago issued felony arrest warrants for five former employees of Honda of Santa Monica. A sixth former employee was charged with fraud, but no arrest warrant was issued for him. A majority of them surrendered this week and will be arraigned on Oct. 31.

According to the felony complaint, 33 different customers were bilked out of nearly \$30,000 between 2001 and 2002, when all of the defendants worked in the finance and sales departments at the dealership. But authorities believe there are many more victims and at least \$500,000 was defrauded from customers at the dealership.

The 25-page complaint details 114 overt acts that the defendants allegedly took part in. There also are 24 additional counts that charge the defendants with grand theft of personal property exceeding \$400.

On the same day of the raid, a class-action lawsuit was filed against the dealership in downtown Los Angeles Superior Court. The suit alleges several customers were ripped off by the dealership, located at 1720 Santa Monica Blvd. That suit has been put on hold until the criminal investigation is complete, said Dan Hoffman, the attorney representing the plaintiffs.

Customers who have signed onto the lawsuit allege they had been given favorable deals in the showroom only to have the dealership's finance department renegotiate the deals afterwards. Such a practice is forbidden by state law, according to the lawsuit.

'Bandit' faces life in prison following conviction by jury

BANDIT, from page 1

ups throughout Los Angeles County in which a total of \$70,000 was taken.

The first robbery for which he was recently convicted occurred on Aug. 19, 2004 at a Cathay Bank in Los Angeles. During the robberies, Robinson sometimes threatened to shoot or kill the bank tellers, Kato said.

Torrance police arrested Robinson on Saturday, Oct. 30, 2004, while he was driving out of the Western Financial Bank parking lot at Carson Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, a bank that had been robbed several days earlier.

Robinson was dubbed the "Dreadlock Bandit" because — until his latest arrest — he wore long braids of hair during his robberies, FBI officials said. He entered

the banks and presented a note to the teller demanding money. He has been described as discreet when he robs a bank, alerting only the teller that a crime is taking place.

FBI officials said Robinson has threatened to shoot the bank employee he robs with a gun and, in at least one robbery, was seen with a knife. Investigators responding to the robberies have interviewed eyewitnesses who have described Robinson's demeanor as calm and friendly.

Robinson was considered by authorities as armed and dangerous. They've also said he is a drug addict and that the degree of violence during his robberies could have escalated.

Robinson has been seen wearing casual clothing in some of the robberies and in others, dress clothes described by witnesses as "flashy."

Bitch! Whine! Complain!

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

The Q Line

LOCAL



Cart operators ready to bend Council's ear

CART CONCERNS, from page 1

Aneeta Sagar, who, along with her husband, owns three carts on the Promenade, including a hat display, heads the group opposed to the new program.

Sagar wouldn't specify what she felt was amiss with the staff report. However, she said PRI's program, if not re-evaluated soon, will force many cart operators off the Promenade who are first-time business owners. As such, their efforts represent substantial money, resources and time to create, which City Hall needs to take into consideration.

"This issue is bigger than you think," Sagar said, indicating she would say more at the council meeting.

City Councilman Kevin McKeown attended a meeting on Wednesday at which he heard first-hand the concerns of cart operators, he said.

McKeown said the City Council has crafted specific policies to protect small local businesses, and City Hall needs to make sure those policies are being followed at every level of city leasing.

"Santa Monica shouldn't professionalize small operators out of business," McKeown said. "What matters to me is results."

"If all our policy efforts so far fail to stem corporate colonization, then we need to revisit and strengthen our policies for a sustainable local economy."

In June, PRI was awarded a minimal 10-year contract to replace Promenade Services Inc., the group that had managed the Promenade's mobile cart operations since 1989. City officials and the Bayside District Corp. — a nonprofit group of business leaders who help manage downtown along with City Hall — felt it was time to explore new vendors who could present better concepts or approaches that would make it more profitable for the Promenade.

The agreement calls for PRI to provide 17 retail carts, five food carts, a cart for concierge services, and three carts for artists. The new operators are expected to begin hawking their new wares on Nov. 21, the staff report said. PRI, which owns the carts, has the discretion to choose which operators it will use, according to Miriam Mack, the city's economic development manager. As of Sept. 20, PRI has offered eight of 16 current cart operators a chance to sign on, of which two have rejected the offer, the staff report said.

In the past, merchants complained because an operator could have multiple carts on the Promenade. Under the new system, operators will only be allowed to have one cart, so "everyone can have piece of the pie," said Deborah S. Kravitz, PRI's president.

The carts are intended to be a more attractive addition to the Promenade, Kravitz said. PRI also has hired a merchandising expert who will see to it the wares for sale at each cart are distinct from one another and nearby shops.

Such moves will likely increase rev-

enue for the cart operators, Kravitz said.

In the past, cart operators were charged a total rent of \$2,000 to \$2,300 per month. According to the Sept. 22 staff report, PRI negotiates the cart operators' rent based on their understanding of the product, the profit margin, plus 15 percent of revenue generated above the "break point."

As a result, the staff report said negotiated base fees averaged \$2,461 per month, a little more than before.

One of the requirements is that PRI retain a visual merchandiser to be responsible for the overall image of the cart displays. The one-time costs of the merchandiser is passed on to the cart operator, the staff report said.

Four levels of improvements are offered to new cart operators, ranging in cost from \$1,800 to \$6,000. Of the 13 contracts signed by Sept. 20, nearly half are paying the middle upgrade of \$3,750. Two are paying the full \$6,000, and only one is paying the base \$1,800. The staff report said none of the new cart operators claimed to need financial assistance, as suggested in recent news reports.

The total start-up fees for a new cart operator varies between \$6,300 and \$12,900, depending on product and cart placement, the staff report said.

The contract is good for six months.

Itay Yona, who has managed Antiqua jewelry and other carts on the Promenade for 10 years, said PRI may be requiring cart operators to invest too much money without guarantees they will be able to recoup their costs within the six-month period. However, he said their investment would likely allow PRI to pay for its new carts, which it will use for years. It's a condition he and other cart operators have said is unfair.

Another issue cart operators have is the timing of the new program. According to the staff report, PRI is required by the L.A. County Health Department to make substantial improvements to the storage and commissary areas prior to the Nov. 21 start date. Staff notified the previous management company, Promenade Services, Inc., that PRI would need access to the storage and commissary areas by Oct. 15 to begin their improvements. As a result, Promenade Services made arrangements to sell the carts and they will not be available to cart operators after Oct. 15, the staff report said.

As a result, cart operators who aren't signed with PRI are expected to no longer be in business on the Promenade by mid-October. Those who are signed will likely have a six-week lull during which they, nor their employees, will be earning an income.

Rob York, a consultant for Bayside, said the changes to the cart program are intended to make good business sense for all participants, even if there are a few bumps along the way.

"In order for a program to be up and running well it may have to be adjusted over time," York said. "The key is to make sure the program is offering diverse opportunities and products."



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PANINI GARDEN-This authentic European eatery serves traditional Italian and French style food. Panin style sandwiches grilled on a cast-iron panini grill that seals all the savory flavors inside a bread envelope of your choice, from very soft and thin like the tramezzini, soft and crispy for the al forno and crusty for the rustico. A large selection of meats and cheeses, organic produce, fresh and healthy combinations of menu items to enjoy everyday have made PANINI GARDEN the local's favorite. In addition, delicious crepes are served all day, for breakfast or just dessert, it is always a treat. The setting is quiet in the lavender garden with the bubbling fountain. Hours: 8am-9pm Sunday-Thursday, 8am-10:30pm Friday and Saturday. 2715 Main Street, Santa Monica. (310) 399-9939.

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THE OMELETTE PARLOR-For 28 years The Omelette Parlor has been offering the finest in breakfast fare. With high fluffy omelettes, super sandwiches, and the freshest of salads, it's more than breakfast. Enjoy your day on our garden patio and experience the friendliness of service. Quality and value prevail forever at The Omelette Parlor. We open everyday at 6am. Come early! Hours: 6am-2:30pm Monday-Friday, 6am-4pm Saturday and Sunday. 2732 Main Street, Santa Monica. (310) 399-7892.

THE SLICE-A true neighborhood pizzeria serving authentic New York pizza & buffalo wings. We also offer a selection of hot & cold subs, pastas and salads. You can also create your own calzone. Eat in, take out, or delivery. Catering is available. Hours: open daily 11am-9pm. Visit one of our three locations: 915 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica (310) 451-7542, 1622 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica (310) 399-4060, 13151 Fountain Park Drive, Playa Vista (310) 437-7499.

VIOLET-At Violet restaurant the atmosphere is casual, comfortable, and, like its cuisine, is uncluttered. Chef Jared Simons' flavorful small plate fare has something to suit everyone, from light eaters to those with a taste for a more robust fare. The Braised Short Ribs with Shallot Potatoes (\$14.50) melt apart while the Multi-Colored Beet Salad with Eel delights with Kumquat and Ginger Vinaigrette (\$9) and the favorite among the regulars is the Baked Macaroni and Gruyere Cheese with Serrano Ham (\$7.50). Unique selection of new and old world wines by the bottle, glass or flight as well as an impressive list of domestic & imported artisan beers. Hours: Lunch: Tuesday-Friday, 11:30am-2pm. Dinner: Tuesday-Friday, 6pm-10pm & Saturday and Sunday, 5:30pm-10pm. 3221 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. www.violetrestaurant.com (310) 453-9113.

INTERESTED IN YOUR DAILY FORECAST?

CHECK OUT THE HOROSCOPES ON PAGE 2!

Entertainment



Free and clear: Symphony strikes back

BY D'LYNN WALDRON

Special to the Daily Press

The Santa Monica Symphony will strike up a chord on their new season this weekend by offering its first free concert.

On Sunday, Oct. 9, at 7:30 p.m. in the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, the symphony's popular and critically acclaimed conductor and music director Allen Robert Gross will lead the evening.

The concert opens with the melodic

Overture to "Ruy Blas" by the eternally romantic Felix Mendelssohn.

Next is the tone poem "Don Juan," which describes the famed seducer's licentious adventures, and his eventual traumatic self-revelation and suicide. This music caused a scandal in 1889 when it was called salacious, which made 24-year-old Richard Strauss an instant pop celebrity.

Today, "Don Juan" is recognized as a groundbreaking composition. It is a showpiece for a virtuoso orchestra and the Santa

Monica Symphony under Gross is able to fully display its orchestral brilliance.

After the intermission, Beethoven's lyrical Fourth Piano Concerto will feature soloist Rina Dokshitsky.

There is a pre-concert talk by UCLA Musicology Professor Raymond Knapp at 6:30 p.m. in the meeting room.

This is the 61st season of Santa Monica Symphony's concerts, which attract people of all ages from all segments of the community. Especially welcome are the

school-age children brought by parents and grandparents. Admission is free to all concerts and seating is not reserved.

The concerts are held in Santa Monica's famed Civic Auditorium, which has been host to the Oscars and is on a national preservation list.

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium is located at 1855 Main Street, just north of Pico Boulevard. For more information, log onto www.smsymphony.org, or call (310) 996-3260.

Instruments will be music to Katrina victims' ears

By Daily Press staff

To kick off its 61st season, the Santa Monica Symphony and a host of community organizations are hoping to prove instrumental to the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

As they attend the opening concert of the symphony on Sunday at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, concertgoers

are asked to bring instruments to benefit needy school children affected in the Gulf Coast region. The instruments will be collected by volunteers and then shipped to New Orleans by the Santa Monica Rotary.

The first donation already has come — Dee Menzies of Calthorpe School in Santa Monica has donated a 1953 Wurlitzer piano.

The campaign, which is citywide and

will be extended nine months, is geared towards the school children whose pursuit of the joys of music was interrupted by the ravages of Hurricane Katrina. The kick off for the campaign will take place on 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 9, an hour before the opening concert is scheduled to begin.

And if people are interested in helping support the symphony for the 2005-06 sea-

son, which provides free concerts to the community throughout the year, a kick-off benefit dinner will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday at Le Merigot Hotel. Dinner will be complimented by jazz musicians Lesa Terry, Nedra Wheeler and Cheryl Keyes, known as "Lady Jazz." Details and tickets can be found at: <http://www.smsymphony.org/benefit.html>.

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Clooney's in 'Luck' with Murrow flick

BY DAN DUNN

Special to the Daily Press

THE MOVIE: "Good Night, and Good Luck"**THE DIRECTOR:** George Clooney**THE STARS:** David Strathairn, George Clooney, Robert Downey Jr., Patricia Clarkson, Jeff Daniels, Frank Langella

A battle waged half a century ago between legendary newsman Edward R. Murrow and Commie-hunting Senator Joseph McCarthy is the subject of *director* George Clooney's second feature ("Confessions of a Dangerous Mind" being the first) and, boy, is it ever a superb piece of work. Named for Murrow's famous sign-

off, the film is rendered in black and white with a smoke-filtered production design that pays meticulous attention to historic detail.

Clooney's film is set in the 1950s, but the issues it tackles — constitutional rights, government-sanctioned mass hysteria, media ownership and its dubious role as a political watchdog — may as well have been ripped from today's headlines. Clooney wisely wastes no time delving into the principal players' backgrounds or the genesis of McCarthy's witch-hunt, but even those with just a passing knowledge of history should be able to follow along. McCarthy's crusade is in full swing when Murrow (David Strathairn in perhaps the finest performance of his stellar career) decides to take the junior Senator from Wisconsin to task over his tyrannous tactics. Predictably,

Murrow is branded a communist sympathizer, setting up a showdown on the CBS news program "See it Now," that ultimately leads to McCarthy's downfall.

Strathairn's performance is the film's highlight, but it would be unjust to discount the amazing work of his supporting cast. Robert Downey Jr. and Patricia Clarkson are terrific as a husband and wife forced to conceal their marriage because of CBS rules forbidding workplace romance (a sign of the oppressive times). Frank Langella and Jeff Daniels flex solid in limited roles as network brass, and Ray Wise shines as red-baited CBS anchorman Don Hollenbeck.

(Rated PG for mild thematic elements and brief language. Running time: 90 minutes)



THE IMBIBER

BY DAN DUNN

Dial me up a Cab ... quickly

Recently, The Imbiber attended a rave. I don't know why they're called raves because from what I witnessed, nobody seemed to be doing anything with any enthusiasm. If you ask me, instead of raves, they ought to call 'em "E&Es — Ecstasy & Evians," since that's what every pimply-faced 20-something I encountered seemed to be on.

I was there because my ex-girlfriend Jen had decided to "reunite" me with my former best friend Donnie, her current fiancé, and thought it would be a "super cool and relaxing" place for us to hash out our differences — first and foremost being that I want, more than anything, for Donnie to be dead.

"Isn't this great?" Jen yelled. Or maybe she said "I'm finally graduating eighth grade." The DJ — who called himself Logic Bomb — had the music amped-up to such earsplitting levels that he made the sound man for The Who look like a freakin' wussy.

"Maybe you should go talk to Donnie. He looks upset," she hollered, gesturing to Donnie, who was bobbing his head numbly, utterly rapt by the condensation on his Evian bottle.

"He's not upset," I howled above the din, "he's on E!" "Ornery? What makes you think he's ornery?" she shrieked.

"He's not ornery ... he's on E!"

"Well, of course he's *lonely*. You're ignoring him!"

It was like being a bad version of that cell phone commercial.

On the way to the bar I passed a wild-eyed Donnie rolling around on the floor, wrestling with what appeared to be a large glow stick. That sealed the deal: It would be my last rave. One good thing came of it, though. I fell in love with a dynamite fru-fru cocktail called a Yellow Cab. Made with Navan (vanilla-infused cognac), the YC has all the exoticism of Madagascan tribal music ... which, come to think of it, is what Logic Bomb was spinning that night.

YELLOW CAB

- 4 oz. fresh pineapple puree
- 2.5 oz. Navan
- 1 oz. fresh lime juice
- 1 oz. simple syrup
- Splash of coconut milk

Combine all ingredients in a shaker. Shake well over ice and strain into chilled martini glass. Garnish with pineapple leaf.

(Thirsty for more Imbiber? Pull up a barstool at www.TheImbiber.com)

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NATIONAL

Bill would restrict the treatment of prisoners

BY LIZ SIDOTI
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Senate faces a confrontation with the House over a \$440 billion military spending bill that, despite White House opposition, would impose restrictions on the treatment of terrorism suspects.

Delivering a rare wartime slap at Pentagon authority and President Bush, the GOP-controlled Senate voted 90-9 on Wednesday to back an amendment that would prohibit the use of "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" against anyone in U.S. government custody, regardless of where they are held.

Sponsored by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., the proposal also would require all service members to follow procedures in the Army Field Manual when they detain and interrogate terrorism suspects.

"This amendment strives to establish uniform standards for the interrogation of prisoners and detainees as a means for helping ensure our service men and women are well trained, well briefed, knowledgeable of their legal, professional and moral duties and obligations," said Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn.

The Senate was expected to vote on the overall spending bill by week's end. The

House-approved version of it does not include the detainee provision. It is unclear how much support the measure has in the GOP-run House.

Rep. John Murtha of Pennsylvania, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations subcommittee on defense and a supporter of the measure, could prove a powerful ally when House and Senate negotiators meet to reconcile differences in their bills.

And the House could face immense pressure after such a mandate by the Senate. All but nine Republicans voted in favor of the legislation.

Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, said he was concerned that McCain's legislation could inadvertently endanger the lives of people who work in classified roles, and he hoped to fix the potential problems in the final bill.

"There are some changes that have to be made if we are going to be faithful to those people who live in the classified world," Stevens said.

The rebuke by members of the president's own party shows how reluctant some lawmakers are to give him unchecked wartime power as the conflict in Iraq drags on and U.S. casualties mount. It also comes as Bush seeks to show strength after weeks in which his approval rating plummeted as Americans

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questioned the direction of the war, the sluggish federal response to Hurricane Katrina and the surge in gas prices.

Bush administration officials say the legislation would limit the president's authority and flexibility in war, and advisers say they would recommend a veto of the spending bill if the prisoner provision is included in the version that goes to his desk.

Bush has never vetoed a bill, despite threats, and scrapping a measure that provides money for pay raises, benefits, equipment and weapons for troops while the country is fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan would open the president to a flood of criticism.

The Senate also approved, by voice vote, an amendment by Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., that would distinguish between a "lawful enemy combatant" and an "unlawful enemy combatant," and put into law the procedures for prosecuting them at the Navy's Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba.

Lawmakers increasingly started calling for Congress to provide U.S. troops with clear standards for detaining, interrogating and prosecuting terrorism suspects after allegations surfaced of mistreatment at Guantanamo Bay and the abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

"We demanded intelligence without ever clearly telling our troops what was permitted and what was forbidden. And when things went wrong, we blamed them and we punished them," said McCain, a prisoner of war in Vietnam.

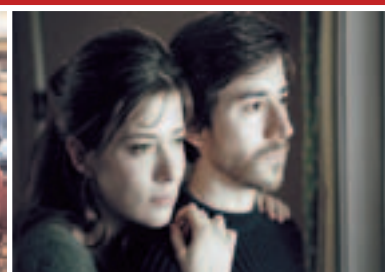
Republican supporters say U.S. troops interrogating terrorism suspects do not know which techniques are allowed. "We have let the troops down when it comes to trying to give them guidance in very stressful situations," said Graham, an Air Force judge for 20 years.

Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., called the legislation unnecessary. "We do not have ... systematic abuse of prisoners going on by our United States military," he said.

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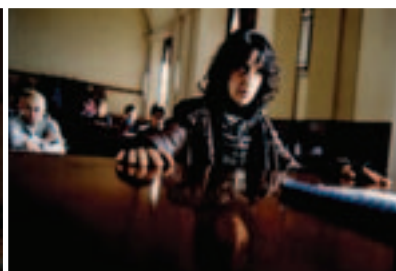


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NATIONAL



Ex-Marine may have lifted White House info

BY MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The FBI is investigating whether a former Marine took classified information from the White House when he worked in the vice president's office and passed it to Filipino officials, U.S. government officials say.

Leandro Aragoncillo, 46, a 21-year Marine veteran who became an FBI intelligence analyst last year, already has been charged in New Jersey with passing classified information about Filipino leaders to current and former officials of that nation.

Philippine Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales said his office wrote to the FBI to ask for copies of documents that will emerge in the investigation, but the U.S. government has not responded. The criminal complaint against Aragoncillo suggests the information could have been intended to destabilize the Philippine government, Gonzales said Thursday.

Aragoncillo worked at the White House from 1999 to 2001 and was assigned to the vice president's office under both Al Gore and Dick Cheney.

White House officials said Wednesday they were aware of the investigation but would provide no details.

"It is an ongoing investigation and as such all questions should be directed to the FBI," White House press secretary Scott McClellan said. "We are cooperating fully with the investigation."

McClellan declined Thursday to further discuss the investigation or Aragoncillo's specific duties while he worked in the offices of Gore and Cheney. "We're not going to have anything further on it," he said.

Justice Department spokesman Brian Roehrkasse said the department would not comment on an ongoing investigation, first reported Wednesday by ABC News.

A law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the case, said investigators were examining all of Aragoncillo's postings where he had access to classified information, including the White House.

Aragoncillo was hired to work at the Army's Fort Monmouth, N.J., in July 2004 and began sending classified information and documents in January, according to an FBI complaint made public last month. The documents' contents have not been made public.

From May to Aug. 15 of this year, he printed or downloaded 101 classified documents relating to the Philippines, of which 37 were classified "secret," according to the criminal complaint.

He sent some of the material to Michael Ray Aquino, a former deputy director of the Philippines national police who lives in New York City, the complaint said.

Both men were arrested Sept. 10 at their homes and ordered held without bail following an appearance before a federal magistrate.

After his arrest, Aragoncillo "essentially admitted that he took classified information," Assistant U.S. Attorney Karl H. Buch told the magistrate.

Aragoncillo is a naturalized U.S. citizen who was born in the Philippines. He had top secret clearance.

A Philippine opposition senator has acknowledged that he received information from Aquino. Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former national police chief under whom Aquino served, said he and "many others" received information passed by Aquino, but he played down the value of the reports, describing them as "shallow information."

Last month, Newark U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie said there was no evidence that the administration of Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was involved, but he would not say if the suspects were in contact with opposition factions. The Asian nation has

been beset by persistent coup rumors since Arroyo was accused of rigging last year's elections.

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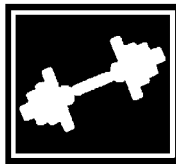
"A crime has been committed in the United States," he told The Associated Press in Manila. "Two Filipinos are involved and we don't know what classified documents they got, so we want to know because it might affect the national security situation in this country."

He said bits of information that can be gleaned from the charge sheet against Aragoncillo show there could be some information used to destabilize the government. He did not elaborate.

Gonzales said he was on the phone Thursday with Philippine Ambassador to Washington Albert del Rosario, who told him that the Philippine Embassy was keeping tabs on the Aragoncillo case.

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NATIONAL

Alaska threatening to yank North Slope leases

BY MATT VOLZ

Associated Press Writer

JUNEAU, Alaska — Alaska's oil and gas chief is threatening to revoke leases held by Exxon Mobil Corp. and other producers for not drilling rich fields near the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge where the companies already have drilling rights.

Division of Oil and Gas Director Mark Myers said Exxon Mobil, the operator and largest leaseholder of the 106,200-acre Point Thomson unit, has failed in its obligation to bring oil and gas from Point Thomson to market. The field has gone undeveloped for nearly three decades, he said.

The producers, which also include BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc., Chevron USA Inc. and ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc., have said it's not commercially viable to develop Point Thomson. But with gas and oil prices at

all-time highs, Myers is taking a hard line.

"We believe it's time for the field to come into that development stage," Myers said. "It hasn't made that jump in the last 28 years."

The Point Thomson unit, 30 miles east of Prudhoe Bay and on ANWR's western border, is believed to hold 8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and hundreds of millions of barrels of oil and condensed natural gas. Unlike ANWR, which has been off-limits to oil companies but could be opened by Congress this fall, all the Point Thomson land has been leased since 1977. The land available for drilling was expanded in 2001.

Myers calls Point Thomson one of the world's top 20 development opportunities.

But not much has happened. When Exxon Mobil filed a new development plan this summer that would have delayed drilling even longer, Alaska regulators were fed up. In a Friday decision, Myers found Exxon Mobil in

default, saying the company had no plan to bring Point Thomson into commercial production within a reasonable time.

If a new development plan mapping the path to production for Point Thomson isn't submitted by the end of the year, officials say they could shut the unit down and revoke all 45 leases. Myers said Point Thomson's individual leases call for production by 2009.

Exxon Mobil said developing Point Thomson is not possible without first changing the state's tax and royalty laws and without a gas pipeline from the North Slope. The company proposed folding Point Thomson's development into a gas pipeline fiscal contract now being negotiated with the state, and also delaying drilling deadlines set in 2001 by another two years.

The state rejected the plan, calling it inappropriate to tie Point Thomson to the gas line negotiations. Hundreds of millions of barrels of oil and condensed natural gas could be fed from Point Thomson through the existing oil pipeline system, Myers wrote in the rejection.

"There are no plans to (develop Point Thomson). That's our problem," said Carol Lee, petroleum land manager for the Division of Oil and Gas. "In 2001, when we agreed to the expansion of the unit, they made a significant commitment to develop the unit. Now they're requesting to be let out of those commitments."

Exxon Mobil spokeswoman Susan Reeves declined to answer specific questions, but forwarded a statement that said the producers are disappointed with the state's denial and they disagree with the decision. The producers plan to appeal.

Get cold or die tryin': Alaska launches travel campaign of a lifetime

BY RACHEL D'ORO

Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — New billboards promoting Alaska as a must-visit destination feature the jolting reminder to get here before it's too late.

The Alaska Travel Industry Association launched a monthlong campaign this week in Seattle, Los Angeles and Minneapolis with billboards proclaiming "Alaska B4UDIE" — or Alaska, before you die. The words are on Alaska's classic license plates: blue letters against a bold yellow background.

Coordinators of the \$180,000 project are hoping to reach folks who consider the northern frontier the trip of a lifetime.

"People say time after time that Alaska is on the list of places they want to go," said association spokesman Dave Worrell. "We want to get people thinking about Alaska now rather than later."

It may seem odd to launch a campaign just as Alaska's long and frigid winter is approaching, but it makes sense to Debbie Reinwand, with Bradley Reid & Associates, an Anchorage-based ad firm working with the nonprofit association. The last few months of the year is when most people start planning their Alaska vacations, she said.

It also may seem strange to attempt to sell Alaska with a few strategically placed words on a simple 14-foot-by-48-foot sign. Most travel ads feature the majesty of the state.

"In 17 years of marketing Alaska tourism, this is the first time we're not featuring wildlife or Alaska scenery," Reinwand said. "This is edgy. We want people to have that 'ah ha' moment, like in, 'Ah ha, I do need to go there.'"

Many daredevils are attracted to the state for such death-defying thrills as mountain climbing or extreme backcountry skiing, but organizers don't equate such activities with the new travel theme.

Instead, they've simply applied an increasingly popular marketing strategy: must-do lists.

"'Before you die' is such a common theme today that it's not morbid," Worrell said. "We certainly don't mean it that way. If anything, it's more in a fun spirit."

Beside posting its message on signs, the travel group also has set up a Web site offering trip planning links.

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NATIONAL



Putting migrant smugglers away has proven quite taxing

BY JACQUES BILLEAUD
Associated Press Writer

PHOENIX — Prosecutors in Arizona border counties have encountered difficulties in bringing cases under the state's new migrant smuggling law because it's hard to hold on to the illegal immigrants who are the witnesses to the crime.

Since it took effect nearly two months ago, the law has led to only two prosecutions within the state's four border counties, the busiest illegal entry points on the entire U.S.-Mexico border. Prosecutors couldn't file charges in two other cases.

Both active cases are in Yuma County, where authorities are grappling with the problems presented when state and local officials try to chip away at responsibilities once considered the sole province of the federal government.

County prosecutors said enforcing the law is difficult because it's hard for them to hold illegal immigrants for questioning when they haven't been accused of working as smugglers or charged with state crimes.

Prosecutors couldn't file charges in two other cases — one each in Yuma and Pima counties — because their witnesses, who would usually be needed to corroborate smuggling allegations, were sent back across the border by federal authorities before local investigations were completed.

"If all the witnesses get deported and the defendant doesn't say anything, we don't have a case," said Roger Nelson, chief criminal deputy for the Yuma County attorney's office.

The state's smuggling law sprang from legislators who rejected the longstanding belief that immigration is the sole responsibility of the federal government and were frustrated with thousands of people sneaking into Arizona from Mexico each year.

Some local law enforcement officials have said the law, which provided no extra funding, is of limited use to them because they don't have the time or money to build cases against smugglers. They said it will detract from their traditional roles of cracking down on thefts, violence and other crimes in their communities.

Police agencies haven't submitted any smuggling cases in the other two border counties, Cochise and Santa Cruz, or in Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix and is a hub for smuggling activity, since the law took

effect Aug. 12, prosecutors said.

In the case from Yuma that county officials had declined to prosecute, federal authorities couldn't hold immigrant witnesses because they weren't charged with federal crimes, said Michael Gramley, spokesman for the U.S. Border Patrol's Yuma sector.

"We can't detain witnesses for state smuggling crimes," Gramley said.

Still, federal authorities are doing what they can to assist local police and prosecutors, Gramley said.

County prosecutors said Arizona law, unlike federal law, doesn't provide authorities with enough time to hold witnesses so that their testimony can be recorded properly.

"I consider this a federal crime, and the feds have the resources and ability to prosecute these crimes," said Pima County Attorney Barbara LaWall.

LaWall predicted that, in some cases, federal agents will send immigrant witnesses back across the border before local prosecutors ever hear that arrests were made.

Cochise County Attorney Ed Rheinheimer said he believes federal authorities are probably reluctant to hold witnesses in state smuggling cases because they already have so many illegal immigrants to handle.

Federal agents might agree to holding witnesses in high-priority situations, but not in routine cases, Rheinheimer said.

Maricopa County Attorney Andrew Thomas, who campaigned last year on the promise of getting tough on illegal immigration, said the circumstances of each allegation will dictate his approach to holding witnesses.

Prosecutors might conclude some cases quickly, thus limiting the length of detentions for immigrant witnesses. His office intends to work with federal authorities when witness difficulties arise, said Thomas, who says his office will receive some smuggling cases soon.

Thomas' recent interpretation of the new law might provide another option. He concluded in a legal opinion that illegal immigrants suspected of using smugglers can be charged as conspirators in smuggling cases, opening the door for some to be detained.

In one of the two cases now in Yuma County courts, authorities were able to work around witness limitations.

A suspected smuggler admitted on videotape to the crime, and investigators were able to promptly document that the people being transported were illegal immigrants, Nelson said.

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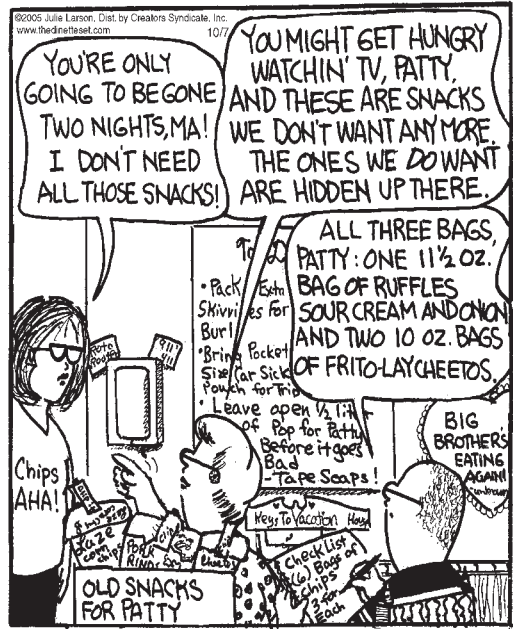
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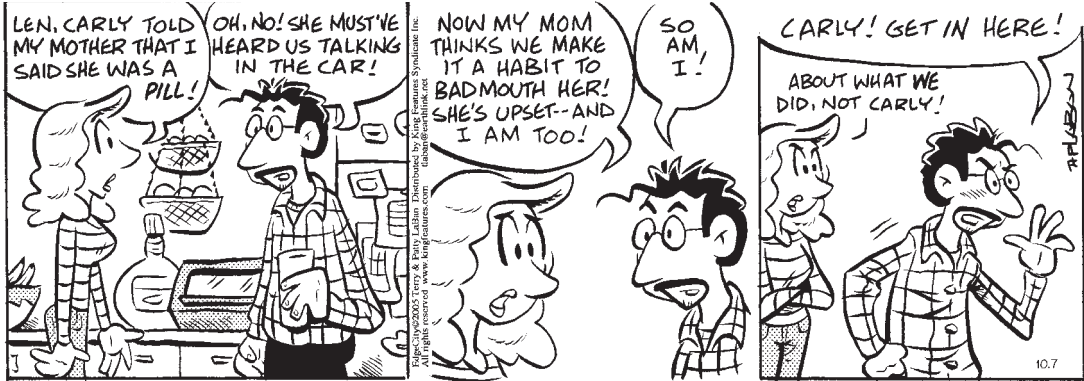


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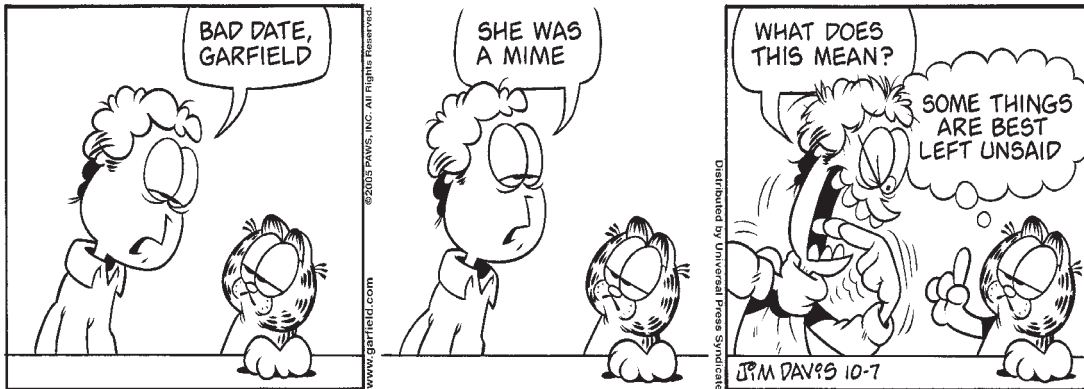
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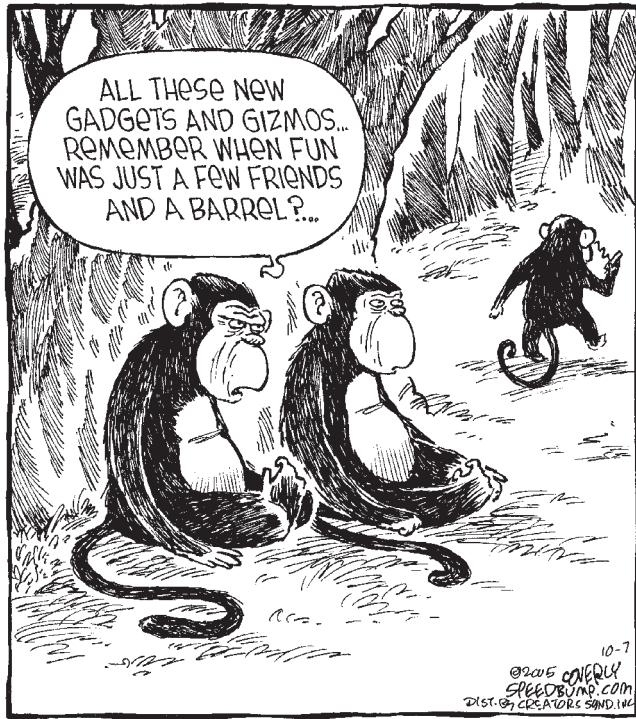
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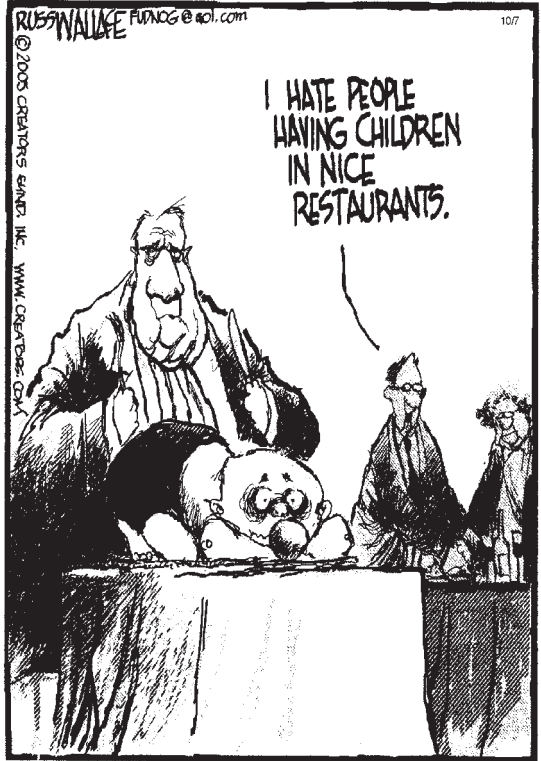


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DBAS

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 05 2001817 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as Pierre Pascal, LeatherupUs.com, AI #/ON 2524406, 1234 Santee Street, #A, Los Angeles, CA 90015. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Grand Saz Global, Inc., CALIFORNIA, 1234 S. Santee Street, #A, Los Angeles, CA 90015 This Business is being conducted by, a corporation. Signed: Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious name or names listed herein. /s/: Grand Saz Global, Inc., President, Albert Bootesaz This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 8/19/05. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 9/16/2005, 9/23/2005, 9/30/2005, 10/7/2005

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 05 1999504 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as Mision Evangelica Dios Habla Hoy, 9521 Van Nuys Blvd., Panova City, CA 91402. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Hector Acevedo, 200 S. Mariposa Ave., #106, Los Angeles, CA 90004 This Business is being conducted by, an individual. Signed: The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed on (Date)8/19/2005. /s/: Hector Acevedo This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 8/19/2005. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 9/16/2005, 9/23/2005, 9/30/2005, 10/7/2005

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 05 2001579 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as Graffiti Removers, 4754 Garrick Ave., Pico Rivera, CA 90660/ PO Box 2227, Montebello, CA 90640. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Daniel Fernandez, 4754 Garrick Ave., Pico Rivera, CA 90660 This Business is being conducted by, an individual.

DBAS

Signed: The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed on (Date)7/1/2005. /s/: Daniel Fernandez This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 8/19/2005. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 9/16/2005, 9/23/2005, 9/30/2005, 10/7/2005

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 05 2001539 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as Diablo Trucking, 13450 Meyer Rd., #27, Whittier, CA 90605. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Juan Rodriguez, 13450 Meyer Rd., #27, Whittier, CA 90605 This Business is being conducted by, an individual. Signed: The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed on (Date)8/16/2005. /s/: Juan Rodriguez This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 8/19/2005. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 9/16/2005, 9/23/2005, 9/30/2005, 10/7/2005

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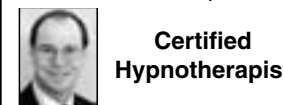
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