

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

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19-6-17-32-9

Megamember: 12
Jackpot: \$99 million

FANTASY 5

8, 2, 32, 20, 24

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 6, 9, 1
Evening picks: 1, 9, 8

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 7, Eureka
2nd Place: 10, Solid Gold
3rd Place: 12, Lucky Charms
Race Time: 1:47.38



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

■ "Man With Ear Ache Gets Vasectomy" (an August Reuters dispatch from Rio de Janeiro about a patient who answered the wrong doctor's call at a clinic and endured the procedure because he thought the ear inflammation had deep roots).

■ "Groups Fight Over Fate of Feral Chihuahuas" (an August Reuters report on 170 wild Chihuahuas taken from a breeder in Acton, Calif., and ultimately given to one animal rescue outfit rather than another).

■ "Woman With No Baby Given Caesarean" (a September Melbourne (Australia) Herald Sun report on an overweight woman who went into cardiac arrest at a hospital after telling doctors she was pregnant, motivating them to try to deliver the baby in case they couldn't save her). (She survived; the baby never existed.)

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I'll not listen to reason. Reason always means what someone else has to say."

— Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell

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Timber!



Christian Boyce/Special to the Daily Press

Crews on Wednesday cut down a mature tree on Ninth Street, between Pico Boulevard and Michigan Avenue. It's unknown why the tree was cut down but neighbors mourned its passing.

Local jury awards more than \$250K to woman

She was injured at USC sorority party

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

A woman knocked down by a falling sun-shade at a USC sorority induction party in 2001 got a Santa Monica jury on Wednesday to award her more than \$250,000 after noting that the fall jarred loose the screws in her hip.

The case brought by Sharon Tuversen, 60, of Palm Desert, turned on who would take the blame for the mishap, sorority Kappa Alpha Theta or the owner of the parking lot where the ceremony was held — or both.

The verdict left one attorney jockeying for court fees with another hotly protesting.

Tuversen was recovering from earlier hip surgery requiring three screws when she attended the USC induction ceremony for her granddaughter.

"We're just glad it's over."

— SHARON TUVERSON
Plaintiff

The sun shade, a sort of eight-foot-high partition weighing about 70 pounds, was blown over onto Tuversen by a breeze. She complained that she had to undergo a partial hip replacement and will need more surgery in 10 or 20 years. Her lawyer, Christopher

See LAWSUIT, page 6

Parents to reconsider wrongful death case

Teen accused of stabbing SM girl died while police questioned her

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

The Los Angeles City Attorney's Office is pressuring parents of a 17-year-old girl who died of a drug overdose while in police custody to drop their case against the LAPD or face hefty lawyer fees if they lose.

LA Deputy City Attorney Geoffrey Plowden said his office has asked Angelique Bernstein and Sarkis Sarkissian, the parents of Katrina Sarkissian, who fatally

stabbed Santa Monica High School sophomore Deanna Maran in 2001, to reconsider their wrongful death suit against the LAPD. He gave them until Friday to drop it.

Their daughter, Katrina Sarkissian, was being questioned by police on Nov. 18, 2001 when she



Katrina Sarkissian

passed out at the West Los Angeles Police Station. Police took Sarkissian and her 15-year-old half-sister into custody for their role in the fatal stabbing of Maran, 15, the night before at an unsupervised teenage party in Westwood.

The Los Angeles County Coroner's Office ruled that Sarkissian

See CASE, page 5

Ironwoman scrapes by

SM 62-year-old completes 17-hour race with two minutes to spare

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

With a mere two minutes and four seconds left on the clock, Santa Monica Peggy McDowell-Cramer plunged across the finish line Saturday in the 141-mile Ironman race held in Hawaii.

McDowell-Cramer is 62.

The Ironman World Championship, which competitors must finish in 17 hours or less, includes a 2.4-mile ocean swim, a 112-mile bike race through the island's interior and a 26.2-mile run. Finishing the trek is one of the highest accomplishments in the racing world.

Though she's competed in and finished the race before, the local minister and mother of two had new obstacles to contend with this time. For the first 40 miles of the race's bike portion, McDowell-Cramer felt faint and thought she might pass out.

"I got on, and my legs said, 'Not today, it's not happening,'" she said. "I just felt sick and I wanted to go to bed, which is not good if you're on top of, or in front of, a

wheel of any kind."

But McDowell-Cramer pushed forward. Race helpers dumped water over her head. She put ice in her hat. And she continued riding.

Then, in the 13th or 14th mile of the run — the last of the three legs of the race — she ran into another snafu.

"Now it's dark," said McDowell-

See IRONMAN, page 6



Photo courtesy

Just across the finish line: Peggy McDowell-Cramer flashes a smile.

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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Thursday, October 23, 2003:

You will be able to mobilize and create unusually dynamic plans this year. Ideas seem to spring from nowhere, delighting associates and family. You might decide to make a major change on the home front, probably involving a new home or renovation of some sort. You will enjoy the process, especially if you are attached. This project could bring you unusually close together. You will also enjoy time spent alone together. If you are single, you might still want a home — and actually go for it. Just be aware that what you might choose now might not be what you would choose if you were in a major relationship. You will have the opportunity to meet people this year. Networking could prove to be significant, allowing you to meet someone who just might become more to you. LIBRA understands you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ You sense a change in your energy and that you might be much more successful dealing with others on a one-on-one level. A friend or associate discloses key information that heads you down a new path. Brainstorm away. Tonight: Put on your dancing shoes.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Others become more challenging than you would really like. As a result, you could be overwhelmed by what comes in your direction. Listen to comments, and choose to work with great ideas. Make your dreams your reality. Tonight: Your treat.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Dynamic ideas seem to flow out of space. You need to harness them and make them work. Investigate alternate possibilities. You laugh and play away. Speak your mind loud and clear, and as a result, you'll feel much, much better. Tonight: Put on your dancing shoes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ You might want to look at your basic foundations. Where someone else agrees, another might give you flak. Think creatively. Brainstorm with a trusted partner as well. Ideas simply flourish, especially in the next few weeks. Tonight: Happily money home.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Talk up a storm; exchange ideas. Your style draws many different opinions. Others greet your ideas with an assembly of reactions. Listen to the feedback, because ideas can only get better by tightening a screw here and there. Tonight: At your favorite spot.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Expenses go way overboard as others come up with great plans that you might want to participate in. Your even and nice temperament at work helps others see what might be going on around them. Tonight: Pay bills.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ With the Moon in your sign, you are highlighted. No one understands better than you the potential of collaboration and brainstorming. You spot a moneymaking venture. Ask appropriate questions. Tonight: The world is your oyster.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ The sun moves into your sign. Happy birthday! Within the framework of your family and/or home base, you find security, excitement and creativity. Take your time thinking through a personal decision. You don't need to make it right now. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22- Dec. 21)
★★★★ You might not be sure about what direction you need to go in. Listen to what a loved one shares, even if something within you says "no." Play with ideas, news and different ways of proceeding. You'll come up with the solution. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Take charge in a meeting, trying to determine what would be right. You might need to explore options with someone else who might be in charge. You are working toward a winner this month, if you can enlist others in the plans. Tonight: The spotlight is on you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Dynamic ideas flow, as long as you get past a tendency to screen your thoughts. Your creativity and dynamic thinking point to a new project or idea. Others might be quite enthusiastic. Still, make sure you let others know it is your idea. Tonight: Rent a sci-fi movie or something you generally don't.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Relate individually to others in order to get the response you desire. Reach out for those at a distance in the next few weeks. Important information heads your way. Consider taking a seminar or class. Use your intuition. You're right-on. Tonight: Opt for togetherness.

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LOCAL



Schwarzenegger on the pier



Jimmy Johnson/Special to the Daily Press

California Governor-elect Arnold Schwarzenegger, his wife, Maria Shriver and U.S. Olympic Decathlon Gold Medalist and Special Olympics Board of Governors Chairman Rafer Johnson at the Special Olympics Southern California's Pier del Sol on the Santa Monica Pier this past Sunday. The event honored Timothy Leiweke, president of Anschutz Entertainment Group, the Staples Center, and the Los Angeles Kings. More than 35 of L.A.'s top restaurants provided their appetizing specialties for the festivities. All proceeds benefited the Special Olympics of Southern California, which strives to make a positive impact upon the lives of individuals with mental retardation.

Kids keep up with technology

BY ELLEN MARK

Special to the Daily Press

Kids in Santa Monica can now surf the Net, play DVDs or brush up on their computer skills thanks to a new technology center at the local library.

Every Monday through Thursday afternoon, eight new lap top computers are kept busy by students between fourth and 12th grades at the Fairview Branch Library. The new Youth Technology Center is designed for student access to computers to do word processing, play games and explore the Internet. Lots of educational and fun software is provided.

The computers, purchased with a \$25,000 grant from Verizon, are available after school from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis. Those hours may be expanded.

Nia Dawson, of the City of Santa Monica Community Services Department, provides supervision and homework assistance Monday through Wednesday.

Each Thursday, young adult librarian Catherine Ronan offers one of the following 45-minute computer instruction classes:

The Library Treasure Hunt, which teaches library skills; Beyond the Internet, which explores why databases are better than the Internet; Advance Internet Searching and

Know Your Computer.

"It's not a homework center but a computer lab," Dawson said. "The youth can be more autonomous with how they use their time. I try to make sure they do their homework but I'm not here to enforce it."

On a recent afternoon Binh Le, a city computer systems specialist assigned to the library, instructed students as they took apart some old computers to learn how they work. A visitor observed one student chatting online with friends in Vietnam, while two boys nearby were researching Diego Rivera.

Andrea Cruz, a seventh grader at John Adams Middle School, who uses the technology center every day, explained what she likes most.

"We watch music videos and DVDs," she said. "The people here are really nice. One day we took apart a computer. We learn to type better and to look up books in the library."

For more information on the Youth Technology Center program, contact Ronan at (310) 458-8600.

The Fairview Branch Library is located at 2101 Ocean Park Blvd. The hours are: Monday through Thursday, 12 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The library is closed Fridays and Sundays. For more information, call (310) 450-0443.

surf report

The water is warm. The waves are firing. As we said yesterday, there's no way it can last.

Toss out your wetsuits and get in the sea cause there's some W in this swell and it's making it into the bay.

Then again, if you didn't get it yesterday, you might be bumming. The swell is expected to take a dip today and those head-high bombers may be a thing of the past ...

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break. We'll print your report in a future issue of the Daily Press

Today the water is:

68°

Sunrise 7:01 a.m.
Sunset 6:14 p.m.

	LOW TIDE				HIGH TIDE			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	10:10	3.7	11:47	0.7	7:37	3.8	3:34	4.4
SUNDAY	11:49	3.3	N/A	N/A	7:18	4.0	5:07	4.6
MONDAY	12:29	0.4	12:36	2.7	7:26	4.4	6:10	4.9
TUESDAY	1:03	0.2	1:15	2.0	7:41	4.8	7:02	5.2
WEDNESDAY	1:35	0.1	1:54	1.2	8:01	5.2	7:49	5.4
THURSDAY	2:06	0.2	2:34	0.5	8:24	5.7	8:36	5.4
FRIDAY	2:37	0.4	3:16	-0.2	8:52	6.2	9:24	5.3

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The Q Line

In response to recent violence in an eastside Santa Monica neighborhood, the City Council last week agreed to help find ways to address the problems there.

One is to give jobs created by City Hall, local schools and unions to at-risk and minority youth, as well as encourage employment opportunities within the private sector.

But some council members are concerned that creating new jobs without

re-evaluating the entire situation may not really help what some view as a societal problem.

"How should we address youth violence, and is creating jobs for them going to help?"

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

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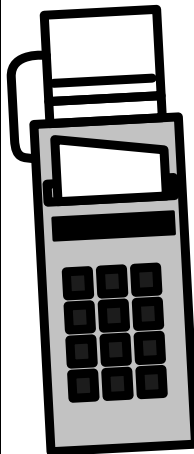
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LETTERS

Columnist misses the point of strike

Editor:

Evelyn Jerome (SMDP, Oct. 21, page 4) neglects an important fact in her discussion of the grocery strike: The workers from Ralph's and Albertson's were locked out by management. In other words, they are not on strike. Management is refusing to let them work. She also cites a pay rate that is greater than the workers, most of whom are struggling on part-time hours, receive. She apparently doesn't know or care that a person becomes a bagger with the expectation of ultimately improving their job. Lastly, the grocery chains are quite profitable as evidenced by the high salaries of their CEO's. Strikes are not childish. Workers were severely abused before labor won the rights of an eight-hour day, overtime, and a 40-hour week. Many people were beaten, imprisoned, and even killed to gain the benefits that Ms. Jerome dismisses so cavalierly. It is puzzling that some people don't think their fellow Americans should be paid a living wage and have health insurance.

Michael Johnson
Santa Monica

Clearing up the quote

Editor:

Thank you for your recent balanced coverage of the federal fair housing lawsuit, Vivanco vs. Liska (SMDP, Oct. 21, page 1). The plaintiffs believe you are doing a great public service by bringing the illegal discriminatory misconduct of defendant Liska to the attention of the Santa Monica community. The publicity this case has received serves to educate both tenants of their rights under law and landlords of their obligation to treat tenants fairly.

I do, however, have one minor criticism of the article: I was badly misquoted. I spoke to your reporter, Mr. John Woods (sic), for about 15 minutes and explained several times the nature of defendant Liska's discriminatory misconduct in this case.

During that interview, I never made the following ungrammatical remark, "this landlord has acted in a highly discriminative behavior towards people with children and people of color." I never made this statement.

I remember distinctly what I said: "The record speaks for itself. This landlord has

engaged in a consistent pattern of highly discriminatory behavior toward people with children and people of color."

I would appreciate it if you would in the future review quotations for accuracy and if one appears to be totally ungrammatical to check with me to ascertain whether the quotation is accurate or whether I would like to amend or correct it. To print such a palpably incorrect and ungrammatical quotation is really unacceptable journalism.

I would have also liked to have had an opportunity to have responded to Mr. Rosario Perry's statement that he thinks the "whole thing," by which I assume he is referring to the plaintiffs' lawsuit, is "preposterous." In fact, the only sworn affidavits in the record all confirm the truthfulness and accuracy of the plaintiffs' case against defendant Liska. Every single tenant in the building in which the Vivancos live stated in affidavits that the Vivancos had not committed any of the acts which defendant Liska fabricated as a pretext to evict them from the last rent-controlled unit on the premises. Indeed, defendant Liska has been convicted of two misdemeanor counts based on precisely the same facts that plaintiffs have alleged in their complaint. The only "thing" that is "preposterous" in this case is Mr. Perry's untenable assertion that defendant Liska is innocent of any wrongdoing after she has been criminally convicted of the very misconduct on which plaintiffs have predicated much of their civil lawsuit.

Dario Navarro
Attorney

No non-local dogs, homeless in area parks

Editor:

I was encouraged to read that the Santa Monica City Council has declared that Santa Monica's dog parks are now for the sole use of Santa Monica's canines (SMDP, Oct. 21, page 1).

Wouldn't it be nice if the City Council would extend a similar privilege to the children of Santa Monica and declare that Santa Monica's parks are for the sole use of our children rather than for use as homeless encampments?

Katherine Marie Anderson
Santa Monica

U.S. breathes easier, Wile E. Coyote nabs Roadrunner

NEWS
on the
EDGE

By Ron Scott Smith



■ The Ace of Clubs nailed the Joker.

■ Attorney General John Ashcroft has put in a zealous couple of weeks in his obsessive quest to rid America of all that's evil. He's been designated as the Ace of Clubs in a new deck of playing cards spoofing that ill-advised idea the Bush guys came up with to identify Iraq's most-wanted villains. American leaders provide faces for the cards this time — the "least-wanted," as its creator, French writer Thierry Meyssan, calls them. "This card game allows us to explain why we consider the government of George Bush a threat to international security," he said. "We were shocked at the indecency of presenting a manhunt as a game."

■ No game Ashcroft was playing in his own successful manhunt for the joker from East L.A. That 65-year-old, clear-and-present danger to society, arch-villain Tommy Chong, has begun serving a nine-month prison term for the dreaded act of selling glass pipes over the Internet. It had all the makings of one Wile E. Coyote finally catching up with and capturing the mocking and elusive Roadrunner after years of tormented chase. The hanging judge in Pittsburgh admitted to using the retribution factor at Chong's sentencing last week, chiding the comedian for having "spent years mocking law enforcement officers, and now it's time to pay the

pipe." It must have been lines like this one from "Up In Smoke" that got to the judge. The stoned and bumbling Cheech and Chong, when asked by a couple of equally bumbling cops if they have any illegal substances in their cloudy car, laughingly reply, "Not any more, man."

■ Meanwhile, out on the high seas — no pun intended — Greenpeace, long known for their demonstrations against vessels suspected of breaking international environmental law, have been brought in to shore by the same Ace of Clubs. They've been charged with "sailor-mongering," under an obscure 1872 law intended to stop the luring of sailors from their boats with liquor and prostitutes. Greenpeace had not a flask of rum or a whore amongst them, and didn't attempt to lure even one sailor from the ship containing a load of illegal wood on that day in April, 2002. But this month, another of the Ashcroft hanging judges will rule on an indictment handed down against the entire Greenpeace organization based on that colorfully extinct 1872 law. One of the world's staunchest environmental advocacy groups now faces the loss of its tax-exempt status, which could mean curtains for them, much to the delight of this administration. It was Greenpeace, don't forget, that flew a banner at the president's ranch immediately after he took office that said, "Bush: The Toxic Texan. Don't Mess With The Earth."

■ And our streets are even safer now that three Dominican nuns have just been sentenced for painting crosses on the 110-ton cap of a missile silo as part of a nuclear disarmament protest last year. They prayed and waited to be arrested at the silo, willing

to face the penalty for their civil disobedience. How severe could it be for the 68-, 66-, and 55-year-old nuns? How about 30 years in prison? That was what they were looking at when Ashcroft decided to charge them with not a misdemeanor, but with obstructing national defense and putting the military "in harm's way." The hanging judge in this case showed that there's a trace of mercy left in Bushamerica, and the peace-loving sisters were sentenced to "only" two to three years each for the few blessed moments spent trying to get us all out of harm's way.

■ Next up the river ... a 20-year-old college student from North Carolina arrested for intentionally planting box-cutters and other banned items in the lavatories of Southwest jetliners to expose the flaws in security that still plague the industry. Nathaniel Heatwold describes himself as a concerned citizen with a point to prove, but Ashcroft's Justice Department may have a different point to prove, as they consider seeking 10 years in federal prison for the young man. Instead, they might want to consider stiffening the testing standards for potential screeners at the airports of this nation. Here's a multiple-choice question found on the test created by the Department of Homeland Security: "Why is it important to screen bags for bombs?" I couldn't make this up. Sit down. These are the answers you get to choose from:

- The ticking timer could worry passengers.
- Batteries in the bomb could leak and damage other passengers' bags.
- The bomb's wiring could cause a short to the aircraft wires.

D. Bombs can cause a loss of life, property, and aircraft.

If you answered "D" you may have a career in the airline industry waiting for you, that is, if there is any airline industry left after Moe, Larry and Curly are done managing it.

■ Three names that will not conjure up chuckles are simply: Sean Grille, Joe Bellavia and Kim Orlando. Ho-hum. Who? Maybe their job titles will give them away. Corporal, Staff Sergeant and Lt. Colonel, respectively. They are the three latest young Americans to lay down their lives this week in the shooting gallery that has become post-war Iraq. Only their families and friends probably ever even knew they were here for their short time on the planet. Their Commander-in-Chief maybe doesn't even know they're gone. He was busy kicking off his reelection campaign in New Hampshire last week. "It's a lot better in Iraq than you probably think," he gushed to loyal followers who yearn for four more years of whatever this is. "Just ask people who have been there, they're stunned when they come back."

For the fallen Grille, Bellavia and Orlando, "stunned" is not the word. "Stilled" is more like it.

■ Country legend Merle Haggard has drastically changed his tune from earlier, more bellicose days and the chorus from his unlikely new hit sums it up for the week: "Politicians do all the talking ... Soldiers pay the dues ... Suddenly the war is over ... And that's the news."

(Ron Scott Smith lives on the edge. E-mail him at EdgeoftheWest@aol.com.)

LOCAL



Wrongful death case could go to trial in May of 2004

CASE, from page 1

had overdosed on antidepressant capsules before she left her Brentwood home with detectives. The autopsy revealed that Sarkissian had taken 43 capsules of Nortriptyline, a prescription antidepressant — twice the average fatal dose.

Gary Cassleman, the attorney representing Bernstein and Sarkis Sarkissian, said it's unlikely his clients will drop the suit, saying he has strong evidence from expert witnesses that police should have known something was wrong with the teenager when her speech began to slur.

The suit alleges that Sarkissian would have survived had the two detectives, Jim Hays and Kirby Carranza, immediately summoned paramedics when they were questioning her.

Cassleman said the detectives should have observed odd behavior from the teenager as the drugs kicked in, especially since Bernstein told police that her daughter was prescribed the pills.

Cassleman added that he has a doctor familiar with Nortriptyline who will testify that symptoms of an overdose show up quickly when a lot is ingested.

"We think there would (be) radical changes within the first 20 minutes," he said. "They had the information they needed but they were out to lunch."

Katrina Sarkissian and her half sister were picked up by police at 1:55 p.m. Paramedics were called 45 minutes later when she collapsed. Katrina Sarkissian allegedly told detectives that she felt sleepy during the interview. She was pronounced dead at 5:32 p.m.

Plowden said police possess certain immunities when responding to life and death situations, particularly due to the threat of lawsuits. Without such protection, paramedics and police would be hesitant to try and save anyone's life for fear of being sued, Plowden added.

"There is ample evidence that the officers and paramedics did what they could," he said. "They had no idea that the deceased overdosed on Nortriptyline that caused her demise."

Plowden added that Cassleman must prove that police and emergency workers acted with "deliberate indifference" or "reckless negligence" when they responded to Katrina Sarkissian's seizure.

"They will obtain no evidence that would prove that something else could have been done," he said, adding he has an expert who will say the lawsuit has no merit.

A key piece of evidence will likely show the condition of Katrina Sarkissian — the audio tape during the police interrogation. Cassleman claims she was slurring her speech and talking slowly.

"She goes into this strange sound and

loses it and then she went unconscious," he said.

Plowden maintains she was acting normally.

"The jurors would evaluate that and see nothing could be done," Plowden said. "It's insane to have them sued and accused of wrongdoing when they were trying to save her life."

"The jurors would evaluate that and see nothing could be done. It's insane to have (the police) sued and accused of wrongdoing when they were trying to save her life."

— GEOFFREY PLOWDEN
LA Deputy City Attorney

Cassleman said he is still reviewing evidence and testimony from his expert witnesses, as well as Plowden's, to determine if the case should continue. But he's fairly confident his clients have a strong possibility of winning.

"If you were going to bet, this case will be here after Friday," he said. "If we don't dismiss the case the worst that can happen is that the case will go forward."

If Bernstein and Sarkis Sarkissian don't drop the suit, Plowden said he will ask the court to throw it out of court in early 2004 and seek tens of thousands of dollars in attorney fees.

"Hopefully they will do the right thing," he said.

Sarkissian's half sister, whose name is being withheld because she is a minor, was charged with one count of battery, a misdemeanor, for her alleged role in Maran's murder. Police believe it was her scuffle with Maran that triggered the stabbing at the party. The 15-year-old received 100 hours of community service and was ordered to pay \$100 in restitution for the battery charge, sources said.

After the scuffle, the girl allegedly kicked Maran while Sarkissian allegedly stabbed her in front of the home where a 19-year-old hosted the party.

According to eyewitnesses, dozens of people watched while the girls fought and older college students prevented anyone from rescuing Maran during the fight.

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LOCAL

Santa Monica woman to enter 100th competition

IRONMAN, from page 1

Cramer, who lives with her husband Pat, a real estate investor, in a shaded house north of Montana Avenue on 17th Street. "And Hawaii is dark, dark ... it's dangerous when you can't see."

To cope with the darkness, McDowell-Cramer ran along the white line on the edge of the roadway. To the left, cars occasionally whizzed by. To the right, a precarious drop-off awaited even the slightest misstep.

During a lapse in traffic, with no light at all, McDowell-Cramer lost sight of the white line guiding her and plowed into a cone marking off the race path.

"I slid into (the ground) and, you know, it hurts but I thought, 'Does everything work? It does. Good. Get up,'" said McDowell-Cramer, who carries a muscular 5'3" frame but describes herself as a "Laura Ashley kind of feminine person."

Bruised, exhausted and bleeding, McDowell-Cramer finally neared the finish line. She passed her daughter, Hillary, who shouted for her to "crank it." She passed fellow Ironman competitors who had already finished and then returned to cheer on the others. Everything went by her in a blur.

When she finally reached the fan-laden "chute" and plunged across the finish line, everything was surreal, McDowell-Cramer said.

"They sort of guided me in, because you're kind of loopy by the end. You've narrowed your focus by the end and outside influences don't really (register)."

Friends from the Los Angeles Triathlon Club snapped photos, her physical therapist congratulated her, she was given a shirt, a medal and a small statue. Finally, McDowell-Cramer headed to the medical tent. She was



John Wood/Daily Press

McDowell-Cramer overcame a running accident to finish race.

told the injuries weren't bad and to simply go home and wash off.

Despite having the 17-hour race behind her, McDowell-Cramer said she didn't have the slightest urge to celebrate.

"I reached in my bag and got out a bar with protein and carbohydrates, and I started the recovery," she said, saying the next item on her agenda was a long shower.

"That is so fine — clean, clean, just, 'Oh yes I'm clean.' That is a great feeling."

McDowell-Cramer placed 14th in the women's group, ages 60 to 64. A total of 1,700 people competed in the event, ages 18 to 80 years, and roughly 25 percent were women. At 76, Richard Albrecht of Michigan was the oldest person to complete the race. He did it in 16 hours, 8 minutes and 49 seconds.

The event was held on the west coast of the big island of Hawaii and was centered around Kailua-Kona.

Now back in Santa Monica, McDowell-Cramer, who was born in Atherton, Calif., and turned to a career as a Presbyterian minister in 1981 after years of teaching sports sociology to college students, is on the recovery path and planning her next competition. She heads to New Zealand later this year for her 100th race. Six of the races have been Ironman events.

Training, she said, is rather simple. Lots of biking, running and swimming, but also a healthy dose of weight lifting and plenty of stretching.

"You just ramp up slowly," she said.

Though she wasn't a competitive athlete in her youth, McDowell-Cramer began synchronized swimming after graduating from the University of Oregon. She was first asked in 1992 to compete in a sprint-distance triathlon with her sister and she won, despite using a clunky mountain bike "with a kick stand," she said.

"Doing well is what spurred me on," she said. "I thought, 'I like this.'"

Asked if she'll compete in next year's Ironman event in Hawaii, McDowell-Cramer said, "I don't know about next year yet. I'm not locked into, 'I have to do this every year to be a wonderful person.'"

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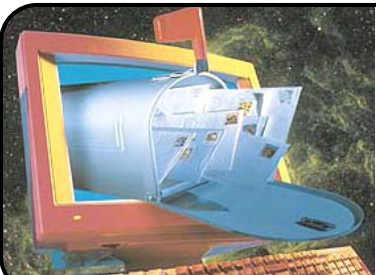




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Woman awarded \$175K for pain and suffering

LAWSUIT, from page 1

Mears, asked the jury for \$400,000.

Just before lawyers made opening statements in Santa Monica Superior Court Monday, Benjamin Seal, lawyer for Kappa Alpha Theta, which has chapters across the country, agreed to settle the sorority's portion of the case for \$175,000.

That left as defendant just Vicky McCluggage, a former member of the sorority and the owner of the parking lot where the ceremony was held.

Although McCluggage, wife of Kerry McCluggage, former chairman of the Paramount Television Group, found out the partitions were going to be used shortly before the ceremony began, Robert Levine, her lawyer, argued that she was not liable for the accident because she rented out the space in good condition.

"This isn't a case where somebody tripped and fell in a pothole," he said. Levine said there is another reason she shouldn't have been found liable — because she doesn't technically own the land, but rather controls a limited liability corporation that owns it. It was a technicality jurors said they didn't buy.

In the end, jury members, who were not told about the settlement agreement between Tuverson and the sorority, awarded Tuverson \$76,280.70 in medical bills, \$50,000 in past pain and suffering and another \$125,000 in future pain and suffering. They agreed that the sorority should shoulder 65 percent of the liability and McCluggage should be responsible for the other 35 percent.

Jury foreman James Shaw, 40, a schoolteacher, said jurors agreed both parties were responsible for the accident.

"(McCluggage) had a really short amount of time, apparently, that she had to make a decision about (the threat posed

by the partitions)," said Shaw, of Los Angeles. He said he thought the case was worth less but he failed to convince the other jurors.

"You can't get better than having to pay nothing."

— **ROBERT LEVINE**
Defendant's attorney

"Basically, the jury found that she was the owner of the property and owners of properties have certain responsibilities if they see something dangerous."

Levine applauded the verdict, which came after a three-day trial before Santa Monica Superior Court Judge Richard Neidorf. Levine asserted that due to the way the responsibility was assigned, McCluggage won't pay a penny.

"You can't get better than having to pay nothing," he said, adding that because he believes his client won't have a financial obligation he will ask the court that she be named the prevailing party.

As the winner, McCluggage can then seek reimbursement for "thousands and thousands" of dollars in court fees, for things such as depositions, court reporter costs and expert witnesses.

But Mears, who also sits on the Irvine City Council, read the verdict differently.

"He's dead wrong about that," he said, adding that he expects the final judgment from Judge Neidorf will hold McCluggage liable for about \$75,000. The final amount will be determined by taking a percentage of the amount of the verdict, with some other complicated legal calculations.

Tuverson said of the case only, "We're just glad it's over."



WORLD BRIEFLY

Bombers ambush Army convoys

By The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraq's ambush bombers struck Wednesday in the center of Baghdad and in the tense Sunni Muslim area west of the capital, rocking U.S. Army convoys with roadside bombs.

The attack in Baghdad inflicted only light casualties, a U.S. officer at the scene reported. Witnesses said four Americans were carried away on stretchers in an attack on the western end of the flashpoint city Fallujah, but there was no comment from U.S. officials.

The homemade bomb in Baghdad exploded as a three-Humvee convoy passed through a road tunnel under Tayeran Square, already teeming with Iraqis at 6:45 a.m. The blast, whose concentrated sound reverberated through central Baghdad, lightly wounded two 1st Armored Division soldiers and damaged a Humvee, the division's Capt. Tommy Leslie said afterward.

Local residents said U.S. Army convoys had been repeatedly targeted in the tunnel.

"It's always the same," said traffic policeman Adnan Khadim, 43, assigned to the area. "They should stop using the tunnel."

Developers plan to pave wilderness

By The Associated Press

JOSHUA TREE — Now that a proposed sale to conservationists has fallen through, owners of nearly 9,000 acres of land between Joshua Tree National Park and the Coachella Valley Preserve said they intend to develop the property.

Robert Manning, president of Cathton Holdings Ltd., said the "preferential opportunity" for environmentalists to buy the land has closed and the developer now needs to "move on, change our focus and pursue development."

Manning said he was surprised the conservation deal fell through and he said Cathton would cooperate with efforts to revive it.

But, he added, "The preferential buying opportunity

that we made available has been rejected and therefore that initiative appears to be at an end."

Developers had proposed a 7,000-home "virtual city" called Joshua Hills at the site. Developer Richard Oliphant said in July he was scrapping plans for Joshua Hills, citing environmentalists opposition and an incompatible county land use plan.

Transit strike negotiators try it again

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Negotiators for both sides in Southern California's transit strike have agreed to meet again through a state mediator after the Metropolitan Transportation Authority backed away from earlier demands to take over the union's troubled health care fund.

Representatives of striking mechanics have asked for more details on a proposal by the MTA but have not yet offered a counterproposal, according to agency spokesman Ed Scannell.

Negotiations lasted for about six hours Tuesday with both sides shuttling questions and answers back and forth through the negotiator, and more talks were scheduled for Wednesday.

The strike began Oct. 14, with 2,200 members of the Amalgamated Transit Union walking off the job. They are being supported by 6,000 bus and train operators who have refused to cross picket lines. The transit system serves 500,000 riders a day.

Family of swimmer gets \$1M settlement

By The Associated Press

MISSION VIEJO — A week before a wrongful death trial, the Lake Mission Viejo Association agreed to pay nearly \$1 million to the family of a high school track star who drowned while swimming in the association's man-made lake.

The mother of Victor Brown Jr., 18, of Harbor City said the settlement should put the association and corporations on notice to properly train and staff lifeguards

to prevent future tragedies.

"This doesn't bring closure; you can never bring closure on the loss of a loved one," Mary Green-Johnson said. "But by suing for monetary compensation, it puts corporations on notice to staff enough lifeguards."

"Sometimes, putting them on notice can maybe save another person's life in the future."

Victor Brown, a track and football star at Narbonne High School, drowned in 2001 while making a 40-yard swim with his cousin to an anchored raft in the middle of the lake. He was visiting relatives in Mission Viejo and became tired while swimming to the raft.

Witnesses said that Brown was dog-paddling and showing signs of distress, which should have signaled to the lifeguard that the youth should have been asked to return to shore or at least merited closer observation.

About 22,000 homeowners pay a monthly fee to maintain the private, 124-acre artificial lake and the surrounding landscape.

Wisconsin senator thrown out of office

By The Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Democratic State Sen. Gary George, who spent almost 23 years in office fashioning a reputation as a maverick politician, was swept from office in the state's second recall of a sitting senator in seven years.

Democratic State Rep. Spencer Coggs defeated George by a 30-point margin Tuesday, making him the only candidate in the Nov. 18 general election for George's seat, which represents inner-city Milwaukee.

George, 49, fought the recall drive in court every step of the way, asking a trial court, appeals court and the state Supreme Court to stop or delay it. They all refused, although George's appeal is still pending before the Supreme Court.

George's opponents began the drive to kick him out of office in April after he broke with his party and voted to override Democratic Gov. Jim Doyle's veto of Republican legislation that would have given lawmakers final say over tribal gambling compacts. The governor currently is the only one authorized to deal with the tribes on compacts.

George also angered Democrats by voting for the Republicans' version of the state budget.

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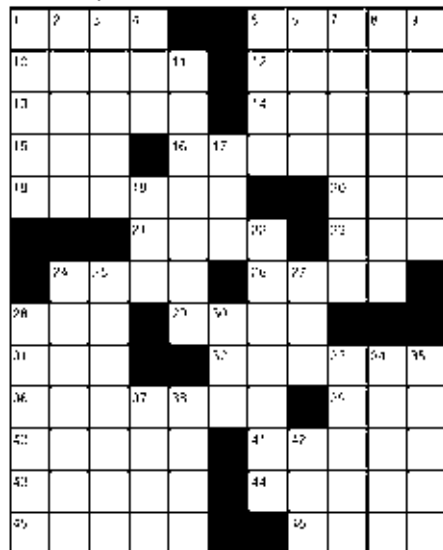
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300 California \$995

Lower single, utilities paid, fridge & stove, gated entry

1449 Princeton \$995

Lower 1 bed, new carpet, good closet space, laundry room

519 Hill St. \$1095

Lower 1 bed, utilities paid, new carpet, paint, & blinds

1812 Idaho \$1295

Upper 1 bed, hardwood floors, bright unit, nice setting

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SANTA MONICA \$1200/mo. 2 bdrm, 1 bath, stove, refrigerator, gas paid. No pets. Close to Santa Monica College. 2535 Kansas Ave. #105, Santa Monica, CA 90404. Cross Streets: Cloverfield Blvd. & Pico Blvd. Available Now. Manager located at Apt. #101.

SANTA MONICA \$1325/mo. 2 bdrms, 1 bath, gas paid, upper level, stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, no pets, close to Santa Monica College 2535 Kansas Ave. #207. Santa Monica, CA 90404. Cross streets: Cloverfield Blvd. & Pico Blvd. Available After: Nov. 1, 2003. Manager Located at Apt. #101.

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SANTA MONICA prime north-side. 1+1, bright, upper, detached, hardwood floors, parking, stove, laundry, immediate occupancy, \$1550/mo. (310)454-9627.

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SANTA MONICA: \$821, studio, plus dinette area & full kitchen, storage area, month to month. (310)395-7368
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SANTA MONICA: \$895, 1+1, upper unit, great location, pet ok, r/s, laundry, enclosed patio, parking included. (310)395-7368
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SANTA MONICA: \$1676, large 3 bdrm, 2 bath, great neighborhood, quiet, carpet, large closets, parking. (310)395-7368
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For Rent

WEST HOLLYWOOD \$795.00 Great 1bd/1ba, patio, 2 units available, patio, hardwood floors, stove, fridge, Spanish style.

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Houses For Rent

SANTA MONICA \$5500 3 bdrm, 2 bath colonial charmer near Georgiana. (310)393-9711 apt/broker.

SANTA MONICA: \$1150, triplex, 1+1, r/s, hardwood floors, tiled kitchen & bath, garage, patio. (310)395-7368
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Houses For Rent

SANTA MONICA: \$1200, cottage, 1+1, cat ok, r/s, carpet, laundry, courtyard, parking, (310)395-7368
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SANTA MONICA SCENE °CALENDAR EDITION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2003

EVENTS

Free "Combating Violence" workshop

Attend a free workshop about combating violence through community cooperation from 6:30-9:30 p.m., sponsored by the Pico Youth and Family Center. This workshop is part of the YWCA's Week Without Violence 2003, a national campaign that focuses on practical alternatives to violence, bringing to life a safer, more peaceful and healthy community. For more information, call (310) 452-3881.
YWCA, 2019 14th St.

Family holiday bazaar

Next weekend, peruse a vast selection of gifts, jewelry, boutique items, plants, baked goods, attic treasures, stationary, clothing, children items and household goods. This bazaar will support Habitat for Humanity and is sponsored by Mission and Youth Groups. It will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 25 and is open to the public. Also, there will be a Scottish Meat Pie Luncheon from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. which costs \$6 for adults and \$3 for children. Free parking will be available in the underground parking structure located on the north side of Arizona, between Ocean and Second with a validation stamp obtained at the church's Desk.
First Presbyterian Church, 1220 Second St.

CULTURE

Teen read week author presentation

A discussion about the books of Sonya Sones with the

author herself will be held from 4 to 5 p.m. Admission is free and open to all teens. For more information, call (310) 450-0443.
Santa Monica Library, Fairview Branch, 2101 Ocean Park Blvd.

Antiques show & sale

18th, 19th and early 20th century antiques, collectibles and decorative arts from over 95 dealers across the country will be on display and for sale this weekend. General admission tickets for the show cost \$7 and \$4 for seniors. On Friday and Saturday the doors will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and on Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call (310) 458-8551.
Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, 1855 Main Street

A Hansel and Gretel Halloween

The Santa Monica Playhouse presents a light, sing-along musical that takes the audiences through the mysterious Black Forest. Suitable for all ages, this play is written and directed by Chris DeCarlo and Evelyn Rudie. Birthday parties are available. Tickets for kids 12 & under cost \$9; adults \$10; they are available at (310) 394-9779 ext. 2. Showings Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. Santa Monica Playhouse Main Stage, 1211 Fourth Street

The Other Shoe: Original Short American Plays

On Saturday and Sunday, the Edgemark Center for the arts will present this compilation of musical and comedic plays. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. and costs \$20. Reservations can be made at (310) 392-7327. Saturday

and Sunday.
Edgemark Center for the Arts, 2437 Main Street

ENTERTAINMENT

Temple Bar

Here visitors can enjoy concoctions like White Chocolate Martinis, a Gingirino or a Razzmatazz. Those who are really hungry can enjoy a Chicken Tamale Plate with Fried Plantains. Temple Bar even offers vegetarian options like veggie eggrolls and burgers. But no good bar would be complete without live music. Tonight, the Temple Bar features DJ Carlos Nino and the following: Rogelio Mitchell and Bobby Matos at 9 p.m. and Virginia Rodriguez at 10:30 p.m. \$20. 1026 Wilshire Blvd., (310) 393-6611

Harvelle's

Established in 1931, Harvelle's is the oldest blues club on the west side. This is the kind of blues joint you'd expect to find in a dark Chicago alley; yet even if it's your first visit, it feels familiar. Tonight Harvelle's features Maetra, new world acid jazz with a funk twist. 1432 4th St., (310) 395-1676

14 Below

An intimate and well-equipped club that is leading the Westside music scene with live performances seven nights a week. Tonight 14 Below features Steve Narahara at 8:30 p.m., Sci-Fi at 9:30 p.m., Dubistry at 10:30 p.m. and Letter Openers at 11:30 p.m. 1348 14th St., (310) 451-5040

MOVIE °GUIDE

LAEMMLE'S MONICA 4-PLEX

1332 2nd Street
Pray for Rock and Roll R - 1:45, 4:35, 7:25, 10:05
Dirty Pretty Things R - 2:00, 4:35, 7:10, 9:45
Wonderland R - 1:45, 4:25, 7:05, 9:45
Station Agent R - 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00

LANDMARK NU-WILSHIRE

1314 Wilshire Blvd
Pieces of April PG-13 - 4:30, 7:30, 10:00
Returner (not rated) - 4:00, 7:00, 9:45

LOEWS CINEPLEX BROADWAY CINEMAS

1441 Third Street Promenade
Kill Bill Vol. 1 R - 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:00, 2:15, 3:30, 5:00, 6:05, 7:40, 9:00, 10:30
Lost in Translation R - 10:45 a.m., 11:20 a.m., 1:10, 1:50, 3:45, 4:30, 6:10, 7:15, 8:40, 9:45
Mystic River R - 12 p.m., 12:45 p.m., 3:50, 6:30, 7:15, 10:30

AMC SANTA MONICA 7

1310 Third Street Promenade
House of the Dead R - 1:05, 4:15, 7:25, 9:40
Out of Time PG-13 - 2:10, 4:35, 7:10, 9:45
School of Rock PG-13 - 1:40, 4:25, 7:00, 9:35
Intolerable Cruelty PG-13 - 2:10, 4:35, 7:10, 9:55
Under the Tuscan Sun PG-13 - 2:20, 4:50, 7:05, 9:30
The Texas Chainsaw Massacre R - 1:30, 2:30, 4:00, 5:00, 6:45, 7:35, 9:20, 10:00

MANN CRITERION 6 THEATERS

1313 Third Street Promenade
Now showing: Good Boy!, Veronica Guerin, Matchstick Men, The Rundown and Runaway Jury. Call theater at (310) 395-1599 for playing times.

If you know of an upcoming event which may be included in the calendar please send the information to calendar@smdp.com or fax it to (310) 576 9913

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Announcements

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP meeting. Last Wednesday of the month; at Sunrise Assisted Living, Pacific Palisades call (310)573-9545/Linda.

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California law requires that contractors taking jobs that total \$500 or more (labor or materials) be licensed by the Contractors State License Board. State law also requires that contractors include their license number on all advertising. You can check the status of your licensed contractor at www.cslb.ca.gov or 800-321-CSLB. Unlicensed contractors taking jobs that total less than \$500 must state in their advertisements that they are not licensed by the Contractors State License Board.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

'Bennifer' celebrity culture scares even Stephen King

By The Associated Press

■ **NEW YORK** — Stephen King is disgusted by the celebrity culture that has turned Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez into a phenomenon known as "Bennifer."

King writes in his Entertainment Weekly column that the amalgamated moniker suggests it's "as if their romance summed up everything we'd ever care to know about them. Are they talented? Can they sing, dance and act? Doesn't matter. When dealing with celebs, talent's a side issue."

The author writes in the magazine's Oct. 24 issue that he knows some actors and singers thrive in the spotlight, while others suffer with the realization that a normal life is impossible.

"Can you imagine Mr. Affleck and Ms. Lopez (that's J.Lo to you, buster) ever dining a deux in a neighborhood restaurant?" King writes. "For that matter, can you imagine them having a neighborhood?"

Lopez and Affleck had planned to marry Sept. 14 before abruptly calling off the wedding. It would have been the third marriage for Lopez, 33, and the first for Affleck, 31.

They've appeared together several times since then, though, including the Oct. 11 playoff game between the New York Yankees and King's beloved Boston Red Sox.

■ **NEW YORK** — After 15 years in the public eye, Uma Thurman said she's learned to ignore what gossip columnists write about her.

Now they're writing that her marriage to actor Ethan Hawke is in trouble, and she's trying not to let that bother her — but it's been difficult.

"You know, I think it was Katharine Hepburn who had the best answer to that," Thurman told Vogue magazine for its November issue. "She said the only time it hurts is when it's true."

"I am with the kids, and I am committed to taking the fall off," she said. "Then we will see what happens."

The star of "Kill Bill — Vol. 1" told the magazine

that she and Hawke haven't had a serious discussion about their future, and said she's unsure whether their marriage can survive.

Thurman, 33, and Hawke, 32, married in 1998 and have a daughter, Maya Ray, and a son, Levon. They've co-starred in the movies "Gattaca" and "Tape."

■ **HELENA, Mont.** — Hollywood film producer Burt Sugarman, a part-time resident of Whitefish, shelved the state land swap he's tried to negotiate for 10 years, citing neighbors' criticism of him and his celebrity wife, Mary Hart.

"My wife and I have been absolutely demonized in Whitefish," Sugarman told the Montana State Land Board as he read from a handful of hate mail.

Sugarman and Hart, co-host of the syndicated TV show "Entertainment Tonight," have lived part-time in the area for more than 12 years.

"Many of the letters say we haven't been good community people and that we've never belonged in Whitefish," he said.

Sugarman has been trying to work a land exchange with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation to acquire about 51 acres of state-owned timberland around the 136 acres he owns along Whitefish Lake.

But Sugarman said Monday he's decided to wait for more public input through a "neighborhood plan" the community and the department started six months ago.

The plan is intended to figure out how to manage the 13,000 acres of state trust land in the area, including the land Sugarman wants.

Sugarman said most of the letters accused him of wanting to overdevelop the land or run a marina on his shoreline property. He told the board the only building on the property is and will be the 1,100 square-foot cabin 200 feet from the shore.

"We kept it looking pristine, exactly like a park," he said.

And, he pointed out, the land he wants to get from the state is not waterfront property, but three segments that just frame his current land.

State Auditor and Land Board member John Morrison, whose parents live in Whitefish, apologized to Sugarman for the personal attacks he has gotten from the community.

"There is room in Montana for all of us," Morrison said.

■ **PERTH, Australia** — An award-winning British film producer and conservationist appeared in an Australian court Tuesday charged with trying to smuggle hundreds of frogs and reptiles out of Australia in his luggage.

Michael Linley was arrested by customs officials at Perth International Airport in Western Australia state Monday, after more than 200 live reptiles and frogs were found in his suitcases, along with insects.

Linley appeared in Perth Magistrates Court charged with trying to smuggle the creatures, which included skinks, frogs and geckos.

Prosecutors said Linley told customs officers he knew his actions were illegal and was likely to plead guilty at his next court appearance later this month. It wasn't immediately clear what sentence he faces if convicted.

Defense lawyer Geoffrey Vickeridge told the court Linley was a well-known film producer who had won international awards for conservation.

Linley, whose credits include work for National Geographic, was released on bail on condition he surrender his passport and report to police three times a week.

Western Australia's Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) said the animals were discovered by X-ray at the airport, following a tip-off from a member of the public.

CALM officers are hoping to release the animals back into the wild later this week. Investigator Rick Dawson said the hundreds of animals were found in two suitcases. Some of the females were laying eggs, he said.



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