

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

The debate continues



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

A local resident listens as city council candidates answer questions during a candidates' forum Wednesday sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Santa Monica and St. Anne's Catholic Church. From right to left, Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McKeown, Jerry Rubin, Councilwoman Pam O'Connor, Abby Arnold, Matteo "Matt" Dinolfo and Josefina Santiago Aranda. Absent from the forum were Councilman Bob Holbrook and Chuck Allord.

Council wants central downtown restroom

New facility would be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

Some city officials want to buy a downtown building that would serve as a centralized 24-hour public restroom.

City Real Estate Manager Mark Richter will ask the city council at its Oct. 22 meeting for permission to begin preliminary negotiations to purchase a property at 312-316 Santa Monica Blvd. that would serve as a Big Blue Bus information office, a bus driver break room and restroom facilities for mass transit riders and the general public.

By law, city officials must first get approval from the city council before

they are allowed to enter into property negotiations.

"The site is adjacent to the busiest transit stop on the recently built transit mall, so this would be a preferred location for a site for services for transit riders and city bus drivers," Richter said.

While officials say the building would be used for transit-related purposes, many say the facility also could be used to solve problems the city is having with its lack of public restrooms downtown.

Many believe the current six public restrooms, which are located in each of the downtown parking structures, are unsafe and often left in unsanitary conditions by homeless and transients who mainly use them.

"This is critical for all who visit our downtown," said Mayor Mike Feinstein, who added that the commer-

See RESTROOM, page 5

'Routine' agenda items include \$8M in expenditures

Editor's note: This is the first of an ongoing series that tracks the city's expenditures which appear on the upcoming Santa Monica City Council consent agenda.

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

The Santa Monica City Council next week is poised to vote in one fell swoop on about \$8 million in expenditures for public projects.

The council's consent agenda, which is

routinely voted on in one motion with little public input, has four items that combined will cost millions of dollars.

The largest single item that the council is asked to approve is \$7.2 million to buy a new management system for the Big Blue Bus. Called the "Advanced Fleet Management System," it applies state-of-the-art technologies in an attempt to be more efficient in operations, scheduling and traveling times, among other things.

The system includes bus radios, global

positioning system locators, an "automatic vehicle location system," a "computer aided dispatch," "automatic passenger counters," scheduling and trip planning software and an "interactive voice response" system.

The Big Blue Bus formed a special committee to review bids from 14 compa-

nies that offer such systems. It has chosen Siemens Transportation Systems, Inc., which will train Big Blue Bus employees on how to use the new technology.

Big Blue Bus hopes to improve driver and passenger safety, provide travelers with real time transit and traffic informa-

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Santa Monica's budget deficits predicted to swell

Gaps between revenues and spending may grow to \$15M

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER

Daily Press Staff Writer

A city analysis shows while officials had millions left over from last year's budget, deficits for the upcoming fiscal year may swell upwards of \$8 million.

Officials released a study Wednesday that shows the city has \$3.2 million left over from last year's municipal budget. The extra

money is attributed to budget reductions, a state refund and several late payments.

"The efforts by city staff to save money was greater than expected," said finance director Mike Dennis. "There were some strong efforts and some good luck."

But officials found sales tax revenues had fallen \$300,000 below predicted levels, forcing the city's financial analysts to decrease the amount Santa Monica is expected to take in over the year by more than \$1.5 million.

City analysts believe as the slower sales

See BUDGET, page 6

When's the next bus coming?

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

If the bus is late, riders will soon know by how much.

A new, transportation management system worth \$7 million is expected to be installed in the Big Blue Bus' fleet in the next 18 months, which will tell people at the bus stop where their bus is and when it will get there, said customer relations manager Joe Stitche.

"The global positioning system will be able to give us real time," he said. "There will be time boards that will tell you the bus will be there in, say, three minutes."

The system also will have a trip planning service that will give customers an itinerary for where they want to go within the Big Blue Bus' service area. Via its Web site, or an automated phone system,

people can find out what routes will get them to their destination and how long it will take them.

"Say you want to go from Fourth and Santa Monica to Barrington, it will kick back an itinerary for you," Stitche said.

People also will be able to check online to see if their bus is on time, or how the long the delay will be, Stitche said.

A new radio system will go into the entire fleet so drivers can communicate with each other in case buses need to be re-routed to handle scheduling problems, Stitche said.

The system, which could be approved by the Santa Monica City Council on Tuesday, is expected to take 18 months to be installed. The first items that will be completed are the voice response system and the trip planning features. The last amenity available most likely will be the real time boards at bus stops.

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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ A partner makes an effort that could overwhelm you. You discover that your perspective could be renewed as a result. Understand what will motivate someone at a distance who, out of the blue, up and changes his or her mind. Tonight: Take some dreamtime.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ You might be taken aback by what someone else does. Certainly, someone cares a lot about you and has an extravagant manner of letting you know. If you can stay at home and work, do so. Much revolves around the home front. Tonight: Time to ask for what you want.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Others seek you out. The question might be: Just how much responsibility are you willing to accept? Others look to you for answers. You could be overwhelmed and delighted by what drops in your lap. Consider your options more carefully. Tonight: In the limelight.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Be sensitive to a special opportunity that might not reoccur. Others have a lot to share. Determine limits that surround your finances. You might want to overextend yourself. Think very carefully before you open this can of worms! Tonight: Play away.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ You will tend to go overboard right now. Of course, you might get a little help along the way. A close friend or loved one knows just how to lure you into an adventure. Clean up your desk before you scatter out the door. Who knows when you'll return? Tonight: Enjoy a loved one.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Others seek you out. Wherever you are, someone manages to put a smile on your face. Share a heart-warming experience with someone you care about. Postpone a domestic decision right now. You cannot please everyone all the time! Tonight: Say "yes."

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ While others seem frisky and playful, you also see what must be done. Listen well to someone you adore who cares a lot about you. This person might shock you on one level, but on another, you know he or she is right-on. Tonight: Just don't stress yourself out.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ You express unusual creativity. Others more than likely respond to not only your ideas, but also your personal charisma. Ask for what you want, both professionally and emotionally. Worry less about finances for now. Tonight: Start thinking "weekend."

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You might be a bit out of sorts with others, who might be unusually joyful or silly. Dig in and focus on what you can get done, perhaps without others' cooperation. Don't take an associate's attitude personally. This person just isn't on the same plane as you. Tonight: Mosey on home.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Your mood could improve, as someone else makes an effort toward you. A partner or associate makes you an offer that you might believe is too good to be true. Pinch yourself and then say "yes." Dialogue; catch up on news. Tonight: Go along with another's overture.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Your efforts come back in multiples, as long as you're not controlling. Let go of a need to have things your way. A boss might be willing to cut you a little slack. Discuss what you need in order to increase your job performance. Tonight: A must show.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Others seek you out. Your ability to see the big picture helps you move a key project. Establish better ground rules concerning your work. Sometimes others drop too much on your broad shoulders. Say "no" once in a while. Tonight: What would make the Fish happy?

QUOTE of the DAY

"Sometimes too much
too drink is barely enough."

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

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LOCAL



CrimeWatch

Burglaries and drugs top crime this week

By Daily Press staff

■ Old Navy security officers thwarted two armed shoplifters Friday, October 4th, on the Third Street Promenade.

Security watched two females shoplift merchandise and exit the store. Security confronted the women outside, and one woman dropped her bag and ran. As security picked up the merchandise, the second woman pulled a knife.

A struggle broke out, and the woman dropped the knife and her merchandise and escaped.

Security recovered a bag with Old Navy merchandise and clothes from other stores. The weapon was also recovered.

The woman with the knife is described as a black female, 18 to 21 years old, five feet five inches tall, 130 pounds and was wearing a white cap.

The second woman is described as a black female, 18 to 20 years old, five feet four inches tall, 115 pounds and wearing a white hat and a long sleeve red shirt.

■ Michael Lane was arrested for armed robbery after holding up a friend on Tuesday, October 1.

The victim was a companion of Lane's, and says he and Lane were drinking together. The victim fell asleep and woke up to Lane stealing his wallet.

The victim gave chase until Lane pulled out a box cutter, blade exposed, and threatened the victim.

The victim called Santa Monica police, who caught Lane near the 2000 block of Ocean Avenue.

Lane was arrested for armed robbery and a warrant, and his bail was set at \$35,272.

Lane is a 39-year old, white male transient.

■ Roy Charles Fincher was arrested for armed robbery after pulling a gun in a store on 2400 Main St.

At around 6:50 p.m. on Monday, September 30, Fincher entered a Main Street store and pretended to shop. After a few minutes, he whipped out a handgun and demanded money from an employee. The employee and a shopper fled the store leaving Fincher alone.

When Fincher fled, a third witness followed him the 300 block of Colorado while talking to police on a cell phone.

Santa Monica police arrested Fincher and recovered the firearm allegedly used during the crime. He was booked for armed robbery, and his bail was set for \$500,000.

Fincher is a 46-year old, white male transient.

■ Santa Monica High School authorities busted three juveniles for smoking marijuana.

At 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 1, school security caught a juvenile smoking on school property, and detained him until police arrived.

At 2:45 p.m. the same day, security grabbed two more smokers and again called police.

Santa Monica police responded to both instances by issuing a citation to the minors, and returning them to the custody of Santa Monica High.



Information compiled by Jesse Haley

Today we're due for slight improvements in size and shape, both up and down the coast, as our admittedly minor southwest swell peaks. Surf isn't expected to get much above waist level, but conditions show improvement.

Thursday a new swell will be bypassing Santa Monica Bay thanks to its excessively steep northwest angle, 300 degrees, but another southwest ground swell should lend a hand in bringing up surf later in the day. The new southwest arrives early Thursday and builds throughout the day and overnight.

As the 200 degree swell fills in, good exposures see occasional chest-high sets, getting more consistent Friday.


**Today's
Tides:**

Low-	1:35 a.m.	0.15'
High-	8:04 a.m.	4.65'
Low-	1:49 p.m.	1.90'
High-	7:26 p.m.	4.88'

Location	Wednesday	Thursday	Water Quality
County Line	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Zuma	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Surfrider	1-2'/Fair	1-2'/Fair	A
Topanga	1-2'/Fair	1-2'/Fair	A
Breakwater	2-3'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	B
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The Santa Monica City Council has passed an ordinance that has created a "zone" downtown to prevent homeless men and women from sleeping in the doorways of businesses.

While some people say it is an important law in terms of public health and safety concerns, others claim the homeless will only find new doorways to use as shelter in other parts of the city, and it is merely a Band-Aid for a larger problem.

So this week Q-Line wants to know: "Do you think the zone will be effective in dealing with the homeless problem downtown? Or will it just create headaches somewhere else in Santa Monica?"

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

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OPINION

LETTERS

Where is our money going?

Editor:

I worry when I read the Santa Monica Daily Press. Why? Because every time I read it, it talks about how the city is spending its budget to beautify the Santa Monica community, especially the downtown area, for tourist attractions. Instead, they should focus on the necessities of our community. They should spend the millions of dollars making more activities for our youth, elderly people and, more importantly, our schools. Education should be the city's priority. "The key to success is education." I'm really hurt by this because this affects the whole community and everyone who wants to get a fair education. Teachers these days only get \$125 to spend on supplies for their classrooms. Do you think that's even enough to buy classroom supplies for one whole school year, for 180 students? I truly hope that people listen to what the youth have to say. We live in this community, we work in this community, so therefore we should have an input in this community.

Brian Castellanos

*Santa Monica High School student
Santa Monica*

Vote to be represented

Editor:

I see that the city council is trying to do something about the homeless issue. Linking feeding programs to social services, now that's a good idea.

Prohibiting loitering and sleeping in doorways, what a clever way to discourage transients from camping on the streets. The downtown and Main Street districts are a start, but the new ordinances must be expanded city-wide to really solve the problem. Who will champion that effort?

Who represents your neighborhood and will be accountable to you when the transients end up in your backyard?

Because it's an election year, Santa Monicans For Renters Rights was publicly forced to take some action on one of the city's oldest problems. Up until now, every effort the community ever organized to deal with this problem was thwarted by SMRR council members. In the past, they have routinely chastised us when we pleaded for help. After Nov. 5, the SMRR council will go back to business as usual unless VERITAS, measure HH, is passed. Remember all the talk about traffic during the last election? Traffic has only gotten worse.

The mayor even wants to change the social services review so it doesn't ever trouble or distract the voters again during an election. I guess he thinks we should focus on important things like what's on his agenda instead of ours. Our mayor was appointed by his SMRR super-majority to promote its agenda. VERITAS will allow us to vote for our own mayor. A mayor who promotes our agenda. That's a novel idea.

Councilman Bob Holbrook is the only viable council candidate who supports VERITAS. He believes that our community is worth fighting for. As an independent

candidate, he will run against the political machine SMRR on Nov. 5 for a seat on our city council.

If you are looking for a candidate who will promote your agenda instead of his own, vote for Holbrook and VERITAS to insure that more candidates like him will come along in the future.

Donna Block

Santa Monica

Look in your own backyard, Bush

Editor:

I wonder how King George, I mean President Bush, thinks that he can rid the world of terrorism, when he can't find the sniper in his own backyard? Dah.

Carolyn M. Lee

Santa Monica

Saving the world instead of our own town?

Editor:

Tom Larmore has been whining about the wolf at the door regarding Measure JJ. He strives, quite correctly, to portray this mislabeled partial minimum wage law as a means of furthering an obscured agenda on the part of the HERE union. What has not been discussed is the as-of-yet unstated response of effected businesses in the event the law actually is enacted.

Does anyone seriously doubt that, the morning the law takes effect, large signs will appear in the lobbies of affected businesses announcing that since ALL employees are, by law, paid a living wage, tipping is no longer necessary or acceptable? Does anyone doubt that new work rules will be decreed to prohibit employees from accepting gratuities?

Employees found to be in violation of the anticipated new policies would face termination for cause. Prices for the services provided by tipped employees would no doubt rise to reflect the increased cost of management to provide those services in addition to management's mark-up on those costs. Santa Monica hotels would then advertise the "no-tip" policies as a marketing hook. In the end, whether or not the law passes, no real change will result. Better to reject this ill-advised scheme from the outset. This flawed measure is a non-starter, and only serves to detract from the real business of local government. When we elect our local representatives, is it too much to expect that they will attempt to solve our local problems before trying to save the world?

Bob Abernethy

Santa Monica

Waving the flag from seat of my pants, not the polling precinct



TITTINGER'S TAKE

By Michael J. Tittinger

Rock the vote ... Make a difference ... Let your voice be heard ... If you don't vote, you can't bitch.

Whatever.

I don't vote, never have. I'm not saying I will never cast a ballot on Election Day, but it doesn't look too good from here. For years, I justified my conscientious absences from the polling place by citing a self-held exemplary devotion to my career as a journalist, where objectivity is not only key, but also a professional necessity. It is a field where bias, at least until recent years (see Fox News), would only serve to checker your career.

After repeated attempts to convince others, if not myself, this was the only logical stance for a member of the media, my excuses seemed to ring a bit hollow. However, when others asked why I didn't vote, that was the line I felt compelled to give them. No more excuses. There are other ways to make a difference.

Packets of voter information bulge from the mailbox almost daily, each proclaiming to be more important than the last — the most important pamphlet, parcel or package of the year. Currently gathering dust on the living room floor, mostly because of guilt towards throwing them in the wastebasket, are the Official Sample Ballot, the Voter Information Guide, the Santa Monicans for Renters Rights ballot recommendations and the Vote Yes on Measure JJ Living Wage Law placard. All have made nice coasters in a pinch.

They're there on the floor halfway between the wastebasket and my acoustic guitar, something else I always plan to pick up and consider pursuing further but don't for lack of compulsion.

To be honest, I hope I don't cast any ballots any time soon. If I do, it means that things have really been going south and I'm looking beyond my own gumption and capabilities for things to improve. It would mean I feel helpless, that I need a hand, that things are dire enough in my life to prompt me to give up time at the beach, or taking in a movie, or working on a screenplay to stop down at the polling station.

Making voting easier, as in "we can do it in our underwear," would seem a no-brainer for those looking to increase voter participation. Making ballots available on the inter-

net appears, on the outset, to be a wonderful idea. Surely we would all take a sudden interest in the so-called issues and fresh-faced candidates were we able to affect change with the click of the mouse, right?

Still, I ask myself whether or not I would vote, and the truth of the matter is, no, I wouldn't. And I don't think a majority of the non-committal faction would either. Inconvenience really has little to do with it, my previous tongue-in-cheek comments notwithstanding.

What our forefathers sacrificed and envisioned for us is not lost. The fact of the matter is that I wouldn't take voting lightly, casting a ballot for a generic candidate based on his or her political party or leanings on one isolated issue. To do so would be invoking more harm upon Santa Monica, harm upon California and harm upon the United States, than good.

Just where do these voter-participation pushers get off? Anyone urging you to vote likely has an agenda and they, whether they admit it or not, want you to vote in the same manner they did. If you don't, you are really just canceling one another out. I'm not trying to shoot holes in the election process because democracy is the greatest thing going in terms of a government by the people, of the people and for the people. It's just that voting without the proper

research and comprehension is doing the process a greater disservice than sitting home Nov. 5 with a fish taco and remote control at the ready.

It is sweeps month, you know.

Twelve years of Catholic school instilled me with enough guilt to last a lifetime; I'm not going to fret anymore about this one. It is not our obligation to vote. It is our right. There is a difference there.

In a way, we non-voters are putting our trust in our neighbors, trusting that they will vote with conscience and goodwill to elect officials who will best represent all of us. We are deferring to those with more interest, more information and more initiative in the political process. Maybe all those who vote should take our lack of participation as a complement that you are doing a fine job. Believe me, if things really start hitting the fan voters will be coming out of the woodwork. The vote would be rocked.

So take our conspicuous absences as a complement, registered voters, for the ship is sailing straight for the most part and we're entrusting you with the wheel. Just vote with your mind, and with your heart, that's all we can ask of you. We are putting our faith in you.

Mike Tittinger is a freelance writer living in Santa Monica.

LOCAL



Officials say centralized restrooms easier to patrol

RESTROOM, from page 1

cial core is a public space and is not just for private business.

"Obviously this also has implications for those people who are unfortunately on the street, and providing them with a safe place to go as well," he said.

The board of the Bayside District Corp., which manages downtown Santa Monica, recommended earlier this year that the city council close four of the six public restrooms located in the parking structures. Council members have not yet publicly discussed Bayside's proposal.

"We want restrooms that aren't just for the homeless but for all the people that come to Promenade," said Councilman Herb Katz, a former chairman of the Bayside board. "The average tourist doesn't know the bathrooms are in the parking structures and then when they get there they don't want to use them."

But the property owner where the city is considering a location for the bathrooms said he was not interested in selling his shops along Santa Monica Boulevard. Serious "Bob" Moini has repeatedly told city officials he would only consider leasing a storefront for a Big Blue Bus office.

He said Wednesday was the first he heard that his property may be used as a centralized restroom facility.

"The only approach they have come to with the landlord is that they want to make it into a bus stop office," said commercial realtor Barbara Tenzer, who represents Moini's property. "It would be very sneaky of them to say that, and then make it into a public restroom facility."

"He would be more than happy to lease it to them as a bus location, where you buy tickets and information, but not as public bathrooms," she added.

Richter said city officials had spoken with Moini, who owns Dee's Diner, only to discuss generally what he would like to do with the property. If Moini does not want to sell, city officials would not attempt to force the transaction to go

through, he said.

"They are considering selling it," Richter said. "If they do conclude that they would like to sell it, we would like (the ability) to talk to them about it."

Supporters of a downtown bathroom facility say it would be easier for police to patrol and for maintenance workers to monitor and keep clean.

"We don't want a place where people wash their clothes and wash their feet in the sink and all that kind of stuff," Katz said. "What we do want is a safe, clean environment where anyone downtown can go."

And supporters want the new facility to be open 24 hours to give people an alternative to relieving themselves on public streets at night. Katz said the city needs to open another all-day restroom facility at the beach as well.

Opening a new restroom facility would seem to conflict with a recent ordinance adopted by the city council, which forbids the homeless from sleeping in the doorways of downtown businesses from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. The council passed the ordinance in response to complaints from business owners of public urination and defecation.

City officials are proposing to keep the new facility open all-night, unlike other public restrooms downtown, to accommodate the homeless and encourage them not to relieve themselves publicly.

But at the same time, the homeless are now forbidden from sleeping anywhere near the downtown area where the new restroom facility is being proposed.

However, Feinstein argues the council wrote the ordinance in a way that made the sleeping ban optional. Those business that don't mind the homeless' presence on their private property could allow it to continue, he said.

"I hope seeing that we will have these bathroom facilities, I hope that some property owners will continue to be generous in ways they have in the past, knowing that it won't cost them in cleanliness and comfort the way it did before," he added.

City spends on renewals

AGENDA, from page 1

tion and be able to provide faster and more accurate reporting of information required under Federal Transit Administrations regulations.

The actual system would cost \$6,311,245.90 and a 5-year maintenance contract would cost \$939,547. The money will come out of the Big Blue Bus' capital budget, which is funded directly by federal, state and local sales taxes, said Joe Sticher, the bus company's customer relations manager.

Another \$700,000 may be spent to assist the city's building and safety department, which contracts with outside companies to handle the current amount of construction activity in Santa Monica.

The city already pays Bing Yen and Associates for the review of geotechnical and engineering geology reports on construction projects within the city. The city also pays Esgil Corporation to provide plans and review services for the building and safety division.

City staff is asking the council to

amend those contracts to cover expenses for a total of \$400,000. Another \$300,000 would be given to a new contract with JAS Pacific for temporary staffing for code enforcement, inspection services, plan checks and review for the building and safety division.

For the Bing Yen contract, city staff expect no impact to the general fund because user fees cover the costs of providing the services. For the Esgil Corporation contract, city staff is developing a new fee structure because the current ones don't cover the additional costs.

JAS Pacific's contract would be paid for from excess funds saved in non-paid salaries because of vacancies in the building and safety department, the city staff report said.

All told, the city will have paid \$1.3 million to the three outside firms for their services, if the contracts are amended next Tuesday.

City staff also recommends that the council appropriate \$267,315 to furnish

See AGENDA, page 6

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LOCAL

City may have to cut services to control costs

BUDGET, from page 1

trend continues, the projected budget gaps will increase from \$5 million to \$8.2 million next year. By the 2004-2005 budget, the deficit may grow to \$15.6 million.

"What we are proposing is that the savings that were realized last year be set aside to cover shortfalls this year and what appears to be a substantial budget gap next year," Dennis said.

But future sales trends look bleak for Santa Monica, officials said.

Automobile sales, which traditionally lead all local business sectors in generating sales tax revenue, are predicted to hit record lows this year because dealers and car manufacturers offered steep discounts for last year's models, sparking record sales nationally.

Economists are predicting most people who were in the market for a new vehicle have already made their purchase.

And businesses are concerned the holiday season will not generate large sales because there is one week less between the traditional six-week shopping period between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

In order to recoup growing sales tax losses, the city council will be asked next Tuesday to raise many fees charged for building permits and for city inspectors to review construction projects. The increased fees are predicted to bring in \$600,000 for the rest of this year, but cannot be used to cover the looming budget shortfalls.

Many of the causes of the growing deficit are out of the control of the city, officials said. The state retirement pension system, CALPERS, has suffered enormous losses on its stock market investments, and cities across the state have been forced to pay much more for their employees' retirement.

Nationally, there has also been huge increases in the cost of health care and insurance premiums.

"Those are largely uncontrollable by the city," Dennis said. "It's stuff outside our direct realm of control."

Even before the economic fallout after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Santa Monica officials began a series of budget

cut backs and holding expensive capital improvements to keep the city's spending proportional to the amount it was taking in on sales and hotel room taxes.

However, sharp declines in Santa Monica's tourism industry deeply eroded much of the city's tax revenues, leaving officials with a \$20 million budget deficit.

"What we are proposing is that the savings that were realized last year be set aside to cover shortfalls this year and what appears to be a substantial budget gap next year."

— MIKE DENNIS

City of Santa Monica, Finance director

To make up for the loss in funds, each city department was required to cut 2.5 percent of its budget, a hiring freeze was put into effect and more than \$20 million capital improvements were put on hold.

While Santa Monica's tourism industry appears to be rebounding, consumer confidence is being eroded by worsening economic trends and a possible war with Iraq, officials said.

With an already lean budget this year, officials believe any further cuts may require discontinuing some services and increasing fees and taxes.

"We are going to have to look at cutting services and raising revenues," said Judy Rambeau, city spokeswoman. "There are a lot of things that could be looked at."

"Community input on this to help the city council make these tough choices is going to be critical," she added.

Items not publicly reviewed

AGENDA, from page 5

the new public safety facility behind City Hall for the police and fire department's dispatch centers.

There is also another \$40,000 needed to pay Twinings Laboratories of Southern California, Inc. for more material testing and services during construction of the Public Safety Building. In order to meet certain code requirements, the builder had to make significant changes to the structural elements of the building, which has resulted in additional inspection and testing requirements.

Items that are placed on consent agendas are usually previously discussed issues that don't attract attention from the public. People are allowed to comment on consent agenda items and if council members feel an issue needs to be discussed, they can pull it off and place it on the regular agenda, said city clerk Maria Stewart.

"It's a collective agreement among the people that put the agenda together, which includes myself, the city manager's office, department heads and the mayor," she said.

About half of the time council members pull items off the consent agenda for discussion, but it's usually for minor things like they need to abstain from voting or they weren't at the previous meeting and don't feel comfortable approving the minutes, she said.

Bob Stern, president of the Center for Governmental Studies, a West L.A.-based nonprofit organization that monitors government, said consent agendas are designed to expedite meetings.

"Especially in Santa Monica, you really need to keep things moving along," he said. "But usually they've all agreed to vote for it and at least for themselves, there is no controversy."

STATE



Apartment rents flat everywhere but Calif.

BY MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Business Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Summertime apartment rents remained stable in most major Western markets except California, where prices at the two ends of the state continued to shift in distinctly different directions, according to a report to be released Thursday.

The Los Angeles and San Diego markets emerged as the hottest rental market in a quarterly survey covering nine Western states while rents in parts of the San Francisco Bay area market slumped to their lowest levels in three years.

Outside California, rents in most Western markets changed by 1 percent or less from the same time last year, according to RealFacts, the Novato-based research firm that surveyed apartment complexes.

As of Sept. 30, the average rent in Los Angeles stood at \$1,295 and the average rent in the San Diego metropolitan area was \$1,137, according to RealFacts. Both those figures represented an annual rent increase of nearly 6 percent.

In the San Francisco metropolitan market, the average third-quarter rent was \$1,632, a 12.8 percent decrease that rolled back prices to mid-1999 levels, RealFacts said.

The San Francisco market's seventh consecutive quarter of rent declines reflects a steep slide in the high-tech market that has dried up incomes and demand.

Rents fell even farther, by 15.5 percent, in Santa Clara County, the hub of Silicon Valley, where the average rent of \$1,427 was the lowest since the first quarter of 2000, the prelude to the area's high-tech blues.

Other strong markets included the most affordable parts of Southern and Northern California. The average third-quarter rents in Riverside and San Bernardino counties and the Sacramento area climbed nearly 5 percent to \$875 and \$864, respectively, RealFacts said.

Rents in Portland, Ore.; Reno, Nev.;

Denver, Phoenix and Las Vegas increased by 1 percent or less, while rents in Seattle, Colorado Springs, Salt Lake City and Albuquerque, N.M., decreased by less than 1 percent. Tucson, Ariz., showed a rent increase of 3.8 percent, while rents in Boise, Idaho, slumped by 2.1 percent.

The stagnant rents in many markets stemmed from a sharp decline in mortgage rates that has made home ownership more affordable to renters living in those areas, said RealFacts spokesman Gerald Cox.

While mortgage rates also have dropped in California, mid-priced homes in the state's biggest markets remain too expensive for most renters, giving landlords greater leverage.

The typical monthly mortgage payment in the Bay Area was \$1,966 during August, according to DataQuick Information Systems. A mid-priced Bay Area home sold for \$417,000 in August, according to DataQuick.

In Southern California, DataQuick pegged the typical monthly mortgage during August at \$1,311. A mid-priced Southern California home sold for \$278,000 in August, DataQuick said.

Southern California's rising rents underscore the diversity of the region's economy compared to the more tech-dependent Bay Area, Cox said.

It appears the Bay Area rental market is nearing a bottom, Cox said.

In an encouraging sign for landlords, Sept. 30 vacancy rates in San Francisco and the Silicon Valley were slightly lower than June 30.

At the end of the third quarter, San Francisco's apartment vacancies averaged 6.6 percent, down from 7 percent at the end of the second quarter. In the Santa Clara County, the June 30 apartment vacancy rate of 6.5 percent fell to 6.2 percent as of Sept. 30.

By comparison, the Sept. 30 vacancy rates in the Los Angeles and San Diego apartment markets were 4.4 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively.

Glance at apartment rents in major Western markets

By The Associated Press

Average rents in major Western markets as of Sept. 30, covering the listed metropolitan statistical area. Tables, for California and for other Western markets, show metro area, average rent, and percent change from a year ago.

Los Angeles, \$1,295, +5.8
Oakland, Calif., \$1,232, -8.9
Orange County, Calif., \$1,232, +2.2
Riverside/San Bernardino, Calif., \$875, +4.9
Sacramento, Calif., \$869, +4.6
San Diego, \$1,137, +5.9
San Francisco, \$1,632, -12.8

Santa Clara County, Calif., \$1,427, -15.5

Albuquerque, N.M., \$626, -0.5
Boise, Idaho, \$709, -2.1
Colorado Springs, Colo., \$705, -0.8
Denver, \$864, +0.2
Las Vegas, Nev., \$737, +0.5
Phoenix, Ariz., \$715, +1.0
Portland, Ore., \$746, +0.7
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Salt Lake City, \$670, -0.1
Seattle, \$864, -0.8
Tucson, Ariz., \$607, +3.8

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Tree-squatter moves into temporary housing

By The Associated Press

BRISBANE — A woman who had lived with her husband for more than a decade in a 300-year-old oak tree on San Bruno Mountain will move into temporary housing.

Thelma Caballero, who thinks she's in her 40s, had lived with her husband, Besh Serdahely, in their coastal oak home for 12 years in San Bruno Mountain County Park. Late last week, Caballero chose to leave the tree house and move into a motel room with a kitchenette on the Peninsula.

Shelter Network, a San Mateo County-based nonprofit that provides housing and services for homeless people, helped Caballero make the move.

"It's going very well. I think she's grateful to have a more stable situation, even if it is temporary," said Michele Jackson, executive director of the organization.

Shelter Network will help Caballero find a more permanent living situation once she decides what she wants to do. Serdahely, 58, has chosen not to take the offer, but it remains open if he changes his mind, Jackson said.

The couple were residing in their oak tree — about 10 miles south of San

Francisco — in violation of several county ordinances against human habitation. County officials had known about the couple for years but thought they were living on state-owned land and left it to state officials to decide whether or not to move them.

But on Aug. 26, a survey found the area where they were living was actually county land, and Caballero and Serdahely were given 30 days to remove their belongings. The couple continued to live in their tree house while county officials helped them find new housing.

Caballero, a former housekeeper, receives Social Security payments because of a mental disability. She and her husband met at a San Francisco soup kitchen in the late 1980s. They lived in some bushes by the Caltrain tracks before hanging discarded building materials in the giant oak that would become their home.

Although the tree house was illegal, some considered the couple good stewards of the land, taking care of trails and welcoming schoolchildren who have trekked up the mountain over the years to see a different way of living.

California water deal key step to resolve river dispute

BY LAURA WIDES

Associated Press Writer

LA QUINTA — Southern California water agencies reached a historic billion-dollar settlement Wednesday that shifts water from desert farmers to urban San Diego and is a key step in weaning California from its overreliance on the Colorado River.

The state has been under an end-of-the-year deadline to create a plan showing how it will cut its use of river water by 2016. If it failed, it risked having its allotment severely cut by the federal government.

The agreement reached Wednesday resolved the biggest obstacle to developing that plan.

"This is a measure that will last 75 years. It's not a quick fix. It's not a short-term deal. It's for the long-term," said state Assemblyman Robert Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys, who helped lead the negotiations between water districts representing San Diego, Imperial Valley farmers, Los Angeles and the valley surrounding Palm Springs.

Since the 1930s, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming and California have had an agreement on how much Colorado River water each state receives. California has used more than its share for years, but until recently its over-draft didn't matter because the other states didn't use their entire allotments.

But three years of record drought on the Colorado River and rapid growth throughout the West have made water an ever more precious commodity.

In 1996, former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt warned California it could no longer rely on receiving more than its annual allocation, primarily because of growing demand in Nevada and Arizona.

Without a management plan from California by year's end, the Bush administration said it would immediately reduce

the state's take. The agreement reached Wednesday would keep in place the so-called "soft landing," a gradual reduction of Colorado River water to California over the next 14 years that was negotiated by Clinton administration officials.

The Imperial Valley has been receiving

**"This is a measure that
will last 75 years. It's
not a quick fix. It's not a
hort-term deal. It's for
the long-term."**

— **ROBERT HERTZBERG**
California state assemblyman

about 60 percent of the roughly 5.2 million acre-feet that California has been siphoning off the river each year for decades.

Under the agreement, reached after four days of marathon negotiations, Imperial Valley will transfer up to 1 million acre-feet during the first 15 years of the project to the 3 million people living in San Diego County. The water will be made available to San Diego through more efficient irrigation techniques and fallowing of farmland.

Officials said the water transfer agreement between the Imperial Valley district and the San Diego County Water Authority will help the state gradually wean itself back to the 4.4 million acre-foot limit it first agreed to in the 1930s.

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NATIONAL



ACLU accuses Bush of curbing civil freedoms

BY DAVID HO
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The American Civil Liberties Union launched a \$3.5 million advertising and lobbying campaign Wednesday that accuses the Bush administration of eroding freedoms in the name of fighting terrorism.

The campaign includes \$1 million for the ACLU's first national television advertisements, which will air in major cities this week and then for three months beginning in January.

The first ad depicts a pair of hands cutting and rewriting the Constitution and Bill of Rights while a voice says: "Look what (Attorney General) John Ashcroft is doing to our Constitution. He's seized powers for the Bush administration no president should ever have."

In a statement, Ashcroft said: "I'm glad I live in a country where the ACLU can criticize me and vigorously debate the issues. I consider it my job as attorney

general to make sure that this and all our freedoms endure."

Anthony Romero, the ACLU's executive director, said Ashcroft is restricting liberties without significantly increasing security.

"His message is that Americans must choose whether they want to be safe or free," Romero said.

The first ACLU ads are airing not long before the November elections, but Romero said the group's efforts are not targeting any campaigns.

"This is much broader," he said.

The ACLU's campaign comes nearly a year after President Bush signed the USA Patriot Act, which gave the government broad new powers to monitor people in the United States if they are suspected to have ties with terrorists.

The ACLU said the goals for its campaign include repealing provisions of the Patriot Act, limiting government surveillance, and lobbying for local and state laws to protect civil rights.

Cuban spy receives 25 years in prison plea deal

BY TED BRIDIS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A defiant U.S. intelligence analyst, who confessed to spying for Cuba throughout her 16 year-career, harshly criticized American policy toward Fidel Castro and was sentenced Wednesday to 25 years in prison.

"Our government's policy toward Cuba is cruel and unfair, profoundly unneighborly, and I felt morally obligated to help the island defend itself from our efforts to impose our values and our political system on it," Ana Belen Montes, 45, said in a five-minute speech to U.S. District Judge Ricardo Urbina.

Montes allowed in her remarks that her action "may have been morally wrong."

"I can only say that I did what I thought right to counter a grave injustice," she said.

Urbina responded to Montes' statement by describing her action as a "betrayal."

"If you can't love your country, then at the very least you should do it no wrong," the judge said.

U.S. Attorney Roscoe Howard Jr. said after the sentencing that he was disappointed that Montes did not formally apologize for her behavior. He did note that Montes has cooperated fully with espionage investigators.

Montes' lawyer, Plato Cacheris, said Montes could be released from prison after 20 years with time off for good behavior. Her sentence includes an additional five years of supervised release with a number of conditions, including prohibitions on her use of the Internet and credit cards.

Montes had worked as a senior analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, specializing since 1992 on Cuba.

She pleaded guilty in March to espionage charges and admitted revealing the identities of four undercover agents to

Cuban officials during her time as a spy. All are safe.

Montes was spying for Cuba from the time she started work at the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1985 until her arrest on Sept. 21, 2001, prosecutors say. They accused her of using short-wave radio and coded pager messages to give Cuba U.S. secrets so sensitive they could not be fully described in court documents.

Howard has said that officials believe Montes received only nominal payments for expenses. He has declined to speculate on her motivation.

A U.S. official familiar with the case, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Montes was believed to have been recruited by Cuban intelligence when she worked in the Freedom of Information office at the Justice Department, between 1979 and 1985, and was asked to seek work at an agency that would provide more useful information to Cuba.

Under the plea agreement, the government will receive Montes' full cooperation in disclosing all information she may have about criminal activity regarding herself or others with whom she may worked.

According to court papers, Montes communicated with the Cuban Intelligence Agency through encrypted messages and received her instructions over short-wave radio. From public pay phones, she then used a prepaid calling card to send coded numeric messages to a pager owned by Cuban intelligence.

The FBI secretly searched Montes' residence under a court order in May 2001 and uncovered information about several Defense Department issues, including a 1996 war games exercise conducted by the U.S. Atlantic Command, authorities said.

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| • Baja Fresh | • Westside Theatre |
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Bush signs Iraq resolution



Ron Edmonds/Associated Press

President Bush signs a resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq Wednesday in the East Room of the White House. Bush summoned dozens of lawmakers to the White House to accept formally Congress' go-ahead for military action against Iraq, hoping that a tableau of a unified America would help win over hesitant allies. Left to right, Sen. Jesse Helms, R-NC, Sen. John Warner, R-Va, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz, Rep. Roy Blunt, R-Mo, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., Speaker the House Dennis Hastert, R-Ill, Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif, Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del.

BY JENNIFER LOVEN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush on Wednesday signed Congress' war-making resolution and told wary world leaders to "face up to our global responsibility" to confront Saddam Hussein.

"Those who choose to live in denial may eventually be forced to live in fear," Bush said as the United Nations began a bitter debate over his plans to disarm and oust Saddam. "Every nation that shares the benefits of peace also shares the duty of defending the peace."

With dozens of lawmakers on hand for the East Room ceremony, Bush used the speech — and the congressional vote — to press the U.N. to adopt a new resolution compelling Iraq to submit to unconditional weapons inspections.

"We will defend our nation and lead others in defending the peace," the president said.

Though he said military action would be his last resort, Bush left little room for Saddam to avoid confrontation. "Our goal is to fully and finally eliminate a real threat to world peace and to America," he said.

The president's message came as the U.N. Security Council started its first day of open debate on Iraq at the behest of the dozens of non-Security Council nations who oppose an attack on Baghdad. The debate is mostly designed to take the administration to task on its Iraq policies, and White House officials expected sharp criticism throughout the day.

Even as Bush spoke, Russia's deputy foreign minister said the United States' proposed resolution is unacceptable, while France's proposal is closer to the Kremlin's stance. Both nations hold veto power in Security Council.

"The American variant of the resolution on Iraq has not undergone changes. It is unacceptable and Russia cannot support it," Yuri Fedotov said, according to the news agency Interfax.

However, the French proposal contains "many positions that Russia shares," Fedotov was quoted as saying.

As if in reply, Bush said, "The time has arrived once again for the United Nations to live up to the purposes of its founding to protect our common security. The time has arrived once again for free nations to face up to our global responsibility and confront a gathering danger."

Among the dozen lawmakers who were

invited to stand on stage with Bush at the signing ceremony were Sens. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., John McCain, R-Ariz., Joe Biden, D-Del., minority leader Trent Lott, R-Miss. and John Warner, R-Va.

Absent from the list was Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., whose granddaughter was born early Wednesday and whose schedule was packed with legislative and political business.

The resolution was passed by strong margins in both the House and Senate.

House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt, D-Mo., who helped negotiate the resolution and provided Bush with welcome Democratic support at a White House appearance before the vote, was not attending. Gephardt's travel schedule was keeping him away, a day after he ratcheted up his strong criticism of the Bush administration and Republicans on the economy.

In a major victory for the president, weeks of back-and-forth between Congress and the White House produced little significant change in Bush's initial draft of the resolution. The measure giving Bush the authority to use military force, if necessary, to rid Iraq of its biological and chemical weapons and disband its nuclear weapons program was approved Friday.

The resolution requires the president to notify Congress, before or within 48 hours after an attack, that further diplomatic approaches would not have protected U.S. security and to explain to Congress how the military action will not hurt the war on terror. But it allows Bush to take unilateral action regardless of U.N. activities.

Just seven Republican lawmakers — six in the House and one in the Senate — opposed the resolution, while nearly half the congressional Democrats were unwilling to give Bush such open-ended war-making authority and voted no.

Passage of the resolution came with entreaties by lawmakers from both parties for Bush to exhaust all diplomatic efforts before using military force.

The Bush administration had hoped the congressional action would fortify the U.S.- and British-backed effort at the United Nations. France, Russia and China, the Security Council's other veto-capable permanent members, remain opposed to a resolution authorizing military action if it refuses to cooperate with inspectors. France has preferred a separate resolution to be debated afterward.

In his speech, Bush spelled out several ways Saddam has avoided compliance with U.N. resolutions on weapons of mass destruction and made it clear his patience was running out.

INTERNATIONAL



Rebels ready to sign truce in Ivory Coast, mediators say

BY AUSTIN MERRILL
Associated Press Writer

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — Rebels controlling the northern half of Ivory Coast agreed Wednesday to a truce with the government they attempted to overthrow, West African mediators said.

The deal paved the way for the first meeting between the warring sides Thursday, when the truce was expected to be signed in the rebel-held city of Bouake.

The envoys, who were still working out the last details of the plan, expected to fly from the commercial capital, Abidjan, to Bouake for the signing, said Mohammed Ibn Chambas, executive secretary of the regional economic bloc behind the initiative.

They would be accompanied by a Cabinet minister who would sign on behalf of the government. It was not immediately clear which minister that would be, or who would sign for the rebels.

An earlier attempt at a cease-fire foundered at the last minute on the government's insistence the rebels disarm first.

The new plan — initiated by Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade, who heads the Economic Community of West African States — calls for the rebels to confine themselves to their quarters, with their weapons, so peace talks can begin.

Government and rebel officials did not immediately comment on the announcement. However, President Laurent Gbagbo said previously his government accepts the proposals of the mediators.

The rebels indicated Sunday that they also agreed "in principle" to the plan, but took four days to give final confirmation they would sign — forcing mediators to repeatedly postpone their trip to Bouake.

"I'm praying that tomorrow we will sign the peace accord," Senegalese Foreign Minister Tidiane Gadio said. "I'm not going to Bouake for anything else."

The rebels have seized most of the northern half of the country since their bloody coup attempt Sept. 19. Hundreds have died in the fighting.

At the core of the insurgency are some 800 ex-soldiers, many of them dismissed from the army for suspected disloyalty. The uprising has also gathered support from Ivoirians in the north, who complain the country's southern-based government discriminates against them.

Mediation efforts were stalled over the weekend by fighting in Daloa, a key southwestern cocoa city captured by the rebels, then reclaimed by government forces in a counterattack. Residents said Daloa was quiet Wednesday.

"When the government reinforcements came from Abidjan they pushed the rebels all the way out of town to the north," said Bruno Gaston, a hotel receptionist contacted by telephone. "There are still residents leaving town, but now others are coming back at the same time."

Ivoirian army spokesman Col. Jules Yao Yao urged Daloa residents to help the army in a "mopping up and consolidation exercise." Speaking on state television and radio, Yao called on citizens to denounce suspects and hand them over to the appropriate authorities.

The war — and ethnic violence it is unleashing — has caused tens of thousands of people to flee their homes, creating a tide of refugees that aid workers fear could spill over Ivoirian borders, destabilizing other West African countries.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights on Wednesday protested abuses by both sides, including summary executions, arbitrary arrests, destruction of property and attacks based on nationality, ethnicity or religious beliefs.

Sergio Vieira de Mello also deplored the absence of a cease-fire agreement, urging the government and rebels to cooperate with international mediators.

Saddam wins



Jassim Mohammed/Associated Press

Iraqis, holding portraits of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, gather in Baghdad Wednesday to celebrate after Iraq declared Saddam Hussein winner with an 11 million to 0 margin in Tuesday's state-orchestrated referendum.

Mexico City is latest testing ground for ex-Mayor Giuliani

BY TRACI CARL
Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY — He conquered crime in New York City, and was hailed as a hero during the Sept. 11 attacks.

But cynics in this metropolis of 18 million people believe former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has met his match in Mexico City's kidnappers and corrupt police.

Mexican business leaders, fed up with losses from crime and theft, are paying the charismatic Giuliani \$4.3 million to give the city's police tips on how to crack down on violence in the nation's capital. Representatives from the former mayor's consulting firm are scheduled to arrive Thursday to begin work, and Giuliani himself will come sometime next month.

Although it will be Giuliani's first international security project, it won't be the first time his ideas have been used in Latin America.

Last year, Honduran President Ricardo Maduro was elected on promises to implement a Giuliani-style zero-tolerance policy on crime. He has sent soldiers into the street and abolished search warrants, allowing gun-toting police to enter any home and look for criminals.

The efforts in Honduras — as well as Giuliani's one-year consulting contract in

Mexico — have drawn criticism from human rights groups who fear the all-out war on crime is dangerous in societies that already have few protections against police abuse.

Others in Mexico say Giuliani's contract is proof that Mexico City's government can't manage it own problems.

Federal officials refrained from criticizing the decision of Mexico City Mayor Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador to hire Giuliani. But when asked if President Vicente Fox's government would follow suit, Public Safety Secretary Alejandro Gertz Manero said, "We can handle our job perfectly well."

Still, everyone — even Fox — agrees that crime is out of control, especially in the capital.

Mexico is estimated to have the second-highest rate of kidnappings after Colombia. Actors, business officials — even maids — are taken from their cars, homes or off the street and held. Sometimes the kidnappers cut off their victims' fingers and send the body parts to family members to persuade them to pay a ransom.

Taxi drivers have been known to hold their passengers for days, driving them to automatic teller machines until their bank accounts are empty. Even taxi drivers themselves are subject to assaults.

Rosalio Juarez and his passengers have been robbed twice while stopped in traffic. Once the assailants took a knife and sliced Juarez from his knee to his armpit.

When he tried to report the crimes, police told him to haul in witnesses — and in one case, the assailants — before they would write a report. He says the problem of police corruption and ineptness is too big for Giuliani.

"Who are they going to get rid of?" he said. "All of the thieves or all of the police?"

Juarez is not alone. Citizens have little faith in law enforcement officials, who take bribes to settle everything from a parking ticket to a homicide and have been repeatedly linked to kidnapping and drug trafficking gangs. Most crimes go unreported, leaving virtually no accurate crime statistics in the country.

The organization of business officials who helped hire Giuliani, known by its Spanish initials Coparmex, estimates that 15,000 people have been kidnapped in the past decade, with more than 100 victims killed in the past four years.

"We want a return to law and order, but we are not authorizing police brutality," said Coparmex official Jose Antonio Ortega.

The effort is reportedly being led by retail and telecommunications magnate Carlos Slim, one of Latin America's richest men and president of a committee try-

ing to restore Mexico City's historic center — an area plagued by crime and homelessness. A spokeswoman for Slim refused to comment on his involvement.

Still, for many, Giuliani is not the answer.

Watching over Mexico City's Independence Angel monument, policeman Raul Cholicco said his colleagues welcomed Giuliani's advice, but didn't think he would be much help.

"No one respects authority here," he said as cars sped around the monument, cutting each other off and running red lights. "Other police in other countries are protected by the government, but here they don't care about us."

Others criticize Giuliani's politics.

"It's astonishing how the city's chief, who is so bothered by the International Monetary Fund advising the country over its finances, can turn to such a pure, neoliberal Republican like Giuliani," said Miguel Gonzalez, a Mexico City lawmaker from the opposition Institutional Revolutionary Party.

Even in New York, where he is credited with reducing crime rates by 65 percent, Giuliani fought off critics who accused him of kicking the homeless out of a church and turning seedy Times Square into Disneyland.

Giuliani himself is optimistic he can make a difference here.



SPORTS

Irish needs to wake up against Air Force

BY RICHARD ROSENBLATT

AP Football Writer

Notre Dame's offense needs to wake up. If not, the Fighting Irish might run out of luck when they visit No. 18 Air Force on Saturday night.

In a matchup of teams that are 6-0, the Falcons seem to have the clear advantage. They lead the nation in rushing and score more than 40 points a game. Notre Dame has the fifth-worst offense and averages barely 23 points.

New coach Tyrone Willingham has the Irish off to their best start in nine years, but his West Coast offense is still sputtering. And don't think his defense doesn't know it.

"Every game the defense goes out and our mentality is to win the game by ourselves," safety Jerome Sapp said this week. "We don't want the offense to have to win any games. We realize the offense is going to handle their business when they need to, so in every game we put the game on our shoulders and say, 'We have to win it.'"

So far, it's been a charmed season for Notre Dame. Just last week, the Irish were outgained 402 yards to 185 but still beat Pittsburgh 14-6 thanks to a defense that produced eight sacks and three turnovers.

Air Force, meanwhile, has no problem scoring with its triple-threat option led by quarterback Chance Harridge. The Falcons ran for 386 yards and routed BYU 52-9 last week, scoring TDs on their first four drives.

Harridge produces 102.5 of Air Force's 339.2 yards rushing per game, and the quarterback has more touchdowns (15) than Notre Dame's offense (11).

The last two games between Air Force and Notre Dame went to overtime: The Irish won 34-31 in 2000, and the Falcons won 20-17 in '96.

"We plan on going into this game and having to play our best game of the season," Sapp said.

They'll need it.

The picks:

No. 9 Iowa State (plus 9) at No. 2 Oklahoma

Heisman-defining game for Cyclones QB Wallace? ... OKLAHOMA, 28-24.

Rutgers (plus 42) at No. 3 Virginia Tech

Hokies won last two meetings by com-

bined 99-0 ... VIRGINIA TECH, 49-0.

No. 4 Ohio State (minus 7) at Wisconsin

Buckeyes can pass, too ... OHIO STATE, 31-21.

Vanderbilt (plus 26) at No. 5 Georgia

After two close calls, 'Dawgs get a breather ... GEORGIA, 34-14.

Arizona State (plus 10 1/2) at No. 6 Oregon

Ducks find way to stop pass rush of DE Terrell Suggs ... OREGON, 42-28.

No. 7 Notre Dame (plus 3) at No. 18 Air Force

Falcons have an offense, Irish don't ... AIR FORCE, 31-18.

No. 8 Texas (plus 2) at No. 17 Kansas State

Horns' coach Brown is 0-2 vs. K-State ... KANSAS STATE, 31-28.

No. 11 Michigan (minus 3 1/2) at Purdue

Wolverines due for downer ... PURDUE, 28-27.

Duke (plus 24 1/2) at No. 13 North Carolina

With win No. 8, Wolfpack match best start ever ... NC STATE, 42-7.

South Carolina (no line) at No. 14 LSU

Tigers have nation's No. 1 defense ... LSU, 24-10.

No. 15 Iowa (minus 12 1/2) at Indiana

Hoosiers posted their upset last week ... IOWA, 31-17.

No. 22 Washington (plus 8) at No. 19 USC

Best defense wins ... USC, 34-31.

Northwestern (plus 25) at No. 20 Penn State

Bad calls shouldn't affect outcome in this one ... PENN STATE, 38-20.

No. 21 Mississippi (plus 11) at No. 24 Alabama

Rebels looking for first 3-0 league mark since 1970 ... ALABAMA, 27-21.

Baylor (plus 28) at No. 23 Colorado

Buff's still Big 12 threat if RB Brown keeps chugging ... COLORADO, 45-10.

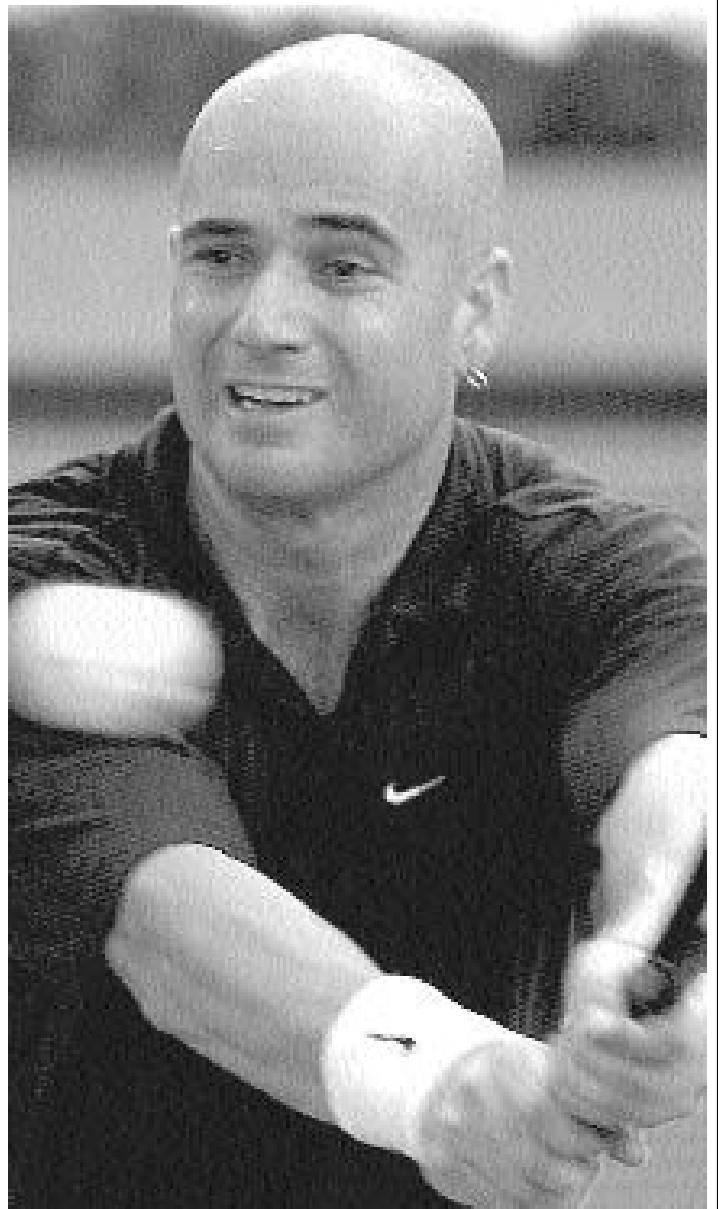
Western Michigan (plus 15) at No. 25 Bowling Green

Sixth straight win gives Falcons best start since '85 ... BOWLING GREEN, 35-7.

Last week: 11-9 (straight); 14-6 (vs. points)

Season: 105-34 (straight); 76-54 (vs. points)

Agassi triumphs



Paco Campos/Associated Press/EFE

Andre Agassi, of the United States, returns the ball to his fellow countryman Jan-Michael Gambill during the Madrid Tennis Masters Series tournament in Madrid, Spain, Wednesday. Agassi won 6-4, 6-4.

All-California World Series a challenge for network

BY LYNN ELBER

AP Television Writer

ANAHEIM — Fox will chase World Series viewers with two surprising California teams and a manic monkey, but history casts doubt on the odds of TV ratings glory when the rest of the country is left out.

In 2000, Fox Sports' telecasts of the Yankees-Mets Subway Series produced the lowest-rated World Series ever. Another intrastate matchup, 1989's earthquake-interrupted Oakland Athletics-San Francisco Giants series, also was among the lowest-rated ever.

"The network's gotta hate this one," said media analyst Larry Gerbrandt of Paul Kagan Associates in Carmel, Calif.

But Gerbrandt says Fox does have reason to believe in the Anaheim Angels-Giants matchup starting Saturday. Others, particularly Fox Sports president Ed Goren, second that.

"If there is going to be a difference, it's about Cinderella and it's about the biggest name in the game

right now, and that's Barry Bonds," Goren said, referring to the Giants' home-run king.

"Does that translate outside of California?" Goren asked. "From people who have been watching, people who have sampled the postseason, it's been infectious."

Postseason ratings for the American and National league championships were up, representing the best numbers in three years. Overall, postseason baseball is up 5 percent over last year.

The "Cinderella" factor of unlikely World Series contenders is important, agreed Gerbrandt. "You've got two wildcard teams, neither of whom anybody would have ever picked," he said.

The absent Yankees could add to the ratings, said some observers. The team played in five of the last six World Series, including four consecutive ones, and that leads to viewer fatigue, said analyst Stacey Lynn Koerner of Initiative Media in New York.

"It was the same when the (Atlanta) Braves were in it several years in a row," Koerner said.

Fox is working hard to maximize interest in a contest between a first-time league champion, the Angels, and the more seasoned Giants.

"Our job is to reintroduce a whole new group of athletes to America and not assume because we did something on the Angels in divisional play there's no reason to do more," Goren said.

Spotlighting a player like the Angels' David Eckstein, who's struggled to build a baseball career despite his relatively small size, is an example.

The enthusiasm of both teams is a draw in itself, Goren said. "I think there's just a very human, honest excitement here. These players seem to be so pure" in their approach to the game.

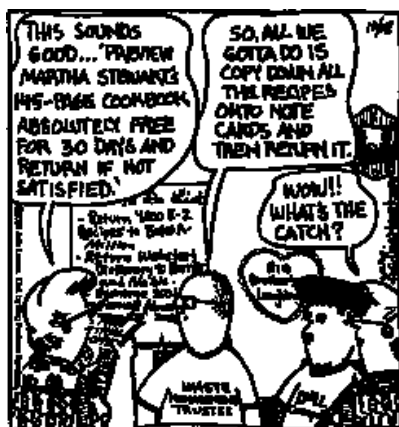
Even the Angels' most unlikely star, the rally monkey that pops up on the Anaheim scoreboard, is part of "this festival of fun," he said.

Games 1 and 2 air at 4:30 p.m. PST with Games 3 through 5 at 5 p.m. Games 6 and 7, if needed, will be at 4:30 p.m.

COMICS



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson

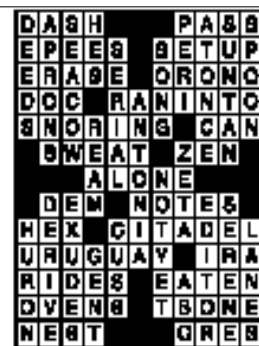


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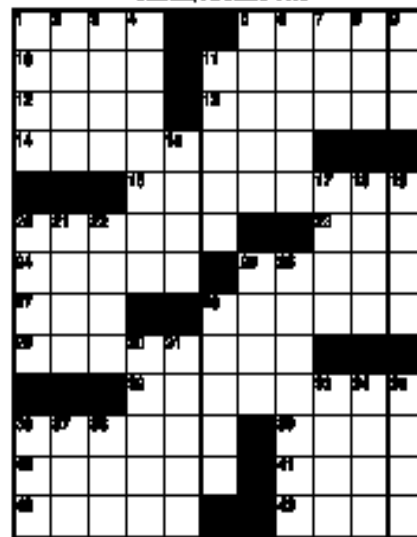
- ACROSS**
- 1 Bed board
 - 8 Madrid museum
 - 10 Trunk item
 - 11 Eastern European
 - 12 Word of agreement
 - 13 Skill
 - 14 2000 comedy film
 - 16 They're hard to pass
 - 20 Smooth
 - 23 Truck trip
 - 24 Rings
 - 25 Duplity
 - 27 Skill
 - 28 Hood-winked
 - 29 Touring troupe's offering
 - 32 Cause of driving confrontations
 - 35 Imps
 - 39 Trek of "Jeopardy!"
 - 40 Grove item
 - 41 Skin opening
 - 42 Government income
 - 43 Dates
- DOWN**
- 1 Headliner
 - 2 Big wheels
 - 3 Scoops
 - 4 Creeping stem
 - 5 Turban texture
 - 6 Alice's hubby
 - 7 Blvd. kn
 - 8 Clamor
 - 9 U.N. Day mo.
 - 11 Wander
 - 13 Grad weights
 - 17 Lame of movies
 - 18 Strong wind
 - 19 Went 60
 - 20 Practice in the ring
 - 21 Air (Prof.)
 - 22 "See ya"
 - 26 Well-behaved
 - 28 Opens in a way
 - 29 Action film staple
 - 30 Buzz
 - 31 Album tracks
 - 33 Lotion additive
 - 34 "Power" player
 - 35 Alimony recipients
 - 36 Morse symbol
 - 37 Fishing stat
 - 38 The Grinch's dog



Yesterday's answers

- 25 Well-behaved
- 26 Opens in a way
- 29 Action film staple
- 30 Buzz
- 31 Album tracks
- 33 Lotion additive
- 34 "Power" player
- 35 Alimony recipients
- 36 Morse symbol
- 37 Fishing stat
- 38 The Grinch's dog

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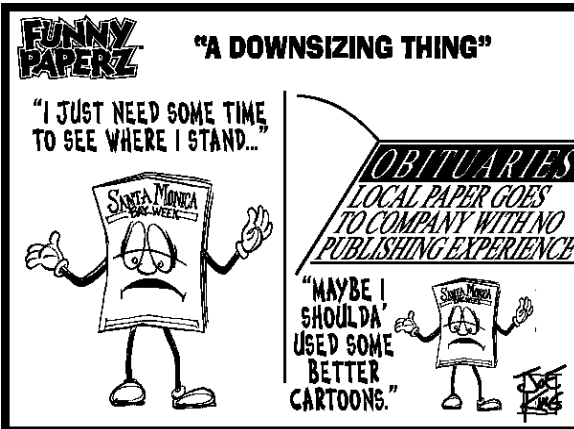
Speed Bump® By Dave Coverly



NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Juror with a conscience doubts criminal's act

Cheverly, Md., juror Levon Adams, 25, skipped out during deliberations in a September carjacking trial, and when sheriff's deputies brought him back to the courtroom the next day, he told the judge that he left because the other jurors were becoming aggressive with him. Adams told the judge that he was the only holdout against a guilty verdict and told the jurors that no matter how much evidence there was against the defendant, he could not convict him because Adams was not present at the scene of the crime and thus did not actually see the defendant do it.





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Announcements

PRO SE of Neighborhood Project needs volunteers for events that honor our heroes. (310) 899-3888 pro.se@adelphia.net.

VOTE FOR Pro Se Santa Monica City Council! Our Residents, Businesses, Schools must come first!

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Announcements

VOTE Thomas David Carter, Santa Monica Rent Control Board. YES on Measure EE. Protect Free Speech and Education. Paid for by Thomas David Carter

Services

AFTER SCHOOL program for special needs children. Monday through Friday. Saturday program also. (310)459-5973.

Services

BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS of your wedding, pregnancy and family. www.belinawaymouthphotography.com

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PIANO LESSONS Westside, my home or yours, ages 4 to adult, sliding scale. Jan (310)453-6211.

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EXPERIENCED MAKE-UP ARTIST! Weddings & Special Events. Local references available. (310)702-8778 / (323)559-9033. Nina & Alex.

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Calendar

Thursday, October 17, 2002

movies

Loews Broadway Cinema
1441 Third St. at Broadway
Knockaround Guys (R) 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15
Welcome to Collinwood (R) 11:45, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:30
The Rules of Attraction (R) 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45
The Tuxedo (PG-13) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Mann Criterion
1313 Third St.
Sweet Home Alabama (PG-13) 11:30, 12:10, 5:00, 7:40, 10:20
Below (R) 11:10, 1:45, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00
My Big Fat Greek Wedding (PG) 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10
Punch Drunk Love (R) 11:00, 12:00, 1:40, 2:40, 4:15, 5:15, 7:00, 8:00, 9:40, 10:30
The Transporter (PG-13) 11:20, 1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 9:50

AMC Theatre SM 7
1310 3rd Street
Red Dragon (R) 1:40, 3:50, 4:30, 6:45, 7:25, 9:40, 10:15
Tuck Everlasting (PG) 2:10, 4:55, 7:40, 9:50
The Banger Sisters (R) 1:30
Barbershop (PG-13) 2:00, 4:20, 7:00, 9:25
Brown Sugar (PG-13) 1:50, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
Jonah: A Veggie Tales Movie (G) 1:15, 3:15, 5:15
White Oleander (PG-13) 1:20, 4:00, 6:50, 7:30, 9:35, 10:10

Landmark Nu-Wilshire
1314 Wilshire Blvd.
Moonlight Mile (PG-13) 11:00, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45
Swept Away (R) 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

Laemmle Monica
1332 2nd St.
Heaven (R) 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:25, 9:50
The Man from Elysian Fields (R) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:45, 10:15
Secretary (R) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:35, 10:05
Spirited Away (PG) 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
The Good Girl (PG) 5:30, 7:30, 9:30

Today

Community

Childbloom Program. Special Open day at Santa Monica Music Center. This coming Sat. Oct. 19, 1-3pm. Guitar Giveaway and free mini lessons. For more information call (310) 600-0284

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

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

Classes/Groups

Come practice at SUNSET YOGA, overlooking the Pacific! "Integral Hatha Yoga" every Thursday from 7:15-9pm. Mixed levels. Donations only. Please bring a mat and towel. Located at 1450 Ocean Ave. between Santa Monica Blvd. and Broadway. For more information contact skinnybuddahboy@hotmail.com Music / Entertainment

Dharma at the Clubhouse. A weekly book and multi-media study group, no fee. Applying studies of Buddhism-Dharma into our daily lives. Every Thursday night at the Clubhouse at Douglas Park, 25th & Wilshire. 7:30 - 9pm. Dan (310) 451-4368 www.santamonivcakksg.org

Music/Entertainment

O'Briens Irish Pub, 2941 Main St., Santa Monica, pours A Pint of Funny, every Thurs., 8 p.m. FREE! (310)396-4725.

Komedy Krunch. Showtime is at 7pm. UnUrban Coffeehouse. 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, (310)315-0056.

LUSH 2020 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. Three bars, plenty of booths, sofas, leopard-print carpet and a sunken dance floor. Mexican grill

serves dinner after 5 p.m. Full bar. Over 21. Cover \$5 - Free. (310)829-1933.

The Joint, 8771 W. Pico Blvd., W. LA. One of the most exotic rooms in the local rock-facility pantheon. Pizza. Cover \$10 - \$5. Full bar. Over 21. (310)275-2619.

Friday

Community

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

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

Classes /

Groups

Pulse - Through kinesthesia, sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell, pathways clear for your deeper embodiment and wider expression. Each session is supported by live music with Christo Pellani of Soundformation Music and/or by recorded music. Altars devoted to the senses, spirit and play enrich the environment and amplify your awareness. Third Friday of the month, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Continuum Studio, 1629 18th Street #7, (North of Olympic in Santa Monica) Cost \$12.00. For more information please call Kara Masters (310)455-2743.

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The Joint, 8771 W. Pico Blvd., W. LA. One of the most exotic rooms in the local rock-facility pantheon. Pizza. Cover \$10 - \$5. Full bar. Over 21. (310)275-2619.

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KEEP YOUR DATE STRAIGHT

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



Amusement park rides do not cause brain injuries

BY MICHAEL RUBINKAM
Associated Press Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Roller coaster enthusiasts can climb aboard without fear, according to researchers who say there is no evidence that even the fastest, tallest rides cause brain injuries.

Roller coasters simply do not produce enough "head rotational acceleration" to cause either bleeding or swelling of the brain, according to researchers at the University of Pennsylvania who studied data from rides at three parks.

"Looking at the absolute maximum head acceleration, we found that those numbers were nowhere near known thresholds for brain injuries," said Penn neuroscientist Dr. Douglas H. Smith, co-author of the study appearing in Wednesday's edition of the *Journal of Neurotrauma*.

Other researchers, however, disputed the findings and said more work needs to be done.

Politicians and consumer advocates have long questioned the safety of coasters, citing more than a dozen reports of brain injuries since 1979, most of them since 1990. One elderly patient died.

The reports have led to state and federal legislation. On Oct. 1, New Jersey became the first state to limit the gravitational forces, or G-forces, of amusement-park rides. And U.S. Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass., has proposed legislation that would subject roller coasters to federal oversight.

He and Penn colleague David F. Meaney

"When you look at the hard science, the only conclusion that can be made is the industry is incredibly safe and that our customers can feel safe at our parks."

— BILL POWERS

International Association for Amusement Parks and Attractions

examined data from three rides with high G-forces: the Rock 'n' Roller Coaster at Disney-MGM Studios in Orlando, Fla.; Speed — The Ride at the NASCAR Cafe in Las Vegas; and Face/Off at Paramount's Kings Island near Cincinnati.

The researchers developed a mathematical model to predict the effect of the rides on the head and neck. They found that the coasters produced accelerations to the head nine times less than what would be required to cause torn blood vessels in the brain, and 18 times less than the force required to cause brain swelling.

The researchers also said that too much has been made of the effect of G-forces on riders' brains. G-forces are what coaster riders feel during sudden up-and-down movements and when they are whipped around corners.

While a coaster such as Face/Off can produce a G-force of 5, simply plopping

into an easy chair can produce a G-force of eight to 10, the study noted. While these G-forces are temporary and "well-tolerated," it requires much longer exposure to high Gs to pose a serious health risk, the authors said.

Industry spokesman Bill Powers lauded the study as confirming "what we and what experts already know."

"When you look at the hard science, the only conclusion that can be made is the industry is incredibly safe and that our customers can feel safe at our parks," said Powers, of the International Association for Amusement Parks and Attractions.

But Dr. Robert J. Braksiek, an Iowa physician who co-wrote a study of roller coaster injuries in the January issue of *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, said the new research fails to account for injuries reported in the medical literature.

"Roller coasters do cause brain injury

and that fact can't be debated. Although rare, it does happen," he said.

Congressman Markey questioned the study's methods, and said the researchers based their conclusions on the effect of coasters on "normal healthy individuals," as opposed to children or adults with pre-existing medical conditions.

"Measuring rotational G-forces is extremely difficult ... They plugged the data into a mathematical model to determine head accelerations, as opposed to measuring those accelerations on actual riders," Markey said in a statement.

Dr. Toshio Fukutake, co-author of a study contending that roller coasters were responsible for four cases of otherwise healthy patients developing bleeding on the brain, also disagreed with the findings. He noted that there are much faster coasters than the ones in the current study.

"We need more research using a real human model on the bigger and faster machines," he said via e-mail.

But Smith, whose research was funded by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said there hasn't been a single study showing definitively that amusement-park rides cause brain injuries. He called reports to the contrary "anecdotal."

The authors wrote that roller coaster riders are much more likely to be injured on the way to the amusement park.

"We highly recommend that all roller coaster riders use a proven method to reduce the risk of brain injury: make sure your seat belts are buckled at all times when driving to an amusement park."

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