

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

10 14 30 38 42
Meganumber: 22
Jackpot: \$17 Million

FANTASY 5

18 21 28 30 38

DAILY 3

Daytime: 4 2 1
Evening: 4 8 8

DAILY DERBY

1st: 12 Lucky Charms
2nd: 05 California Classic
3rd: 07 Eureka

RACE TIME: 1:42.02

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

Austin Gullette, 45, was arrested on Aug. 31 in West Monroe, La., after his sister caught him allegedly having sex with one of her three pigs. Two days later about 100 miles away in Florien, La., Timothy Garner, 35, was arrested after being spotted inside a henhouse, allegedly having sex with a chicken. (A sheriff's official in the West Monroe case said he had never before, in his 29-year career, seen a case of a man having sex with a pig, but then he added, to a Monroe News Star reporter, that of course there were cases involving men with "dogs, donkeys and sheep.")

TODAY IN HISTORY

ON OCT. 28, 1886, the Statue of Liberty, a gift from the people of France, was dedicated in New York Harbor by President Cleveland.

■ In 1919, Congress enacted the Volstead Act, which provided for enforcement of Prohibition, over President Wilson's veto.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Next to excellence is the appreciation of it."

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY
BRITISH AUTHOR (1811-1863)

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Connect four: School board race nears finish

Malibu fights to maintain representation on school board

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

Voters this November could keep Malibu parents off the decision-making board of the local school district for the first time in nearly 25 years.

Only one of four candidates running for three open seats is a Malibu resident, and none of the board members whose terms don't expire until 2006 are from Malibu. Board member Mike Jordan of Malibu will retire this November.

If community volunteer Kathy Wisnicki, a Malibu parent, fails to win a seat, it will be the first time since 1981 the board has been made up entirely of Santa Monica residents. That possibility has sparked a debate over what's best for students.

"I think that Malibu would feel very disenfranchised," said Wisnicki, 42, who sits on the district's financial oversight committee. "I think that there's already that impression coming from a number of people, and I think that, without Malibu representation, that will create more of that feeling of disenfranchisement from

the district."

Incumbent Maria Leon-Vazquez, 48, disagreed. She said the board will consider the interests of all the district's students, regardless of where members live.

"We don't turn around and say, 'This money is just going to be spent on Santa Monica,'" said Leon-Vazquez, referring to a recently passed bond measure that was used in large part to fund projects in Malibu. "No, no. We said, 'It's got to be spent on all our children in the district. Wherever the need is, that's where the money goes.'"

Challenger Ana M. Jara, 46, agreed with Leon-Vazquez.

"I think that every single board member that is elected onto the position has to consider the overview of all the students, from Olympic High all the way to Point Dume," she said.

Incumbent Jose Escarce, 51, said although the lack of a Malibu representative probably wouldn't make much of a difference substantively, parent perceptions would be affected. Both Escarce and Vazquez are seeking re-election after four years on the board.

"Ninety-five percent of the time, the issues are not Malibu specific or Santa Monica specific,

See SCHOOL BOARD, page 9

School Board Candidates



José Escarce

Age: 51

Profession: University professor and physician

Where do you live? Santa Monica

Photo Not Available

Ana Maria Jara

Age: 46

Profession: Administrative assistant

Where do you live? Pico neighborhood



Maria Leon-Vazquez

Age: 48

Profession: Manager, legal/compliance unit, Century Housing Corporation

Where do you live? Sunset Park



Kathy Wisnicki, Ph.D.

Age: 42

Profession: Parent, educator, volunteer

Where do you live? Malibu

See FULL RESPONSES, pages 4-5

Will Rogers Elementary School put on 'lock down'

Students held in class after suspected prowler runs across campus

By Daily Press staff

SUNSET PARK — Students at Will Rogers Elementary School were held in their classrooms Wednesday morning after a suspected prowler apparently ran across the campus, police said.

The suspect had been sighted in the area Sunday and was seen again shortly after 9 a.m. Wednesday running across the school campus,

said Santa Monica Police Department Lt. Frank Fabrega.

Police searched for the prowler for about 35 minutes, but were unsuccessful, Fabrega added. A prowler is defined as somebody who trespasses with the goal of peeping into a business or residence, police said.

However, Will Rogers Principal Maureen Bradford sent a note home with students Wednesday afternoon that told parents the school was put on "lock down" so police could search for a suspected burglar, not

a prowler.

"An off-duty officer noticed a man walking down 14th Street who matched the description of a suspect in a series of burglaries in the area," Bradford's letter said. "The off-duty officer saw the man turn into what appeared to be either our 14th Street parking lot or the apartment building next door. He called the situation into the police department and several officers responded.

"We used our intercom system to hold all students and adults in classrooms with the doors locked,

while the officers dispersed a visual sweep and then a more thorough search of the campus. This took approximately 30 minutes. No suspect was found. The police then left two officers posted at the northern perimeter of the campus while they began to search the apartment building next door.

"Students and staff did a terrific job of practicing our lock down safety response," continued the letter, which went on to advise parents to discuss the experience with their children.

— John Wood

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Stay with a friend, Libra

JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

*****-Dynamic ****-Positive ***-Average **-So-so *-Difficult



 **ARIES (March 21-April 19)**
★★★ A meeting or an associate only adds confusion to the mix. You might not want to follow his or her lead, as it (1) might not be practical or (2) could cost a lot. Be conservative with expenditures, even though another person encourages you to splurge. Tonight: Your treat.

 **TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**
★★★★★ Use your charisma to downplay yesterday's uproar. Others appreciate your efforts, though a boss or parent could be wifty. Do your best to confirm what he or she wants. A smile goes a long way at work. Tonight: Just smile and ask.

 **GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**
★★ What you can be sure of is that you are not getting the whole story. You might be hearing only what you want to hear or the facts might be muddled. Take your time sorting through what needs to happen with key people in your life. Tonight: Indulge yourself.

 **CANCER (June 21-July 22)**
★★★★ Carefully listen to someone you care about. Money matters involving others might be a bit hazy. Don't make decisions just yet. A meeting helps you and others center. Come to an agreement, if possible. Tonight: Among the maddening crowds.

 **LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**
★★★★ Despite another's flak or confusion, you assume your place as a natural leader. Use your innate charm and creativity to solve some problems that have popped up out of the blue. Find an expert if you need to. You don't want a flub-up. Tonight: Could be late.

 **VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**
★★★★ Take an overview when others can't. How you deal with others could make a big difference in their responses. Express kindness and understanding. Use your excellent listening skills and think about what others are feeling. Tonight: Choose a mind escape.

 **LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**
★★★★ What an associate or partner says doesn't jibe with what you have been thinking or what a close friend or child has said. Weigh the pros and cons, but avoid taking risks. Certainly take off your rose-colored glasses. Tonight: Spend time with a trusted friend.

 **SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**
★★★★ You might not have the whole story. Check out your home to see if there is a leak. Don't be surprised by what someone reveals. He or she might have been hiding it for years. Tonight: Dinner out.

 **SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**
★★★ Your strong work ethic comes through one more time. Write down ideas and feelings that pop up out of the blue. Be careful with communication; people seem to naturally misunderstand you. Friends surround you, encouraging the end of this heavy work cycle. Tonight: Do something just for yourself.

 **CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**
★★★★ Your smile and imagination lead you in the right direction. "No" is unacceptable as an answer. You can find a way to make what you want happen. Don't jeopardize your finances. You don't have all the financial details. Tonight: Add some spice to your life.

 **AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**
★★★★ You might think you know what is going on, but you aren't getting the whole story. Or could it be that you're only seeing what you want to see? Get down to foundations. A caring call to or from someone at a distance cheers you up. Tonight: Buy some flowers on your way home.

 **PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**
★★★★ What you hear might not coincide with what you feel. Work with givens rather than use your intuition, which could be slightly off. A dear friend takes time to express his or her caring. Realize how important this person is in your life. Tonight: "Quality time" with that special friend.

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SMC awarded \$6 million in 'behemoth' grants

By Daily Press staff

Receiving its two largest federal grants ever, Santa Monica College has been awarded "Title V" grants totaling \$6.2 million over five years that will be used to help first-time college students succeed and to help train teachers in the face of a national shortage.

"These grants are known as the behemoth of grants — the largest amount of money you can get for community colleges," said Marvin Martinez, associate vice president of planning and development, who oversaw a team effort to secure the grants. "We've been working hard to get these grants. It's a great accomplishment for the college."

The money — from the U.S. Department of Education — comes in the form of two awards: An individual grant to help first-time SMC students succeed in college and a cooperative agreement grant with El Camino College to help future teachers complete their lower-division coursework. The SMC programs developed from the grants are expected to have an impact on more than 1,000 students, officials said.

Title V grants are reserved for institutions that qualify as Hispanic-serving institutions, with more than 25 percent of their enrollment Hispanic. SMC's Hispanic enrollment is 28 percent.

SMC receives \$550,000 this year for the individual grant and, over a five-year period, will get up to \$2.75 million.

The money will be used for a program to help first-time, at-risk students stay on track with their coursework and degree requirements through counseling and an "early alert" system that allows the college to identify and help students who are having difficulties. In addition, "bridge" programs for high school students will be established to introduce them to college courses and campus life.

The cooperative agreement teacher training program grant award — called "Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers Today" — was made jointly to SMC and El Camino College in Torrance, for a total of \$3.4 million over five years. The SMC component is approximately \$1.36 million.

"There is a serious shortage of well-trained teachers, especially those who can teach our growing population of Spanish-speaking students," said SMC President Dr. Piedad F. Robertson. "This grant will help ensure that our future teachers acquire the skills and understanding to work with ever-increasing minority populations and are better prepared to receive their degrees and teaching credentials."

College officials said part of the grant money will be used to establish a one-stop teacher training resources center, called Epicenter, where students can make sure they are on track to transfer to a four-year institution. Tutoring also will be available.

"Different universities have different requirements when it comes to education programs," said Edie Spain, chair of SMC's education department. "We'll have a counselor with expertise in transfer requirements, as well as information on financial aid for those various programs. This grant will also help bring more students into the education program and accelerate the whole transfer process."

SM woman honored for international efforts

By Daily Press staff

A Santa Monica woman was honored last week for her leadership in promoting women's rights locally and around the world.

Kelly Hayes-Raitt on Oct. 22, which was United Nations Day, was recognized by the Los Angeles City Commission on the Status of Women and Los Angeles City Councilmember Eric Garcetti.

The U.N. General Assembly created United Nations Day. To commemorate this year's theme of "Women's Rights and Empowerment," the Los Angeles City Council presented Hayes-Raitt with a proclamation at LA City Hall.

Hayes-Raitt, a commissioner on the Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women, traveled to Iraq twice last year. She spoke with hundreds of Iraqi women and children and brought their stories home, where she has addressed a wide range of audiences, including religious congregations, classes, neighborhood associations, Rotary clubs and a delegation of congresswomen about her experiences.



SURF REPORT

Old SW wind swell drops out while some NW swell rolls in. Most spots get knee- to waist-high waves off the mix, best NW breaks in the South Bay see better sets. Slow fade on Friday as the NW'er weakens. Light W winds Thursday morning turn 8-12+ knots by the afternoon. Watch out for the brown mudsuds.

Today the water is:

66°

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.



LOW TIDES

HIGH TIDES

	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	12:46	-0.2	1:06	1.9	7:27	5.0	6:52	5.3
SUNDAY	1:25	0.0	1:51	1.2	7:54	5.4	7:44	5.3
MONDAY	1:59	0.2	2:32	0.6	8:20	5.7	8:31	5.1
TUESDAY	2:29	0.5	3:11	0.2	8:45	6.0	9:14	4.9
WEDNESDAY	2:56	0.9	3:47	-0.1	9:10	6.1	9:55	4.6
THURSDAY	3:21	1.4	4:23	-0.2	9:34	6.2	10:37	4.3
FRIDAY	3:44	1.8	5:00	-0.2	9:58	6.1	11:21	3.9

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The Q Line

With the election only days away, most people have decided on who they will vote for as president. Because California has skirted most of the campaign rhetoric that most states have seen through slanted television ads, most Santa Monicans have been spared the spin coming from both President Bush and Sen. Kerry.

It's still anybody's race. However, with the electoral college vote system, it

appears Bush might win the election, despite majorities for Kerry elsewhere

This week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you agree with the electoral college vote system? Why or why not?"

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

ELECT:

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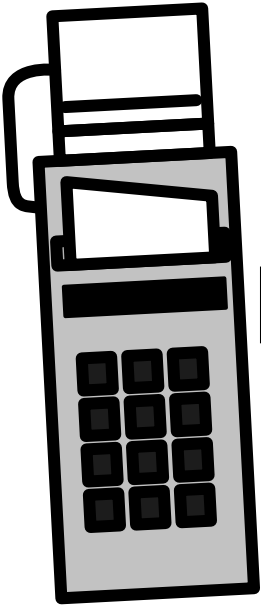


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José Escarce

Educational background: B.A., Princeton University; M.A., Harvard University; M.D. and Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania
Endorsed by: Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association, Santa Monica-Malibu Classified Employees (SEIU Local 660), Community for Excellent Public Schools (CEPS), Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, Santa Monica Living Wage Coalition, Santa Monica College Faculty Association, Malibu Democratic Club

In 100 words or less, what about your background makes you a qualified school board member? My background and my conviction that public education can be an engine for self-fulfillment, social justice and community improvement have made me an excellent school board member. I am a strong advocate of a well-rounded education for all students, and I am passionate about fostering students' intellectual and personal growth. My varied educational experiences and professional background as a university professor and health care expert have nurtured my open-mindedness, belief in the value of public input, analytic skills and ability to build consensus, all qualities that contribute to improving the culture of the board and the quality of its deliberations.

In 300 words or less, a group of parents is staging an effort to secede Malibu schools from the school district. Do you think this would be a wise move? What are the possible upsides and downsides to this plan? Since I was

Ana Maria Jara

Educational background: Associate of Arts, SMC
Endorsed by: SMRR, HERE Local 11 (parents, educators, students)

In 100 words or less, what about your background makes you a qualified school board member? I have been a steady figure in our district for the past 20 years as participant, leader and member. I have proved to be inclusive, respectful, knowledgeable and possess a strong commitment to our children and a passion for their success. I bring a different style of leadership skills to our board. Leadership skills learned through participation with government officials, dignitaries and leaders worldwide. As well as my experiences as a student of our district, as parent and advocate. I bring my life experience and skills in working in an economically, racially and culturally diverse community. I am a single parent of four daughters — all of whom have attended our district schools. I have been actively involved in the development of their education and instilled at a very young age the importance of being an advocate not only for themselves but for their peers as well.

In 300 words or less, a group of parents is staging an effort to secede Malibu schools from the school district. Do you think this

Maria Leon-Vazquez

Educational background: A.A., social studies, Santa Monica College, 1976; B.A., history, U.C. San Diego, 1978; J.D., U.C. Hastings College of Law, 1981
Endorsed by: Santa Monica/Malibu Classroom Teachers Assn., SEIU Local 660, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, Community for Excellent Public Schools, Santa Monica Mirror newspaper, National Women's Political Caucus, Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE), Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights, Santa Monica Democratic Club, Malibu Democratic Club, Los Angeles County Democratic Party, Coalition for a Living Wage, Assemblymember Fran Pavley, Mayor Richard Bloom, Councilmember Ken Genser,

elected to the board, I have worked very hard to represent all the students in our district, including those from Malibu, and I plan to continue to do so. I have listened to our parents, students and teachers in Malibu and have supported proposals to meet their particular needs and concerns, such as allocating additional resources to finish construction at Malibu High School and modifying the district's mandatory transfer policy for high school students who commit certain disciplinary infractions. At the same time, I have come to realize that, despite the board's best efforts, Malibu's distance from and small size relative to Santa Monica have led some parents in Malibu to feel that they are not well represented. These parents would like more local control of their schools, and argue that Malibu has grown and matured enough as a city and community to have its own school district. I take these arguments for community self-determination very seriously. Therefore, I support the parents' efforts to move forward with the administrative and democratic process that will determine whether Malibu can and should create its own district. Ultimately, separation would have to be approved by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, the California Department of Education, and most important, the voters of Malibu.

Concerning separation itself, I do not yet have all the information I need to decide for myself whether I believe it's a wise move. The main test, for me, will be whether separate school districts can provide the same quality of education to their students that our joint district currently provides. I anticipate

would be a wise move? What are the possible upsides and downsides to this plan? As a member of the committee to look into the feasibility of opening a high school in Malibu and the final selection for recommendations for principals, I can say that I was very excited about creating this partnership between our two cities. I listened to the need of Malibu residents and was happy that we were able to assist. I also understand that this was not a venture for a lifetime. A process has already begun, and we need to allow it to take its course. However, there are many factors open for consideration and discussion, i.e. the effect on our children, the effect on our teachers, the effect on both cities. We should look into other districts such as ours that have separated to find out how their process was. What long-term effect did it have or does it have? We need to create a space where residents who oppose the effort to secede from the district can come together with those that do not.

The county and state will determine if Malibu is able to sustain itself as its own district. Ultimately, if both the county and the state approve the feasibility of the separation it will be up to the Malibu registered voters to decide on how their district will be run and what that composition will look like.

School Board Members Emily Bloomfield, Julia Brownley, Michael Jordan, Oscar De La Torre, SMC Trustees Margaret Quiñones, Nancy Greenstein, former Santa Monica City Councilmembers Dennis Zane, Judy Abdo and Tony Vazquez, former School Board Members Pam Brady, Patricia Hoffman, and Tom Pratt, School Board Candidate Kathy Wisnicki, and many community activists, such as Judge David Finkel (ret) & Bruria Finkel, Reverend Sandy Richards, Ralph Mechur, Dolores Press, Val & Alan Glick.

In 100 words or less, what about your background makes you a qualified school board member? My passion in education comes from over 30 years of involvement in Santa Monica and education issues since I was in high school. I

that the data being compiled by the parents, with the help of our district, to support their petition for separation will be very useful in this regard.

In 300 words or less, the school board recently approved a policy that requires wealthy schools to share a portion of their cash donations with poorer schools. Where did you stand on this controversial issue? How will you address inequalities with local schools? I supported the new "gift policy." As a school board member, my responsibilities are to provide the best education possible to our students within the constraints of our budget and to see to it that all students have an equal opportunity to fulfill their potential. In this context, the sizable differences across our schools in their ability to raise funds from donations — differences that reflect the socioeconomic status of the families who attend the schools — pose a vexing problem. On one hand, donations are part and parcel of parental and community involvement in the schools. I value parental involvement enormously and believe that it is an essential component of successful, high achieving schools and thriving school communities. Moreover, donations strengthen schools' educational programs. On the other hand, large differences in donations can result in highly disparate educational opportunities for students. School districts throughout the nation wrestle with this problem, although few have taken steps to address it.

In my view, the new gift policy represents an excellent compromise. The policy recognizes the crucial importance of parental involvement and donations, and allows 85

In 300 words or less, the school board recently approved a policy that requires wealthy schools to share a portion of their cash donations with poorer schools. Where did you stand on this controversial issue? How will you address inequalities with local schools? If anything I would approve an increase from the 15 percent to ensure that our most needy students receive the resources necessary to succeed academically. A couple of years ago over 150 constituents, leaders, parents, students, administrators, staff and teachers gave up a weekend in order to work on a vision for our district and create the district strategic plan for which I was a team member. The outcome was seven initiatives. One of which was formed by the outcry of students: Equity and Equality for Education Action Group, for which I am co-chair. In 2002, we made several recommendations in how to address inequities and inequalities within the district. I plan to revisit those recommendations and see about allocating the necessary funding to the implementation of them. Other recommendations that I plan to visit are those made by the recent strategic plan for special education. As one of the original members of the district's multicultural advisory council, data has showed that there is an over representation of students

have been in the Santa Monica community since 1959. I was raised in a working class, union family, which emphasized education as a means of getting ahead economically. My parents both only had a third grade education and realized that their purpose for immigrating to the United States was to build a future for their children. I grew up with a strong work ethic and compassion to help others less fortunate than our family. We didn't have much growing up but were raised with the riches of a strong family unit and lots of love.

This upbringing inspired my career in law, community organizing and politics. I attended Santa Monica College, U.C. San Diego and U.C. Hastings College of Law. Upon completion of my formal education, I returned to Santa Monica realizing that I had a role to

percent of donations to be retained by the receiving school. However, the policy also sets aside 15 percent of donations to create an equity fund that can be used to fund services for students in other schools or in the district as a whole. I realize that in passing this policy, the board has assumed an enormous responsibility: Ensuring that the equity fund is used wisely and effectively to improve students' educational opportunities in meaningful ways. That is why I am a strong proponent of devoting a substantial share of the equity fund to district-wide services and programs that can enhance opportunity and raise achievement for struggling students irrespective of the school they attend.

In 300 words or less, do you think the school district handles at-risk youth properly? And do you think Olympic High School, the district's alternative high school, needs attention? In what way? One of our district's main goals is to raise the academic achievement of students who are disadvantaged by virtue of socioeconomic status or other factors. To this end, we have emphasized literacy, developed intervention and support programs, expanded access to advanced coursework in middle and high school, and fostered professional development. We also redesigned Santa Monica High School to help students have a more personalized experience. These measures are working, and over the past two years achievement for disadvantaged students has risen substantially. We must now stay the course and redouble our efforts.

Despite this progress, I remain concerned that we are not doing enough for those students who, by

of color in special education. Are students being correctly assessed into special ed or is it simply a language barrier or lack of early intervention in meeting the needs of our students? Is it a matter of intellectual ability versus academic performance? Mediation is a very costly process. We need to investigate why there are so many parents in mediation. We need to invest in effective and early intervention. We must look into ensuring that our teachers and special ed instructors are equipped and certified to know the difference in discipline, attention deficit, etc. I plan to create a space where parents are included in the process and are given the space to hold us accountable.

In 300 words or less, do you think the school district handles at-risk youth properly? And do you think Olympic High School, the district's alternative high school, needs attention? In what way? As one of the co-chair for the Race and Discipline Task Force, I am faced with many parents' concerns surrounding this very issue. Through the Race and Discipline Task Force, we successfully started a program with SMART MOVE, which assists young people returning to the community from juvenile detention centers, which was working in collaboration with Laurel Schmidt. However, to the detriment of our

play in society and that was to change the institutions' way of thinking that only a certain few could be highly educated. I have been involved in community organizations such as Westside Legal Services, Community Corporation of Santa Monica, Commission on the Status of Woman, FAME-Santa Monica Economic Development Corporation, and the PTAs at Will Rogers, Jams, and Samohi. My role has been as participant, board member and appointed member, but in all the hats I have worn I have contributed my knowledge and expertise, and have gained more knowledge and expertise to share with the organizations I served. I have always been involved in heated community issues whether educational or not with the end purpose of coming to a positive resolution. My 30 years of

late middle school, have totally disengaged from school and for whom our current strategies are not working. One new approach that intrigues me is creating a small high school of about 400 students that would offer highly personalized instruction and a rigorous core curriculum coupled with intensive support, small classes and community internships. This school could be a "school of choice" for students who struggle in middle school or who simply know they would do better in a small, personalized setting. I recently returned from an "Educational Leadership" tour of New York City in which we visited several such schools. I saw highly engaged teachers and students and reviewed data demonstrating remarkable success with youth at very high risk of not completing school. I believe our community should begin a conversation to determine whether and how this model can be adapted to our district.

Finally, Olympic High School is a crucial part of our district. Olympic has improved greatly over the past few years through the hard work of teachers and administrators, and many more Olympic students are graduating. I anticipate continued improvement under Olympic's dynamic new leadership.

Do you support fast food and/or junk food being sold at local schools? Why or why not? I believe schools have an important role to play in instilling healthy habits, including dietary habits, in our children. As a physician, I am especially concerned about the epidemic of obesity afflicting American youth. Although no group is unaffected, the epidemic is most severe among low-income and minority youth, and foreshadows an epidemic of

children this program was dismantled since we had problems with staffing.

Through my work in the Multicultural Advisory Council, we were effective with the extension of the AVID Program to the middle school through which we are doing a good job at reaching at risk children.

Yes, we have neglected Olympic High School. However, I see changes, i.e. there was an outcry from students to the board not to close down the school. For the first time at Olympic High School, we have student leadership. We need to build upon student ownership of schools.

We need to provide culturally relevant curriculum to our students. We can look into the model of alliance program at SAMOHI for kids with a 2.0 GPA. We need to start looking at our "at-risk youth" and take them for what they are, our disengaged youth. We need to start looking at this issue as means to spark creativity in conjunction with students to provide alternative means of educating.

I look forward to the evaluation of all intervention programs being conducted now. We need to recognize that we have at risk youth in low income and affluent communities.

Drugs and self-destructive behavior is prevalent throughout

involvement have forged many positive changes in this community. I have seen the dynamics of education change from that of the privileged to the demand of excellence for all children. And I will continue to strive for "extraordinary achievement for all students while simultaneously closing the achievement gap" in a community approach.

In 300 words or less, a group of parents is staging an effort to secede Malibu schools from the school district. Do you think this would be a wise move? What are the possible upsides and downsides to this plan? When I ran in November of 2000 and I was elected to the school board, I did so knowing that I would represent all the children in the district irrespective of what city they lived in. I am opposed to any separation of the

diabetes, high blood pressure and other obesity-related health problems as these children and adolescents age.

Schools can promote healthy dietary habits by including appropriate lessons in the curriculum and serving healthy foods. Currently, the food served or sold in our elementary and middle schools adheres to the guidelines set by California Senate Bill 677, which limits the fat and sugar content of food sold on elementary and middle school campuses and eliminates items like carbonated drinks. In my view, SB 677 is a great start, although it is still possible for students to choose individual food items that do not make a healthy meal. About half the food sold at Samohi adheres to the SB 677 guidelines, but "junk food" is still available on the campus.

I would favor taking additional steps to provide healthy food at all grade levels, and especially to reduce the unhealthy and fattening food and drinks sold at Samohi. It is not enough for schools to teach students how to eat healthy; they should reinforce the message by making only healthy foods available. On the other hand, to have a real impact on students' diets, schools need cooperation from parents and youth. The problem is especially difficult at Samohi, where we have an open campus and students can go out to lunch. Continued education of adults and youth, by both schools and other community organizations and agencies, is essential in the effort to curb obesity among students.

our student population, and we cannot ignore this. As community members, we need to motivate their engagement into the process.

If elected I will bring my specialization as a parent and multicultural advisory member to ensure that all children are supported through the educational process.

Do you support fast food and/or junk food being sold at local schools? Why or why not? As a participant for many years to health champions at the elementary and middle schools, I know the importance of a well balanced meal as well as physical activity participation. As consumers of some of these fast food companies, we are faced on a daily basis with propagandas such as "super size" and we know the detrimental effects caused by the intake of so much food. Having said that, I also believe that we should offer choices. Provide a variety of simple meals that are attractive to our students but keeping their health in mind first over a profit. We need to make sure that we keep our vendors responsible. Another issue to look into is that at the high school level you have students that although qualify for free or reduced meal, are embarrassed to apply or take advantage of such plan. We need to provide choices for them that can be at minimal cost.

district because I feel that the present board has fully represented all children well in the district. It is unfortunate that talk of splitting the district has come from a result of the 15 percent gift policy that is meant to bring equality of funding to the education of all children in the district. If it is the request of the citizens of Malibu to move forward with the separation, then I would not interfere in the democratic process, and will allow the Malibu citizens to put it to a vote. The Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization will review the petition to make sure that it meets nine conditions, and then recommends to approve or to disapprove the petition. If there is a recommendation of approval, then it is forwarded to the State Board of

LOCAL



RESPONSES, from page 4

Education where a public hearing is held and a final decision to approve or disapprove is made. If approved, the state board sets the process for a vote by the citizens of Malibu. Ultimately, it is the hope that the best interests of all students in our district are taken into consideration as we move forward or not with this petition. I will continue to represent all children in the district until such decision is made to split the district.

In 300 words or less, the school board recently approved a policy that requires wealthy schools to share a portion of their cash donations with poorer schools. Where did you stand on this controversial issue? How will you address

Kathy Wisnicki, Ph.D.

Educational background: Ph.D. Education from UCLA; M.A. Psychology from San Diego State University; B.A. Psychology from State University of New York at Stony Brook

Endorsed by: Santa Monica Malibu Classroom Teachers Association, Community for Excellent Public Schools, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, Coalition to Protect the Living Wage, Santa Monica College Faculty Association, LA County Democratic Party, Santa Monica Democratic Club, Malibu Democratic Club, National Women's Political Caucus, Assemblymember Fran Pavley, Congressman Brad Sherman, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez, Dolores Press, Chair 41st Assembly District, Ralph Mechur, SMRR Steering Committee, Nat Trives, President, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, Bob Holbrook, Santa Monica City Councilmember, Julia Brownley, SMMUSD School Board Member, Emily Bloomfield, SMMUSD School Board Vice-president, Shane McLoud, SMMUSD School Board Member, Mike Jordan, SMMUSD School Board Member, Maria Leon-Vazquez, SMMUSD School Board Member, Harry Keiley, president, Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association, Malibu City Council, Community Leaders in Santa Monica and Malibu. For a complete list of endorsements, visit my Web site at www.votewisnicki.com.

In 100 words or less, what about your background makes you a qualified school board member? As a parent in the district with a Ph.D. in education and with my position on the district's financial oversight committee, I have the unique skills necessary to comprehend, prioritize and implement the detailed SMMUSD working budget and evaluate effective educational

inequalities with local schools? I voted for the gift policy. It is the only fair and equitable means by which the district can equalize the playing field of education for all its students. The fact that some schools can fundraise more than others is based on the economic means of the families that comprise that school, and not on the ability to fundraise. Students should not be penalized for having been born poor.

However, I recognize the fact that certain schools will lose reading intervention programs, classroom aides, science classes and art classes as a result of the 15 percent contribution to the district fund. So I am prepared to re-visit this policy and recommend that we prepare a matrix of basic programs, services

and staffing needs for all the schools. Once we have done this, the board can recommend that at a minimum certain programs, services and staffing must exist at all the schools, and if a particular school does not have that minimum, then monies from the district fund can be used.

In 300 words or less, do you think the school district handles at-risk youth properly? And do you think Olympic High School, the district's alternative high school, needs attention? In what way? As long as I have been on the board, the district has always handled "at-risk" students properly and fairly. That is one of the first issues that the superintendent was asked to review, analyze and make recommendations for

improvement of academic, intervention and support programs for the "at-risk" students. As a result, the smaller learning communities at Samohi were implemented and six smaller schools, or houses, have been operating for two years. An extensive professional development piece was instituted with monies from the Stupski Foundation, and our principals have been trained to become teacher trainers. The summer school intervention piece has been given priority, and specific intervention mechanism have been set up at each of the levels — elementary, middle and senior high schools — to bridge the infamous gap. This task has been designated as one of the superintendent's performance targets so that there is much

work in progress with updates to follow in the coming two to three years.

Olympic High School has always been given a bad name. I look at it as an alternative school, and I am hoping that in my next term more dialogue is had with teachers, staff, parents, students and the administration on how the high school can be turned into an actual alternative high school. It is apparent that the students that choose to be there is because of the overwhelming size of Samohi and desire a smaller school setting. The superintendent and a couple of our board members were recently in New York visiting charter high schools, so there will be informed and good dialogue soon on the future of Olympic High School. I

look forward to discussing how the district can best meet the needs of students at Olympic.

Do you support fast food and/or junk food being sold at local schools? Why or why not? No, I do not support junk food to be sold on campus, however, I will qualify my answer that certain fast food that is somewhat nutritious can be sold, i.e. Subway turkey or tuna sandwiches and salads, Pollo Loco entrees, but not Pizza Hut, Dominos or McDonalds. Our children eat too many fatty foods and do not exercise as they should to burn off the calories. The district needs to do a better job in providing better entrees and salads in the cafeteria, especially in middle and senior high schools.

programming. My extensive, proven track record has resulted in favorable, long-standing relationships with the parents, teachers and leaders in both communities. I have been an active member of many district committees, the PTA Council, site PTAs, site sovereignty, and school funding campaigns. I have an excellent understanding of the challenges that our district faces, and the ability and reputation to make thoughtful decisions, find creative solutions and to carry out a plan of action.

In 300 words or less, a group of parents is staging an effort to secede Malibu schools from the school district. Do you think this would be a wise move? What are the possible upsides and downsides to this plan? As the only candidate from Malibu running for this seven-member board, one of the problems I've heard over and over again as I campaign throughout our two cities is that the school board needs to communicate better and more frequently with those it serves. Our students, parents, teachers and others involved in public education need to have more contact and a two-way dialogue with those who create school policy. I believe that as a district we are committed to the education of all students in both cities. However, not all of the parents in Malibu share this view. Efforts to separate the district are in the preliminary stages and years away. It is too early to comment on whether or not this idea is educationally sound, financially viable and beneficial to all students. I only favor the creation of a separate district if it can be proven that it is beneficial to the students, teachers and citizens of both communities. Regardless of whether or when Malibu separates from Santa Monica schools, we have a responsibility to provide a top-notch, rigorous education to every child in both of our cities. As a school board member, this will be

my top priority.

It is difficult for the Malibu community to become involved on district committees, the Education Foundation or PTA Council due to the distance between the cities. Therefore, Malibu residents feel disenfranchised from the district and school board decisions. However, as one who has been actively involved at the district level for a number of years, I feel that the board does attempt to serve the needs of the Malibu students. It is imperative to have Malibu representation on the board to ensure that this practice continues. I have been a dedicated advocate for all children in the district while maintaining an excellent relationship with the citizens of Malibu. If I am elected, I pledge to continue to unite our communities around the common goal of providing the best education for all students in the district.

In 300 words or less, the school board recently approved a policy that requires wealthy schools to share a portion of their cash donations with poorer schools. Where did you stand on this controversial issue? How will you address inequalities with local schools? My vision has always been comprehensive and inclusive, seeking to ensure the success of all students. I am supportive of the gift policy and view it as an opportunity for collaborative fundraising and creation of an awareness of the differences in educational opportunities that exist between our school sites. As a past PTA president and fundraising chairperson, I am acutely aware of the pressure that parent volunteers face attempting to raise adequate funds to provide basic educational necessities for our students. We are all faced with the daunting task of providing our children with an excellent education in a state that does not adequately fund their educational needs

For the past few years, I have

worked closely with parent and community volunteers from each of the schools within the district. It is my experience that all of our parents work tirelessly to improve the education of the children in the district. Yet, many of our schools have little chance of improving the size of the contributions they receive from the parents at their schools or businesses in their neighborhoods. This is an issue of demographics, not effort. We have the talent and the resources to create a culture of giving that will ensure equal opportunities for all children in the district. I continue to believe that the goal of these funds should be to close the achievement gap through district-wide targeted intervention programs. As an advocate for excellent public education, my top priority will be to provide each child with access and opportunity for an outstanding education.

In 300 words or less, do you think the school district handles at-risk youth properly? And do you think Olympic High School, the district's alternative high school, needs attention? In what way? I believe that our Santa Monica-Malibu school district has the ability to succeed with all of our children — those who have special needs, those who are on track and those who are gifted. We have the ability to stop talking about closing the achievement gap and to actual-

ly close it. To accomplish this, we must create, implement and evaluate programs and retain them based on their success.

I am running for the school board because I have the experience to make this evaluation process work. While earning my Ph.D. in education, I focused on examining factors that affect achievement in at-risk youth. Every child in the district has the opportunity to succeed given the proper educational tools. At Olympic High School, specifically, we have the opportunity to serve at-risk students in a smaller, more intimate setting and help them to attain their educational goals. In order to accomplish this, we must set high standards for our students and provide the proper support to help them to be successful. We can accomplish this by making sure that our teachers receive the necessary training, that we solidify the home-school relationship and include parents as partners in education, and that we provide the proper counseling, intervention and tutoring services to support at-risk students throughout their academic careers. These same principles of diagnosis, intervention and support apply to the district's other two high schools as well.

Do you support fast food and/or junk food being sold at local

schools? Why or why not?

Although I am a strong supporter of individual choice and the parents' right to make nutritional choices for their child, I believe that we are doing our students a disservice by providing an overwhelming amount of junk food in our cafeterias. Poor nutrition leads to poor concentration which can affect classroom learning. It may also result in obesity and all of the associated health risks. If we are a district that promotes the welfare of the student physically and mentally, and encourages students to make good choices in every aspect of their lives, then we should not send conflicting messages by tempting them with so many unhealthy options. As a parent, I was thrilled to notice that some of the vending machines at school sites had been replaced recently by healthier options, although my eighth grader continues to lament the removal of the soda machines.

In our food services department, we have the responsibility to provide a nutritious lunch to all students. For our least advantaged students, those on free or reduced lunch, this may be their only opportunity each day to receive a complete and balanced meal. It is essential that we offer them nutritious options. Students who are healthy physically are better able to perform academically.

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OPINION

CAMPAIGN 2004: SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS ENDORSEMENTS

Change is in the air in Santa Monica.

The underlying theme for a regime change in City Hall has emerged largely as what many citizens see as quality of life issues — issues that haven't been effectively addressed by the current administration.

It appears as though people are dissatisfied with their city government's responsiveness to their concerns, specifically regarding the homeless population, city bureaucracy, and traffic and parking issues.

The political group that has been in power for the better part of the last 25 years, Santa Monicans For Renters' Rights, has respectable ideals and values that in a simple world should be followed unwaveringly. But, as we know, it's not that simple in the real world. And it's not that simple in Santa Monica.

In promoting its social ideals, SMRR has fallen short on listening to the people of Santa Monica and has moved further away from reality. If citizens want change, it can't happen by re-electing SMRR incumbents who will continue pushing the status quo by holding a majority vote.

However, the SMRR ideals and values are still vital to keeping Santa Monica's character intact, and not selling out to big business and developers. That's why we need a mix of both SMRR and independents on the City Council, with team players who can build a consensus. What we don't need is the same majority making the same ill-fated policy decisions that have brought us where we are today.

Fortunately for Santa Monicans, they have more than a dozen people to choose from, many of whom are intelligent, committed and have leadership qualities. Unfortunately, there are only four seats open.

If Santa Monicans truly want change, they can make it happen at the polls on Nov. 2. If they want effective leadership, a responsive government and a fresh perspective, Bill Bauer, Richard Bloom, Herb Katz and Bobby Shriver are the best candidates to reach that goal.

We feel those candidates are a balanced package for the council. Bloom, a SMRR member, and chamber-backed Katz are incumbents, securing vital institutional knowledge for the council to conduct city business. Bauer and Shriver are newcomers, both with different perspectives and new ideas. Shriver also has been endorsed by the chamber of commerce.

Bill Bauer

✓ A former Daily Press columnist, Bill Bauer has had his eye on City Hall for years, serving as

an effective watchdog. We like that. What we like even more is Bauer's motivations: He's honest, he's not beholden to anyone, and he's running because he wants to improve the city for residents.

Bauer has been a volunteer for the police department and the Red Cross for years, exhibiting a commitment to improving Santa Monica. We feel his track record as a volunteer will translate into excellent service as a councilman. And we believe he will put many hours into the job, doing his homework fully.

If elected, we expect Bauer to put aside his inflammatory rhetoric and attempt to work collaboratively with the council. We also believe that with the right mix on the council, his colleagues will keep him in check. If not elected, Bauer can continue his work on the opinion pages of the Daily Press.

Richard Bloom

✓ Richard Bloom has done an excellent job serving as mayor and as a councilman. He is level headed and keeps order on the dais. Serving on many ad-hoc boards, commissions and committees, he's gone above and beyond what's required of his position. He has proven that he is genuine when he says he cares about Santa Monica. He doesn't bring his ego into politics and truly enjoys public service. He has just hit his prime as an elected leader, and he should be allowed to continue working for the people of Santa Monica.

Bloom is a team player and has proven that he can lead when it's needed. He understands the city's budget and has the institutional knowledge required to respond in tight economic times.

With that said, Bloom has voted on some policies and laws that have proven to be ineffective, directly impacting residents' quality of life. Two of those laws relate to the homeless population. But Bloom has dedicated himself to helping end homelessness in Los Angeles by taking a regional approach, and is moving closer to getting other cities to share some of the burden. He serves on a panel that includes 80 leaders throughout the county to address the issue. Bloom deserves another term to strengthen his track record on this issue.

Herb Katz

✓ Watching Herb Katz the past few years on City Council has been painful at times, not because of his actions but because of his evident frustration about being in the minority when the council is faced with making reasonable decisions. His campaign literature touts him as the

"voice of reason," and we believe he is.

Katz has said that the past four years on the City Council have not been fun, mostly because he has had to make concessions and compromises on policy decisions after realizing that his vote would be in the minority.

Given the right make-up of moderate and liberal thinkers on the council, Katz can be an effective leader. He has the experience not only as a councilman and a longtime Santa Monica resident, but also as a business owner. Katz is the only member of the current council who owns a business with multiple employees. Given the recent problems business owners have faced with City Hall bureaucracy, we believe Katz will continue to promote and protect small- and medium-sized businesses in Santa Monica.

Katz has proven that he is independent and tells it straight. He also has a sense of humor, something of which the current city administration desperately needs more. Additionally, Katz is succinct and gets to the point quickly in public meetings. City Council meetings have turned into long-winded conversations between city staff and city council members, virtually leaving the public out of the process.

Bobby Shriver

✓ If it's new energy and changing the face of city government that citizens want, Bobby Shriver is a candidate who no doubt fits the bill. He's bright, energetic and passionate about Santa Monica. In addition, Shriver is a consensus builder who has proved during his campaign he's eager to get down to business.

If elected, we hope that Shriver's role as a local politician will eliminate the divisiveness between City Hall and residents. Shriver has been able to bring groups together who historically fall on opposite political lines. He's supported by several SMRR leaders, the chamber of commerce, other business interests, local unions and the education community. That combination of support is rare.

Shriver's notoriety will serve Santa Monica well. He comes from a family that has dedicated itself to public service, and we have no doubt he will carry that legacy into Santa Monica. Plus, you can't ignore the fact that his brother-in-law is the governor of California and that he has an uncle in the U.S. Senate. When Shriver says he will call upon state and federal government to assist in local issues, we believe him. Perhaps more importantly, he has a better chance than anyone of actually making it happen.

PROPOSITIONS

Measure N: The hotel bed tax

✓ Yes □ No

Measure N will increase the hotel bed tax, known as the transient occupancy tax, from 12 percent to 14 percent, generating roughly \$3.5 million annually. We have reservations about the measure because it would make Santa Monica's bed tax 1 percent higher than Marina del Rey's hotel tax, potentially putting Santa Monica at a competitive disadvantage. Still, we support it — partly because the local tourism industry does, too.

City officials publicly have said the revenue generated by the tax increase will help them fulfill a promise to fund schools under a new agreement with the school district. City Hall will give a minimum of \$6 million annually to local schools for at least the next five years, and Measure N will provide about half of that money.

We caution city officials, however, to be transparent about how extra money is spent. City Hall has conservative estimates about how much money the tax will raise, and the public should be part of deciding where the extra revenue would go, if there is a surplus. The hotel industry wants some of the money to go toward increasing public safety, and some of the revenue has been earmarked for the Convention and Visitors' Bureau, to promote tourism. We expect the CVB to be transparent about how it spends the money as well.

Measure S: SMC bond

□ Yes ✓ No

Measure S is a \$135 million bond that would be used for a variety of building projects at SMC. It would also be used to purchase or develop properties and public amenities in Santa Monica and Malibu.

Our biggest problem with the proposal is that it was introduced to the community only four months ago and then approved with little public input. The first proposal was a \$175 million bond. When the SMC Board of Trustees voted against putting it on the ballot, the bond was reduced by \$40 million. The board approved that proposal within days of voting down the first one, and there was virtually no public notice about the meeting.

We also have reservations about tax hikes in general. The fact that SMC just passed a \$160 million bond measure for facilities in 2002 makes us seriously doubt that now is the time to give the college more money for more

facilities. Residents already are paying for several bonds and tax hikes on a variety of programs that were approved in the past several years.

Measure S could provide Santa Monica and the college with some sound opportunities, including acquiring more open space, a childcare facility and a new performing arts theater. But the problem is we don't know specifically how Santa Monica taxpayers would benefit. The city of Santa Monica and SMC have yet to come to an agreement, which, in our opinion, should be sealed before we give any money to anyone.

SMC is facing serious financial constraints. As a result, the college has had to slash programs and staff. What good are new facilities if there is an inadequate amount of teachers and student programs?

Also, SMC has thrown its weight around in the community for a long time, straining its relationships with City Hall and residents. The public is wary of SMC's size and its impacts. We have a message to SMC: Be nice to your neighbors. We hope, too, City Hall will work with SMC to mend the faltering relationship.

PUTTING EDUCATION FIRST

The Santa Monica Daily Press also supports these local residents who have shown their commitment to the community and to improving education:

SMC Board of Trustees:

Susan Aminoff
Charles Donaldson
Rob Rader
Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School Board:
Jose Escarce
Maria Leon-Vazquez
Kathy Wisnicki

Endorsement notes ...

All Daily Press endorsements came with considerable debate. That is to say two things: We hope we're right, but we also trust those candidates who aren't elected this time around will continue to stay involved and make Santa Monica a better and more interesting place to live. They have a lot to bring to our community. With that said, we felt it would be irresponsible not to explain some of our decisions.

■ David Cole is running with Bauer on a slate called the "Team for Change." Cole is an outspoken critic of City Hall and has reiterated that he is an independent candidate, not beholden to anyone. He makes decent points about where government has gone wrong, but much of his

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The environmental choice

Editor:
I have lived in Santa Monica for 10 years. I moved here to be close to the ocean and live in a community that cared about the environment, and did everything possible to ensure the safety of its citizens.

On the environment, the city of Santa Monica has done an adequate job. One way to ensure the city does even more is to support Bobby Shriver and Herb Katz for City Council.

As the chairman of the State Recreation and Parks Commission, Shriver has worked to ensure the preservation of open space. We are in desperate need of more parks in the city, and Shriver is well qualified to achieve this goal.

Herb Katz has been a tireless advocate for cleaner beaches, restoration of the Santa Monica Pier and promoting buses that use alternative energy.

Their commitment to the environment, along with their shared goals of reaching a humane, sensible plan to working with city, regional and national agencies to develop a plan for dealing with the homeless make Herb Katz and Bobby Shriver excellent choices for Santa Monica City Council.

Mary-Louise Gemmill
Santa Monica

Defending persistence

Editor:
Community for Excellent Public Schools (CEPS) is proud to continue our work this election season by providing reliable information about candidates' positions on education. As part of this effort, we asked City Council and SMMUSD Board of Education candidates to answer a series of education-related questions, and we encourage all voters to view candidates' full answers at www.ExcellentPublicSchools.org. In addition, we held our first CEPS candidates forum in which members of the community could ask questions of candidates directly. And finally, we published endorsements for school board candidates and evaluations for Santa Monica City Council candidates.

It was our objective, particularly among City Council candidates, to identify those whose records and philosophies clearly indicated that they would be a reliable ally for our schools. We are indeed fortunate that among a pool of 14 City Council candidates, eight are clearly reliable. These include Richard Bloom, Matt Dinolfo, Ken Genser, Patricia Hoffman, Herb Katz, Maria Loya, Kathryn Morea and Bobby Shriver.

CEPS rated four candidates, including Councilman Michael Feinstein, as "unreliable." This rating came from a variety of factors, including Councilman Feinstein's refusal in May to support the city-schools agreement, which increased the city of Santa Monica's contribution to SMMUSD to \$6 million per year with provisions for increased funding as city revenues increase.

CEPS was startled, then, to see Councilman Feinstein, in a recent mailer, claim credit for this growth in school

funding. We felt we had a responsibility to correct the record, and we sent out a recorded phone message to inform voters that Feinstein had not, in fact, supported the city-schools agreement, and that his mailer was misrepresenting his record. Our message to residents also shared our unanimous assessment that Feinstein is not a reliable supporter of city funding for our schools.

In her recent letter to the editor, City Councilmember Pam O'Connor takes issue with CEPS' message to Santa Monica residents regarding Councilmember Michael Feinstein's record on education issues. O'Connor objected to our efforts to set Feinstein's record straight, accusing CEPS of "demonizing" him. In her letter, and on other occasions, she has referred to CEPS members as "bullies."

We regret this reaction and find O'Connor's language puzzling and quite excessive. CEPS believes that accountability of elected officials to their constituents is an underlying foundation of our democracy — and accountability requires accurate information.

While CEPS has been tenacious and persistent in pressing our case for increased and predictable city funding for our schools, we have never used harsh or aggressive language toward the city or any of its officials.

We make no apology for our tenacity and persistence on behalf of our community's children and their schools or for our energetic involvement in the democratic process.

In addition to the City Council candidates whom we have evaluated as reliable supporters of education, CEPS is also proud to endorse three excellent candidates for the board of education: Dr. Jose Escarce, Maria Leon-Vazquez and Dr. Kathy Wisnicki.

Lastly, we also recommend "yes" votes for Measure N, the hotel visitors tax, and "yes" on Measure S, the Santa Monica College bond.

CEPS is proud to be part of such vibrant and committed communities. Election after election, Santa Monica and Malibu voters have shown their commitment to education. We look forward to many more years of community support for our excellent public schools.

CEPS co-chairs Shari Davis and Louise Jaffe,
and the CEPS steering committee

Feinstein sticks up for himself

Editor:
I write to set the record straight about my support for public education. When I campaigned in 1996 for my first election, I stated that "education is my number one Priority." After eight years in office, I have the record to prove it.

In my two terms on the City Council I've voted to increase funding to our schools 250 percent.

I voted to support every ongoing and one-time school funding increase since I've been on the council — including this past June when I voted "yes" on the city's budget that raised our annual school commitment from \$3 million to \$6 million.

Despite this, I've been attacked this campaign by a small group who would like us to believe only they know the way to support public education.

Here are the facts:

At our May 11 meeting, the City Council discussed an agenda item to give direction to city staff "regarding

proposed terms for a new contract providing payments to the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District in Exchange for community access to school facilities."

I abstained on that vote. While I support increasing city support to the school district on a continuing basis, I had substantive concerns about the proposed terms and wanted to use my vote to register them.

What I said that night was "I want to be positive for kids by not saying no, but I want to ensure that there is at least one voice on the council calling out the real structural problems and insufficiencies" in the proposed deal.

Why? Because I believe in cooperative partnerships.

We owe it to our citizens to work cooperatively on ways to finance schools, parks and open space and other community needs.

My main concern that night, given tight fiscal circumstances, was that we were negotiating a deal without having the revenue to pay for it.

The CEPS group proposed a charter amendment in private, outside of the public process. I opt for open, transparent coordination between the school board and City Council to explore mutually beneficial and financially synergistic strategies, perhaps building upon the playground partnership/school parks deal initiated when I was mayor.

Apparently, some are so angry that I have questioned their tactics that they have chosen to malign me, lie about my record and create an urban myth that I am somehow against parents who seek more education funding. Nothing could be further than the truth. On that night in May I specifically said that I was not criticizing those parents, but rather only the political insiders who crafted an unfunded, non-synergistic funding strategy outside of public view.

Thankfully, many education supporters have seen through the attacks on me and offered their support. I appreciate it. We are stronger when we work together and divided when we do not. Our common goal is education and the kids in our community. Let's stick to that and stop the slandering of my positive record in the community.

Mike Feinstein
Santa Monica

Standing up for Feinstein

Editor:
I received a brochure in the mail ostensibly from the "Santa Monica Democratic Club" but, in fact, with a return address of Santa Monica for Renters Rights' (SMRR). I was all the more disappointed to see the SMRR negative statements about Michael Feinstein.

I have lived in Santa Monica for 20 years and contributed to SMRR for all of those years. I am currently a land owner and landlord but support strong Rent Control, repeal of the Costa-Hawkins law, and even rent control of commercial property, since such controls reduce the incentive for property speculation and permits more people to afford homes and for the small business owners to have affordable rent.

I will be voting for Michael Feinstein for City Council and will reconsider my support for SMRR candidates who do not speak out to condemn these unfortunate tactics of SMRR.

I encourage other citizens of Santa Monica to do likewise.

Dennis G. Allard
Santa Monica

ENDORSEMENTS, from page 6

campaign has been based on what's broken and less on how to fix it. Cole is a committed community member, and his volunteer work is more valuable to Santa Monica in that capacity than serving in office.

■ The Daily Press endorsed Matt Dinolfo two years ago in his bid for a council seat. He is a proven leader and a moderate. But he has been conspicuously absent the past two years, not engaging himself in the community as much as he ought to have. It was a close call, but in the end there were too many other qualified candidates who have proven an ongoing commitment to Santa Monica.

■ Mike Feinstein is a smart and independent thinker who has

introduced some innovative policies. But he has failed to show that he is a true community leader and team player. Although some might argue that Feinstein is effective when he gets frustrated and angry, which occurs frequently, we believe it is counterproductive, ineffective and creates divisiveness. True community leadership means playing well with others and not allowing emotions to dominate politics. Feinstein has let his ego get in the way of improving life for all Santa Monicans and being part of an effective, responsive government.

■ Ken Genser has a proven track record, is dedicated and extremely committed to Santa Monica politics. His institutional knowledge has been instrumental in public policy making. But

after serving 16 years on the council, it's time to give someone else a turn. Still, we wish there was another seat open for Genser, because he's a reasonable man with valuable knowledge and an enviable historical perspective.

■ Although we wanted to endorse a woman and think Patricia Hoffman had the best chance of winning a seat, we simply felt she will not move Santa Monica toward meaningful change when it comes to quality of life issues. As a self-described optimist, Hoffman thinks life here is pretty good. It is, but there are serious issues that need to be addressed, and we need elected officials who sympathize with a broad base of their constituencies.

■ Maria Loya comes from a neighborhood that has been under represented for decades. Although we believe the City Council should have a member from the Pico neighborhood, Loya isn't ready for the job. She has virtually no specifics on how she would affect change in the city, and often uses government jargon to mask that weakness. Loya repeatedly employs an underdog mentality when it's not needed and resorts too easily to fighting rather than working collaboratively. Citizens are not best served by that type of rhetoric.

■ Kathryn Morea also comes from the Pico neighborhood, where crime has overrun citizens' quality of life. We wish that Morea had the experience needed

for elected office, because Pico needs representation. Her experience in local government entailed spending three years to get preferential parking for her neighborhood, which, in our opinion, doesn't amount to adequate experience. We hope Morea continues to stay involved, bringing her ideas to fruition with different issues and in different forums.

The remaining candidates, Jonathan Mann, Linda Armstrong and Leticia Anderson, haven't provided enough information for us to gauge where they stand on local issues. Two other candidates who will appear on the ballot, Leah Mendelsohn and Tom Viscount, have dropped out of the race.

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9:30 G-Tom Mac (Lost Boys Movie)
10:30 Next to Zero DREAD ZEPPLIN



OPINION

Boo! Four more days until four more years?

NEWS ON THE EDGE

BY RON SCOTT SMITH



May I suggest you vote for Feinstein, Genser, Bloom and Loya? Bobby Shriver will somehow find a way to move on with his life, even if he is unable to buy a seat on Santa Monica's city council with the blessings of the Chamber of Commerce and the beachfront luxury hotels.

The phone just rang and, seriously, it was Teddy Kennedy asking me to support his nephew. I'm flattered that he remembered the influence Thursday's opinion page wields around here, and I like New England liberals as much as the next guy — probably more than the next guy. But leave the governance of Santa Monica to the people who have been here battling in the trenches, who know the struggles this town has endured to be what it is.

"What it is" is something many among you apparently have come to think is all wrong, judging by the bitching and moaning expressed in letters written to this newspaper on a near-daily basis. What town could you possibly be waking up in every morning, thinking this is all wrong? Because many happen to be here, laying down their heads on the cold concrete at night to dream their dreams, does that so spoil your Santa Monica experience? That's a fairly impressive sun glowing off the Pacific right in front of your eyes every evening, have you noticed? Do you have time to remember how lucky you are? Homelessness is a cruel problem of this age, and this city has taken more than its share of that problem upon its shoulders. Somebody's got to solve it. Einstein's dead. God knows. There's no easy solution. If you have one, write it out on the blackboard, soon. Meanwhile, where did you leave your heart? You want Beverly Hills-by-the-sea? Go ahead, it's your vote.

May I suggest you vote for John Kerry? Nothing like preaching to the choir — as this town will go something like 85 percent for him and this state is so locked into its pre-ordained presidential result that we don't even get to see the filthy, last-minute political ads running in the "battleground" states that have all the drama and all the fun. What at long last will sway those "undecideds" who will determine the next leader of the free world? The better question might be this: Who in their right mind could be still "undecided" with four days to go, with such clear ideological differences in front of them? Undecided? More like brain-locked.

There's only one way this failed president could possibly be approved for another term of whatever this is, and it's because you're scared to death, just the way he wants you to be, remember? He

has your number. You might be even more scared when you consider these numbers of yours that he also has:

■ **2 1/2**

Your dollars paid today at the Arco for a gallon of gas.

■ **150,000**

Your sons and daughters, your brothers and sisters, your friends, whose lives remain on the line every day after conquering the land where all the gas comes from. Mission accomplished?

■ **1,304 give or take a couple hundred**

Your loved ones killed in action in the land where all the gas comes from — a small price to pay to keep freedom on the march.

■ **200 billion**

Your dollars spent in order to keep freedom marching through the land where all the gas comes from, where the natives don't appear to care much for the notion, thank you, as freedom wears boots and marches all over many of them.

■ **45 million**

Your fellow citizens living their lives without the freedom to seek medical care if they get sick, other than throwing themselves at the mercy of the nearest emergency room, while that \$200 billion marches off with that freedom, half a planet away.

■ **500 billion**

Your American dollars in the red, while four short — or is it four interminable? — years ago, all those dollars were that much in the black.

■ **0**

Weapons of mass destruction found, rendering specious the Bush rationale for going to war and spending precious American and Iraqi lives.

Bush has your numbers all right.

He counts on the "fear factor" to bring him victory on Nov. 2, because if enough Americans remain fearful enough of the evil he has single-handedly identified and put us to war against, he will be reelected. However, if enough Americans entertain a different fear, the same fear I do, (the same fear I had in 2000 when he took the presidency) — that this is exactly the wrong man at exactly the wrong time in exactly the wrong place — then his reign will be over.

In his dumbing-down of America, George W. Bush has put us all in the awkward position of having to choose which fear to embrace. Soccer moms have given way to security moms to form the key voting bloc that he hopes will yield him Tuesday's decisive margin.

No matter what fears are your fears in these terror-alert-color-coded times we've been dragged into... even if you are one fearless mother... may I suggest you vote?

(Ron Scott Smith can be reached at edgeofthewest@aol.com. To read previous columns, go to archives at www.smdp.com).

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

LOCAL



Wisnicki raises \$26K more than competitors

SCHOOL BOARD, from page 1

but there's a small percentage of time where an issue relates to a particular school or a particular community," Escarce said. "When issues like that come up, it's really nice to have representatives from the Malibu community, if it's a Malibu issue.

"From the perspective of appearance, I think it's a really big issue," he added. "I feel very comfortable and very confident that everybody on the board tries to represent everybody ... Now, does it help to have somebody that lives in Malibu? Of course it does.

"It would be silly to say it doesn't."

The debate over Malibu representation comes only months after a group of Malibu parents began pushing to secede from the district, a movement that is still garnering support while the finances are being studied in detail. It also comes during a school board race that has been marked by an air of collegiality, both candidates and observers said.

"I think it's been clean and fair," said school board member Shane McCloud, whose term runs until 2006. "The mud's been reserved for the City Council election."

McCloud said he is supporting Wisnicki, along with Escarce and Leon-Vazquez for re-election. He's not alone. That trio also won the backing of, among other groups, the Coalition to Protect the Living Wage, the local chamber of commerce, the Committee for Excellent Public Schools, the local teacher union and the faculty union at Santa Monica College.

Jara beat out Wisnicki to win a coveted endorsement from the powerful Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights group, along with Escarce and Vazquez. She is also backed by the local chapter of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union.

As of the middle of October, the candidates had reported widely varied fundraising amounts. Escarce reported raising \$6,570, while Jara brought in \$3,789 and Leon-Vazquez raised a total of \$3,765, according to fundraising disclosure documents filed at City Hall. Wisnicki, on the other hand, reported raising nearly \$33,000 by the middle of this month.

"That's the disadvantage for a Malibu candidate not getting the SMRR endorsement," Wisnicki said. "I've had to raise so much more money than anybody else."

AMERICAN RED CROSS OF SANTA MONICA



HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

As ghosts, pirates and princesses prepare to descend on neighborhoods across America on Halloween night, the American Red Cross of Santa Monica offers parents our "lucky 13" safety tips to help prepare their children for a safe and enjoyable trick-or-treat holiday.

"Lucky 13" Red Cross Halloween Safety Tips:

- Plan your route and share it with your family. If possible, have an adult go with you.
- Wear light-colored or reflective -type clothing so you are more visible. (And remember to put reflective tape on bikes, skateboards and brooms too!)
- Use face paint rather than masks or things that will cover your eyes.
- Cross the street only at corners.
- Look both ways before crossing the street to check for cars, trucks and low-flying brooms.
- Don't hide or cross the street between parked cars.
- Walk, slither and sneak on sidewalks; not in the street.
- Carry a flashlight to light your way.
- Visit homes that have the porch light on.
- Keep away from open fires and candles. (Keep in mind that costumes can be extremely flammable).
- Accept your treats at the door and never go into a stranger's house.
- Be cautious of strangers and animals.
- Have a grown-up inspect your treats before eating. And don't eat candy if the package is already opened. Small, hard pieces of candy are a choking hazard for young children.



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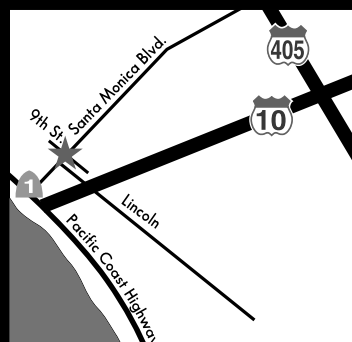
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STATE

President Bush signs \$395 million CalFed bill

BY ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush signed a landmark California water bill, committing \$395 million to restoring the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that feeds the nation's most productive farm land and provides drinking water to 22 million Californians.

The bill reauthorizes the California Federal Bay-Delta Program, earmarking funding for studying new storage projects, reconstructing levees, restoring ecosystems and other needs.

Bush's signature on the bill late Monday came after six years of debate and negotiations. Attempts in past years to pass versions of the bill with much larger price tags repeatedly failed, but Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo, R-Tracy, shepherded it through the House and Senate in recent weeks.

The legislation authorizes feasibility studies for several major new storage projects and includes \$90 million for reconstructing levees. It increases water flows

to thirsty Southern California and requires a study on restoring the Salton Sea, among numerous other measures.

"What this law will do is ensure that California will be able to meet its water needs in a balanced manner — for farmers, for cities and for the environment," Feinstein said in a statement.

"We will enhance Delta water quality, improve delivery and secure future supplies of water — the lifeblood of California's agricultural economy," Pombo said.

CalFed was started a decade ago as a long-term multibillion-dollar project bringing the first major changes to California's water systems since the 1960s.

The state, the federal government and water users are supposed to pay a third each for the program, but Congress had not reauthorized the bill, costing the state millions in the past few years.

Farmers and water managers have cheered the bill, though it has not pleased everyone. Environmentalists say the bill does not do enough to improve habitat.

Storm brings flooding, record snowfall, with more on the way

BY TOM VERDIN

Associated Press Writer

A powerful Alaskan storm swept southward across California, knocking out power to thousands, leaving slick roadways littered with wreckage and forcing residents to flee flooded homes.

The storm, which dumped record-breaking snowfall in the Sierra Tuesday, is expected to linger through Thursday, dropping several inches of rain across the state and more than two feet of snow in the mountains.

The National Weather Service forecast issued flash flood warnings and fears of mudslides in mountain areas scarred by wildfires over the past year.

In San Bernardino County, the sheriff's department ordered voluntary evacuations for two streets in the Devore area due to unstable soil and the possibility of flash

flooding. A Red Cross shelter was set up for residents.

In the Santa Clarita area of northern Los Angeles County, rising water Tuesday night flooded a mobile home park that also was hit hard last week by a storm.

A swift-water rescue team late Tuesday retrieved a man who fell into the rain-swollen San Gabriel River, said Inspector John Mancha of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Witnesses saw the man fall into the river shortly before 11 p.m. and said he was carried away in a 3-foot tall current moving about 10 to 15 mph, Mancha said. A rescue diver caught the man about half an hour later.

By Wednesday morning, the heaviest snowfall tapered off across the northern Sierra Nevada, moving southward to San Bernardino and Southeast Inyo.

In the Southern California mountains,

ski resort operators said the snowfall will allow them to open lifts at the earliest time in five years.

And at least one school district in the San Bernardino Mountains closed all schools Wednesday.

A section of Interstate 5 was closed Southbound in Los Angeles after two tractor-trailer rigs jackknifed across the center divide, snarling traffic. Portions of numerous streets and freeways were flooded throughout the region.

Roads through the Sepulveda Dam Recreation Area were closed due to rising waters in the flood control basin.

More than 17,000 Pacific Gas & Electric Co. customers were without power Wednesday, company spokesman David Eisenhower said. Another 10,000 Southern California Edison customers were in the dark, according to SoCal Edison spokesman Gil Alexander.

Nearly an inch of rain fell Tuesday in Los Angeles, breaking the previous record for the day of .17 inches in 2000. Records were also broken in areas such as Camarillo, with 1.02 inches, and Palmdale, with .91 inches, which broke its 1940 record of .64 inches.

The University of California, Berkeley's Central Sierra Snow Lab reported that more than 48 inches of snow have fallen this month at Soda Springs, the most at the site for October since it began keeping records in 1945. That eclipsed the previous record of 36 inches in 2000.

Many Sierra ski resorts were reporting their earliest openings in years.

The storm was adding to an already impressive early season snowpack in the 400-mile-long Sierra Nevada. A surprise storm last week already had dumped 2-to-3 feet of snow.

YOUR VOTE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY



SANTA MONICA POLICE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

Vote For Those Who Share Our Commitment For Public Safety



✓ YES

Richard Bloom, Current Mayor and 24 year resident of Santa Monica is a dedicated volunteer. Mayor Bloom is Past President of Friends of Sunset Park and has worked on the Commission on Older Americans, the Santa Monica School District and College Committee and American Red Cross.



✓ YES

Ken Genser is a proven leader. Current Councilmember, Past Mayor and Past Mayor Pro-Tem, Ken has worked tirelessly for many years on the City Council to improve the quality of life for our city. He served on the Council when improvements were approved for many important projects including the 3rd Street Promenade, Palisades Park, Civic Center Plan, Public Safety Facility, Christine Reed (formerly Lincoln) Park and Chelsea Park.



✓ YES

Patricia Hoffman is a 25 year resident of Santa Monica and a wife and mother. She spent two years as president and 6 years total on the Santa Monica Board of Education prioritizing and balancing budgets. Patricia served as PTA Council Vice-President and AYSO commissioner. She is committed to making the City General Land Use Plan fit the needs of all residents.



✓ YES

Bobby Shriver, the Current Chairman of the California Park and Recreation Commission is a 17 year resident of Santa Monica. Bobby is an attorney with long time family and business connections in both Washington D.C. and Sacramento. He will ensure that Santa Monica gets its fair share of revenues. He has proven successes in maneuvering difficult bureaucratic obstacles to accomplish goals. Bobby Shriver is a man who can get things done.

Bloom, Genser, Hoffman and Shriver

- * All believe that the homeless issue is a top priority and needs to be addressed.
- * All believe we need a thoughtful approach to development with an emphasis in striking a balance between business and neighborhoods.
- * All support our schools, libraries and other programs that enrich our community.

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STATE



Wal-Mart's political spending reaches new levels

BY TOM CHORNEAU

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — After years of waging its political wars almost exclusively on the local level, Wal-Mart is spending aggressively this election in support of favored statewide candidates and ballot measures — including donations to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the state Republican Party.

The world's largest corporation, which once had a tradition of trying to stay out of politics, has given more than \$2.4 million on California races so far this year — well beyond any previous sum the company has spent here in one year.

And Tuesday, the Bentonville, Ark.-based company announced it would donate an additional \$500,000 to the opponents of Proposition 72, a measure that will require employers to provide basic health insurance to workers.

Wal-Mart representatives said the escalation of its political activity in California is a direct result of the mounting attacks the company faces in the state by labor unions and other critics.

"Many of our opponents are trying to use the political system to stop our growth," said Bob McAdam, Wal-Mart's vice president of corporate affairs. "And we are not going to sit back and take it without responding. We will respond."

Indeed, after spending more than \$1 million this year on unsuccessful efforts to gain voter approval for superstore projects in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas, the company has given the California Republican Party \$160,000 to use in legislative races and close to another \$70,000 to support candidates and measures in Lodi and Antioch where Wal-Mart has proposed centers. They have donated another \$10,000 to governor's California Recovery Team, which Schwarzenegger can use to fight or support any ballot measure he chooses, and another \$30,000 to a general purpose campaign set up by major employers that is supporting GOP candidates statewide.

The contributions this year far exceeds the \$1 million spent in 2003 and more than double their previous high of \$1.2 million they gave to state and local campaigns four years ago.

In addition, Wal-Mart heir John T. Walton has given \$200,000 to the governor's California Recovery Team. Walton has also given \$350,000 in support of Proposition 62, an open primary measure; and \$150,000 to various other candidates and local proposition committees throughout the state this year.

The big Wal-Mart check to the opponents of

Proposition 72 came just one day after supporters of the measure began running TV ads citing a study from a University of California research group with ties to the labor movement that estimates California taxpayers spend \$32 million a year providing health care to Wal-Mart workers.

Until the ad began running this week, Wal-Mart had not been among the companies funding the anti-Proposition 72 campaign, but once the giant retailer became a target, McAdam said they had little choice.

"Their ads are just wrong," he said. "They are not telling the truth."

Among those backing Proposition 72 and the critical Wal-Mart health care ads, however, is the California Medical Association, whose chief executive Dr. Jack Lewin has said that Wal-Mart was singled out because it is the state's most prominent low-wage, low-benefit employer.

But, as McAdam points out, it is the company's expansion plans that are the real target. With already 145 stores in California, they plan to open 40 superstores over the next five years — stores that have been the subject of big election fights up and down state.

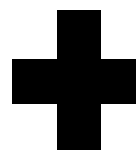
Union officials say California has become a battleground for the company.

"Wal-Mart is dramatically increasing its political spending and its political involvement all across the country but California is especially critical to them," said Greg Denier, spokesman for the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union.

The latest fight is in the Bay Area town of Antioch where the retailer is backing three council candidates that are sympathetic to the company's plan for a superstore in that community. Candidates Arne Simonsen said union officials threatened to spend \$100,000 to defeat him.

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Dolores Press, SMC Personnel Commissioner
David Finkel, former judge and City Council Member
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STATE

Schwarzenegger's campaign trip to Ohio could bear political risk

BY BETH FOUHY

AP Political Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Ever since word floated out that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger would make a last-minute campaign trip to Ohio for President Bush, political observers have predicted the celebrity governor's presence in the hard-fought presidential battleground state could shake up the tight race there in the campaign's closing days.

Schwarzenegger's planned Ohio visit has even been compared to former President Clinton's 11th-hour campaign swing for Democrat John Kerry — Clinton's first public outings since undergoing open heart surgery last month.

But with Bush widely unpopular in Democrat-leaning California, strategists are debating whether Schwarzenegger could bear a political cost for the Ohio trip — especially if Bush ekes out a victory there.

"This is a very high stakes moment in this presidential race, and if Ohio is the Florida of this year's race, there won't be a lot of applauding among California Democrats for Schwarzenegger's role in that," said Marty Kaplan, a political analyst at the University of Southern California, referring to Florida's disputed vote in 2000. "He can get away with a lot, but this is a real high stakes moment and he might not be cut the same slack."

Schwarzenegger spokeswoman Margita Thompson said Tuesday the governor will appear with Bush at a campaign event Friday in Columbus, Ohio, where he maintains several business interests and hosts the annual Arnold Fitness Weekend.

The state's 20 electoral votes are a top target for both campaigns, and while Bush won the state in 2000, some polls show Kerry opening a narrow lead there.

At a press conference with San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom Monday, Schwarzenegger created some confusion about the trip, saying "we haven't really made up our mind yet" on whether to go.

Newsom, a Democrat, later said he questioned Schwarzenegger's decision to travel to Ohio for Bush at all.

"I think he knows it's in the best interests of the state of California to stay away from Ohio," Newsom said. "My own strong view is that if Bush-Cheney wins, that it hurts the state of California."

Schwarzenegger has never made a secret of his support for Bush, even delivering a prime time speech at the Republican National Convention where he praised the president's handling of Iraq and the war on terror. And while he

initially said he wouldn't campaign for Bush outside of California, he later amended that to say he would consider making an appearance elsewhere.

"Going to Ohio and campaigning for Bush is definitely a good idea," said GOP strategist Kevin Spillane. "It's expected and appreciated by the Republican Party base here in California and nationally. It's maximum impact for minimum investment of time."

As the Republican governor of a state made up mostly of Democrats and independent voters, Schwarzenegger has carefully crafted a bipartisan image and has signed several pieces of socially progressive legislation, such requiring insurance companies to cover same sex partners and as allowing the sale of clean hypodermic needles without a prescription to battle AIDS.

Last week he announced his support for a California ballot measure that would have the state borrow \$3 billion to fund stem cell research, despite the Bush administration's strict limits on federal funding for such research.

For those reasons, longtime Democratic strategist Garry South said Schwarzenegger's decision to go to Ohio probably wouldn't bear much political cost.

"He's very clever — he has bought himself some running room with liberals, Democrats, moderates and progressives," South said. "Besides, if you were Arnold Schwarzenegger and knew Bush was going to crash and burn in your home state, wouldn't you go to another state too?"

Most polls show Bush all but certain to lose California, the election's biggest prize with 55 electoral votes.

Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein said while Schwarzenegger would certainly be a campaign draw in Ohio, his visit there said more about the state of the Bush campaign than it did about the celebrity governor.

"Up to this point, he's been very reticent about getting involved in the campaign," she said. "This trip could be a show of desperation on the administration's part."

Tony Coelho, a former California congressman who briefly ran Democrat Al Gore's campaign in 2000, said Schwarzenegger's trip would end up being a "win win" for him, regardless of whether Bush won or lost.

"The fact that they are reaching out to him to bring some luster in the last few days makes him stronger, both nationally and in California," Coelho said. "That they go into Ohio with someone pro-choice, pro-gay is an acknowledgment that Bush needs help from moderate Republicans to win."

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- WE NEED A NEW STRATEGY TO HANDLE CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS. Current City programs do help many homeless people – but only those who are physically and mentally able to follow the programs' rules. We have no program for the chronic homeless – most of whom are addicted, mentally ill, or both. They need the most help, use the most resources, and cause residents to avoid certain areas of the city.
- A "HOUSING FIRST" APPROACH. From San Francisco to New York, cities are realizing that their costly shelter programs only provide a temporary respite for some – not a solution. Pilot programs have shown that a small, but stable and secure, living space connected to medical, nutritional, occupational, and social services can be much more successful. *I will work to establish a permanent supportive housing facility for the chronic homeless in vacant buildings such as those at the VA Hospital in West Los Angeles.*
- WE SHOULD DISCOURAGE ANY PROGRAM THAT PLAYS THE ROLE OF ENABLER TO ADDICTED PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREETS. Every dollar allocated to homelessness must be spent to support our goal of permanently moving people into housing.
- WE MUST TAKE ADVICE FROM OUR POLICE AND PARAMEDICS. We rely on their firsthand knowledge to increase public safety and reduce frightening behaviors such as public inebriation, sleeping in doorways and in parks, and aggressive panhandling.

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"Santa Monica needs to move in a new direction – one that results in a solution. I will work with residents, business people, service providers, police and paramedics to develop a more effective approach to homelessness."

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NATIONAL

Campaigns hopeful their efforts will boost Hispanic voter turnout

BY GENARO C. ARMAS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The major political parties are hoping bilingual phone banks, booths at Latin street festivals and television ads on Spanish — language networks will boost voter turnout among the nation's largest minority group.

But for which candidate?

"Latinos have shown they will dance with any party and defy predictions," said Marcelo Gaete, senior director of programs for the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials in Los Angeles.

Although Latinos typically lean Democratic — exit polls show Al Gore won 62 percent of their vote in 2000 — Republicans are optimistic they can build on the 35 percent that President Bush won among Hispanics four years ago. In 1996, Republican nominee Bob Dole received just 21 percent.

How Hispanics vote and whether they go to the polls in large numbers could swing this year's presidential race in Colorado, Florida and other tight battleground states. Numbering close to 40 million, Hispanics passed blacks as the nation's largest minority several years ago, according to the Census Bureau.

The wild card is what the campaigns and advocacy groups say are hundreds of thousands of new Hispanic registered voters, many of whom are recently naturalized immigrants.

The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials estimates that 7 million Hispanics will vote this year, up 1 million from 2000. That year, 45 percent of voting-age Hispanic citizens

went to the polls, compared to 57 percent of blacks and 62 percent of whites.

Bush and Democratic challenger Sen. John Kerry have done especially well in communicating through Hispanic media and ad campaigns, especially in battleground states, says Adam Segal, director of the Hispanic Voter Project at Johns Hopkins University.

A historic Hispanic turnout could benefit Kerry, Segal says. The most recent poll, conducted in July by the Pew Hispanic Center, showed Latinos preferring the Massachusetts Democrat over the incumbent Republican by a 2-to-1 margin.

However, Gaete says Hispanic voters have recently become a little more unpredictable, citing the better-than-expected support that the president's brother, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, received from non-Cuban Hispanics in his 2002 re-election bid.

Bush won Florida in 2000 by a scant 537 votes, though he scored about a 4-to-1 advantage among Cubans. Despite Jeb Bush's win, an influx of non-Cuban Hispanics into the state has Democrats thinking they can improve among the state's diverse Latino population.

Republicans hope Cuban-born Senate candidate Mel Martinez will get Latinos siding with the GOP. Democrats think Kerry may enjoy the same carry-over effect in Colorado, where Attorney General Ken Salazar, a Hispanic, is running for the Senate.

Such high-profile statewide races may help increase Hispanic turnout overall in those states. Bush and Kerry have also targeted two other western battlegrounds, Nevada and New Mexico, as especially crucial for turning out Hispanics.

Prop. 200 opponents try to nullify vote on measure

BY ANANDA SHOREY

Associated Press Writer

PHOENIX — Opponents of a measure aimed at restricting illegal immigrants from obtaining government services planned to ask a judge Wednesday to throw out votes cast on the initiative.

The challenge focuses on differences in the language on copies of the initiative submitted with the petitions needed to put the measure on the ballot.

Thousands of signatures were attached to a version of Proposition 200 that was different from the measure that ended up on Arizona's Nov. 2 ballot, according to a lawsuit filed Friday in Maricopa County Superior Court.

The changes mean the difference between an initiative that affects welfare benefits and one that affects a wider variety of services, said Charles Blanchard, an attorney for the plaintiffs, which includes the No on 200 campaign.

"This is a constitutional violation," Blanchard said. "It goes to the very heart of what this initiative is all about."

The opponents' commercials argue that the initiative would mean that emergency workers would have to check IDs before providing emergency services.

Proponents argue the initiative isn't that broad and say this is just one last attempt by opponents to kill the measure before Tuesday's election.

"This is another scare tactic," said Randy Pullen, chairman of Yes on 200.

Lawyers for those supporting the measure were expected to argue that the challenge comes too late because of the delay between when the petitions were filed with the Arizona Secretary of State's Office in July and when the lawsuit was filed.

This isn't the first attempt by opponents to challenge the measure in court.

The Service Employees International Union asked a Maricopa County judge to deny Proposition 200 ballot status, claiming it was inadequately described on nominating petitions.

Judge Mark Armstrong ruled Aug. 31 that voters should decide its fate. The union did not appeal.

On Aug. 16, the Arizona Supreme Court declined to rule on a separate lawsuit filed by the union to challenge some parts of the official voter publicity pamphlet's description of the initiative.

Support for the proposition has been dropping, but the initiative, which would

NATIONAL



Security cameras to be required in Vegas cabs

By The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — By next year, cameras in Las Vegas taxis won't only be for "true confessions" style television.

Cabbies, company owners and regulators agreed Tuesday to require security surveillance in all 2,000 cabs serving the area by April 1.

The Nevada Taxicab Authority had rejected a similar measure in February, after company owners cited fears about cost.

But violence against taxi drivers — including the death of a cab driver set afire during a botched robbery in August — spurred new action by the five-member appointed panel.

"Nobody on this board takes any pride in seeing somebody badly burned or shot," authority Chairman Richard Land said Tuesday. "It is time to put this to bed."

Land said cameras won't stop all violence. But advocates said surveillance will provide a deterrent and evidence to help police solve crimes.

"Will it be a cure-all? Of course not," said Art McClenaghan, a former driver and longtime camera advocate. "But it's a huge step. It's bound to make it safer."

Kim Kelly, whose father, Glenn, was

slain while driving a cab on New Year's Day 1971, called the slaying of Pairoj "Paul" Chitprasart, 51, a turning point in the debate.

Chitprasart, who also co-owned a Thai newspaper, died three days after the Aug. 20 attack. Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty against James Scholl, 31, a homeless Las Vegas man awaiting trial in the case.

The rule requires the installation of cameras that capture images of the driver and passengers when a taxi door is opened or closed. It also allows continuous video cameras, digital cameras that snap still images, and audio recordings.

Notices will be posted in cabs in English and Spanish that cameras are used.

"A person that has a problem with a camera in a cab, I don't want to transport them, anyway," said Craig Harris, a steward with the Industrial Technical Professional Employees union, which represents most Las Vegas-area cab drivers.

The authority estimated the cost of camera installations at up to \$700 per taxi.

Owners said they hoped reduced insurance premiums will negate the need for a fare increase.

Challengers plan appeal if defeated

PROP. 200, from page 14

require proof of citizenship when registering to vote and proof of immigration status when obtaining government services, remains popular.

This lawsuit doesn't try to keep voters from casting their ballots on the measure. Many voters have already sent in early ballots.

Instead, it requests an injunction that would prevent county officials and the Arizona Secretary of State's Office from canvassing the result of the vote. The can-

vass is where officials approve vote results as fair and accurate.

It is unusual for challengers to check the language on initiatives, said Andrew Gordon, an election lawyer. But if the lawsuit prevails and the votes are thrown out, things could change.

Lawyers challenging initiatives will have to meticulously read the wording of initiatives and it could clog courts.

If Judge Margaret Downie throws out the case, Blanchard said they will appeal it to the Arizona Supreme Court.

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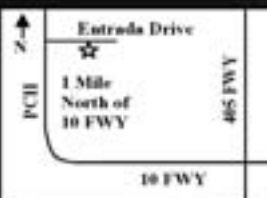
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NATIONAL

Kerry: Bush ‘bobbing and weaving’ on missing explosives

BY MARY DALRYMPLE
Associated Press Writer

SIoux CITY, IOWA — Sen. John Kerry accused President Bush on Wednesday of “dodging and bobbing and weaving” on explanations for nearly 400 tons of missing explosives in Iraq. Bush said his presidential challenger was making wild charges without knowing the facts.

Less than a week before the election, both campaigns intensified their efforts. With their agendas laid out all summer and fall, Bush and Kerry were trying to create an aura of excitement in get-out-the-vote rallies, hoping to snag the dwindling pool of voters who haven’t taken sides.

Kerry hit hard at this week’s revelation that explosives had disappeared from an outpost in Iraq.

“The missing explosives could very likely be in the hands of terrorists and insurgents, who are actually attacking our forces now 80 times a day on average,” Kerry said at a rally in Sioux City. “But now today we’ve learned even more. What we’re seeing is a White House that is dodging and bobbing and weaving in their usual efforts to avoid responsibility, just as they’ve done every step of the way in our involvement in Iraq.”

Kerry said Vice President Dick Cheney “is becoming the chief minister of disinformation” while the president remains silent on the matter.

Bush did bring up the matter a few minutes later, in a speech in Lititz, Pa.

“Now the senator is making wild charges about missing explosives when

his top foreign policy adviser admits, quote, ‘we do not know the facts.’” Bush said. “Think about that — the senator’s denigrating the action of our troops and commanders in the field without knowing the facts. Unfortunately, that’s part of a pattern of saying almost anything to get elected.”

Bush was referring to remarks made by Kerry adviser Richard Holbrooke Tuesday in an interview with Fox News. Holbrooke said “the U.N. inspectors had told the American military this was a major depot.” He added: “I don’t know what happened. I do know one thing — in most administrations the buck stops in the Oval Office.”

Kerry also appealed to middle class voters in the election homestretch Wednesday, saying Bush had sold them out to help the wealthy and now wanted “four more years so that he can keep up the bad work.”

Bush, meanwhile, put together a campaign endgame that included persistent appeals for Democratic votes and a rarely used weapon in this bruising campaign — a positive commercial.

Rockers Bruce Springsteen and Jon Bon Jovi were rejoining the Kerry campaign, minstrels in his fast-moving gallery. California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger was bringing his star power to Bush’s side later in the week.

The president turned to the iconoclastic Democratic Sen. Zell Miller of Georgia to accompany him Wednesday to Pennsylvania and Ohio events, in keeping with his late-breaking appeals to

Democrats who aren’t sold on their own party’s nominee.

Bush, in Pennsylvania, said, “I want to remind the American people that if Senator Kerry had his way ... Saddam Hussein would still be in power, he would control all those weapons and explosives” and could have shared them with America’s terrorist enemies.

“For a political candidate to jump to conclusions without knowing the facts is not a person you want as your commander in chief,” Bush said.

Kerry was focusing on economic troubles in the Sioux City speech Wednesday before stumping in Minnesota and back in Iowa, at a Cedar Rapids event. Aides saw that speech and one Friday that will blend his campaign’s economic and foreign policy proposals as his “closing arguments” for change. The speeches were added to his schedule after aides had said earlier that a speech Tuesday on homeland security was to be his last of the campaign.

After ripping Kerry for weeks as an equivocator, Bush planned to close the contest with a 60-second commercial meant to show him as steady, trustworthy and compassionate in dangerous times.

The ad shows an emotional president telling the Republican National Convention about meeting the children and parents of slain U.S. soldiers, as well as wounded servicemen and women.

“These four years have brought moments I could not foresee and will not forget,” Bush says. “I’ve learned firsthand that ordering Americans into battle is the hardest decision, even when it is right.”

The commercial will be seen by a limited audience, given that it will run only on a couple national cable news networks.

Neither campaign was going upbeat, nor were their supporters.

Hard-hitting leaflets lined mailboxes in a dozen or so hotly contested states. A glossy mailing by the Pennsylvania Democratic State Committee showed burning roadside wreckage in Iraq, with U.S. soldiers looking on, and the headline “Wrong Choices ... Less Secure.”

A Republican National Committee mailing showed pictures of Jane Fonda and Michael Moore, two anti-war liberals supporting Kerry, and the headline, “John Kerry’s heart and soul of America?”

Kerry’s latest ad accuses the Bush administration of failing to secure the explosives that disappeared from a military installation south of Baghdad around the time U.S. forces were toppling Saddam Hussein’s government.

New state polls suggested the race was deadlocked in Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, the three most important battlegrounds in the race for 270 Electoral College votes.

With the possibility of another inconclusive election night looming, lawyers were already deep in courtroom entanglements in a variety of states over problems either anticipated or already experienced in states with heavy early voting.

A federal judge in Miami ruled against Democrats in saying Florida election officials will not be required to process incomplete voter registration forms.

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– ROBERT HOLBROOK, SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCILMEMBER

“Measure S will directly benefit seniors and Emeritus College, with new opportunities in Malibu, use of the new Performing Arts Complex here in Santa Monica, and improved health facilities at the College appropriate for all ages.”
– MAGGIE HALL, DIRECTOR, EMERITUS COLLEGE

“The Corsair supports Measure S. Measure S will enable SMC to replace obsolete buildings...[and] is a wonderful opportunity for the entire community to benefit from new projects designed to enhance learning.”
– SANTA MONICA COLLEGE WEEKLY CORSAIR

“SMC is among the top community colleges in the nation. This past Spring, SMC was rated ‘outstanding’ and earned the highest accreditation possible from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Vote ‘YES’ on Measure S.”
– SHEILA JAMES KUEHL, CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR

“Measure S will acquire new ball fields in Santa Monica, which is severely deficient in field space. All fields will be available for public use.”
– NEIL CARREY, SANTA MONICA RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSIONER

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– DR. MARGARET QUIÑONES, CHAIR, SANTA MONICA COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

“Yes on Measure S. Measure S is the final step in the College’s Facility Master Plan drafted in 1998. It will help fund the new Madison Performing Arts Center, a new Career Opportunity Center (a modernization of the vocational programs lost), new athletic fields and a Childcare and Early Childhood Development Lab School. All great stuff and worthy of community support.”
– SANTA MONICA MIRROR EDITORIAL BOARD

“Many of the good-paying occupations in today’s world were little more than science fiction when Santa Monica College was built. Measure S will build a new career opportunity center in emerging technologies to teach jobs skills and provide counseling services to help students prepare for the jobs of the future.”
– FRANK STIEFEL, PRESIDENT, SANTA MONICA COLLEGE FOUNDATION

“I endorse Measure S!”
– SANTA MONICA POLICE CHIEF JAMES BUTTS

“All funds raised by Measure S will stay in our community. All projects funded by this measure will be available for public and student use.”
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“SMC is severely deficient in facilities to support transfer programs in the arts. West LA, East LA, Compton, and Irvine Colleges have already secured public funding for performing arts complexes. Measure S will help SMC meet new admission standards in performing arts now required by the University of California and will support specialized training needed in the Applied Music program.”
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Vote: November 2, 2004 ☒ Yes on S!

NATIONAL

Cyclocross racers do it for fitness and fun

BY TERRENCE PETTY

Associated Press Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. — Roxy Cate has just finished a 45-minute cyclocross race: furiously pedaling through mucky turns and along rain-soaked grassy straightaways, running several times up a nearly vertical hill with her bike slung over her shoulder, and leaping with it over wooden barriers.

She's exhausted from the difficult course. She's covered with mud. She's drenched.

So why is this 43-year-old smiling?

Like a growing number of cyclists in the United States, she's got cyclocross fever.

"We do it because it shows we can still get out there and race," she says of middle-age women like herself. "It's an investment in our health."

Cate was among more than 600 giddily enthusiastic cyclists who showed up on a recent rainy Sunday for races at the Alpenrose Dairy, tucked into the forested hills just west of Portland.

The cyclocross season has just gotten under way and runs into December.

In the Pacific Northwest, the cyclocross season coincides with the start of the rainy season, turning many of the races into sloppy mud-baths. You might think this would be a deterrent. Not among Oregon racers, a number of whom are disappointed if they go home clean.

"Cyclocross is one of the most brutal introductions to bike racing there is," said Mike Geraci, a 39-year-old cyclocross racer in Jackson, Wyo. who works in the bike industry. "It takes a special kind of person to enjoy the abuse."

Still, the number of cyclists registered for cyclocross races sanctioned by the USA Cycling organization has more than quadrupled over the past several years: from 3,849 in 1995 to 17,255 last year.

Young, trim elite riders with national recognition are the stars at the half-dozen or so cyclocross races in the Portland area's Cross Crusade series. But they are in the minority. At the Alpenrose, the field of 610 riders had only 60 elite racers. The rest were beginners, teens, recreational riders and Baby Boomers trying to fend off the aging process.

Riders race in separate categories that are based on their abilities and experience. They are timed. The fastest in each category is the winner.

The first Cross Crusade race of the season was held on Oct. 3, near a lake just east of Portland. Among the 582 riders that day were 13-year-old Kayla Woolcock and Kenny Bossen, 15.

Asked what she liked about cyclocross, Kayla said: "getting dirty."

Kenny Bossen chimed in, "Cyclocross is the best. There are barriers. It's off-road. And there's mud."

The two kids race because they have strong competitive spirits.

The same goes for Dan Feiner, a Portland attorney. But Feiner has other reasons as well.

"This is my version of a mid-life challenge," said the 51-year-old after racing in the field for riders age 50 and up.

Feiner is an avid road bike rider, but he hadn't raced on a cyclocross bike for two decades. Feiner was pleased just to have finished the race.

"I've discovered that 20 years later I'm still fit. I can still do it," Feiner said. "And I didn't break anything!"

Over the past couple of years the Portland area has become a nationally known hotbed for cyclocross. Others are Seattle, Northern California and the Boston area. Race series are also springing up in the Southeast, the Midwest and the Rockies.

"In the U.S. market we have seen the great expansion of the regional scene over the past few years, and I would say that Portland is really leading in that role," said Bruce Fina, marketing director for the U.S. Gran Prix of Cyclocross, a national series of cyclocross races.

Portland is hosting the national cyclocross championships on Dec. 10-12, for the second year running.

Cyclocross racing is just what the name implies — a cross between two kinds of cycling. The bikes have lightweight road bike-style frames, but mountain-style tires and brakes.

The courses are also a blend of road and mountain bike riding, with straightaways on

pavement and grass, tight turns, steep hills and wooden barriers. There's a fair amount of running involved — up the steep hills and over the barriers.

Cyclocross was invented in Europe decades ago as a way for cyclists to stay fit through the winter months. On the international scene, Europeans are the top racers. But that hasn't dampened the spirits of elite American riders.

"We never let racing get in the way of fun," said Erik Tonkin, a wiry 30-year-old from Portland and a Cross Crusade regular who is also one of the top racers in the country.

The race director for the Cross Crusade series, Brad Ross, and his helpers have come up with some ingenious ways to bring in the masses.

You don't have to have a cyclocross bike to compete. People also ride mountain bikes, fixed-gear bikes, commuter bikes and even unicycles — whatever is in their garage.

Although serious riders wear expensive racing jerseys and Spandex shorts, many Cross Crusade cyclists come in baggy shorts and T-Shirts. At one recent race a rider showed up wearing nothing but a red Speedo.

Elite riders compete for money, national points and glory. But there are goodies for every category.

Anyone who finishes in a place with the digit "4" at the end might win a six-pack. So someone who places 94th gets the same prize as someone who finishes fourth. The digit changes with each race.

And then there's the infamous Black Knight, a black-clad rider who takes short cuts across the course and suddenly shows up at the head of the pack, taunting riders to try to catch him.

The cheating cyclist is Russ Humberston, one of the founders of the Cross Crusade series. Riders who catch him are awarded prizes. These days it might be \$100 in cash. When Humberston first appeared as the Black Knight three years ago the rewards for catching him were far more modest: Humberston's muddy cycling shorts, for example.

"We do all kinds of stupid stuff," Brad Ross says with pride.

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NATIONAL

Progress slow in unearthing Saddam's victims for evidence

BY GEORGE GEDDA

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Iraq's 270 mass graves could be the key to a successful prosecution of Saddam Hussein, but bodies have been dug up at only one site in the year and a half since he was toppled.

Worries about security at the grave sites and a lack of resources and direction from the Iraqi government have contributed to the slow progress.

Also, Europeans with expertise in exhumations generally are not helping because of their aversion to the death penalty, a legal punishment in Iraq that Saddam could well face.

Saddam appeared in court July 1 to hear seven preliminary charges, including the killing of rival politicians and of Kurds and Shiites.

Eleven leading officials from his regime also face trial. Among them is Ali Hasan al-Majid, known as "Chemical Ali" for his role in chemical weapons attacks against the Kurds.

Iraq's interim prime minister, Ayad Allawi, is eager for an early start to the trials, but U.S. officials say patience is necessary to ensure the proceedings meet the highest international standards.

The graves are among the chief legacies of Saddam's regime. About 270 grave sites have been identified, but exhumations have begun only at the site near the Kurdish town of Hatra.

Some of the worst massacres occurred in Kurdish areas in the 1980s. At the time, however, the Reagan administration said virtually nothing about the butchery because the United States was siding with Iraq in that country's war with Iran.

As of earlier this month, investigators had removed 120 bodies from a trench believed to contain about 300. A bulldozer appeared to have been used to dump remains into graves. Among the victims was a mother still clutching her baby. The infant was shot in the back of the head and the mother in the face.

Indeed, many of the remains were those of women and

children. In Bosnia, scene of widespread ethnic cleansing operations a decade ago, the great majority were fighting-age men.

U.S. officials say quicker action on exhuming sites in Iraq could have served as good public relations for an administration struggling for politically positive images from Iraq — something to contrast with the slaughters carried out by Iraqi insurgents and their foreign allies.

But the insurgency in Iraq is making it hard to get to those sites to examine them.

Only a small percentage of the remains unearthed in Iraq will be used for courtroom evidence against Saddam and his former lieutenants. For the rest, attempts will be made to identify them to help Iraqi families come to closure.

Some Iraqis are digging up remains of relatives on their own, rather than waiting for exhumation experts to do the job.

One group expected to play a key role in the exhumations is the International Commission for Missing Persons, which has had extensive experience in identifying remains of Bosnian war crime victims.

The commission is putting together an international conference on helping Iraqis deal with a similar problem. Iraqi officials invited to the conference will be expected to provide guidance on how they want to proceed. Another of the few groups with expertise on humanitarian exhumations is the Boston-based Physicians for Human Rights.

"The challenge is to develop in a careful but hopefully expeditious way a plan for all of Iraq that would involve the various stakeholders, including Iraqi government, religious leaders and representatives of families of the missing," said Susannah Sirkin, the deputy director of the doctors' group.

Ideally, Sirkin says, outside groups prepared to help would bow out as Iraqis develop their own expertise in unearthing and identifying the hundreds of thousands of Saddam-era victims. She says the process could take decades.



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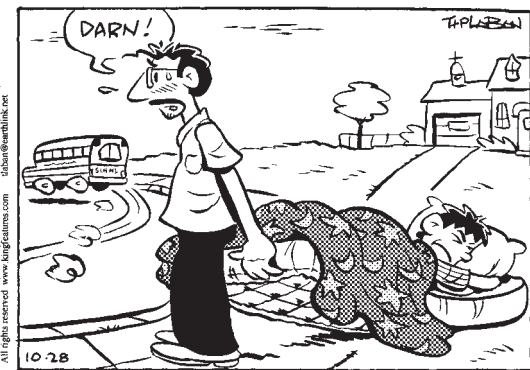
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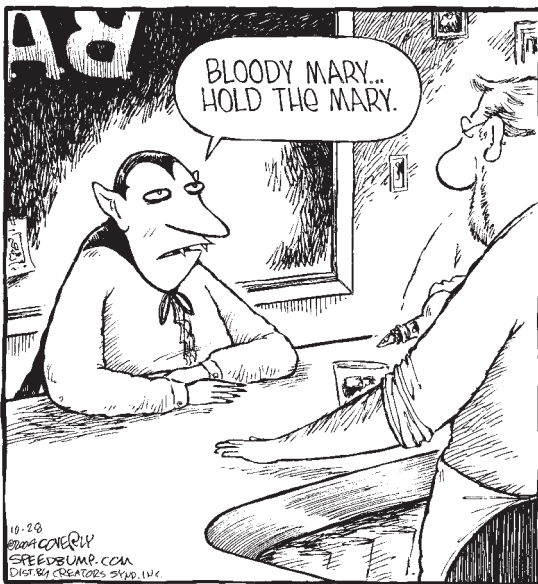
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Julia Roberts put on bed rest after early contractions

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A pregnant Julia Roberts was hospitalized over the weekend after experiencing a series of early contractions, People magazine reported.

The actress was accompanied by her husband, Danny Moder, when she was admitted to an undisclosed hospital Saturday night. The contractions eventually stopped, but she remained under observation, People reported Tuesday, citing unnamed sources.

Roberts' New York-based publicist, Marcy Engleman, declined to comment Wednesday.

The 36-year-old movie star is expecting twins — a boy and a girl — in early January.

People said Roberts' condition wasn't serious, but that her doctors had advised bed rest until her due date.

Roberts, who won the best actress Oscar in 2001 for "Erin Brockovich," married Moder in July 2002 at her home in Taos, N.M. The twins would be the first children for Roberts, who starred in 1990's "Pretty Woman."

Her upcoming films include "Ocean's Twelve" and "Closer."

LONDON — Readers of a British magazine have rated President Bush the year's top screen villain, for his appearance in Michael Moore's documentary "Fahrenheit 9/11."

Bush beat out a shortlist of fictional film bad guys, including the nefarious Doctor Octopus, played by Alfred Molina, in "Spider-Man 2"; cannibalistic Leatherface in "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre"; Andy Serkis' creepy Gollum from "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy; and the eyepatch-wearing assassin played by Daryl Hannah in "Kill Bill: Vol. 2."

Almost 10,000 people voted in the poll, conducted by Total Film magazine. Results were announced Wednesday.

"It is possible that people have been a little bit tongue

in cheek here, but they are also saying that Bush was very scary in 'Fahrenheit 9/11,'" said the magazine's editor, Matt Mueller.

NEW YORK — Had things worked out differently, it might have been Queen Latifah in "Monster's Ball" instead of Halle Berry.

The rapper-singer-actress says she was slated to play the lead in the movie that netted Berry the Oscar for best actress in 2002. Berry was the first black to ever win an Oscar in that category.

"I actually had that role before Halle. But they couldn't set it up. It would have been me, Sean Penn and Robert De Niro," Latifah told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

Instead, the low-budget drama starred Berry, Heath Ledger and Billy Bob Thornton.

Would Latifah have taken it all off for the role, as did Berry, for the movie's explicit sex scene?

"You wouldn't take that role without knowing what was there already," Latifah cautiously answered. "It was the type of script that was written to be an Oscar winner, and that's the only reason you would take it, because you know it would require so much of you as an actor, that if you don't get a freakin' Oscar for this, you ain't gonna ever get one."

Latifah was nominated for a best supporting actress Oscar in 2003 for her role in "Chicago." She stars in the comedy "Taxi" with Jimmy Fallon and recently released "The Dana Owens Album."

ATLANTA — A filmmaker who accused the Rev. Jesse Jackson of not paying him \$550,000 for his work has reached a settlement with two of Jackson's organizations.

As part of the settlement, Eric Williams of Stone Mountain receives ownership of a documentary about

the civil rights activist.

Williams said he plans to offer the film, titled, "The Country Preacher," to buyers, including HBO, Cinemax and TBS. He also plans to show it at film festivals in Africa, Europe and the United States in the coming months.

"I'm ready to make some money. I'm definitely going to get it out to the marketplace," Williams said Tuesday.

Williams said he has been paid for his costs, but that as part of the settlement, which was reached last week, he cannot discuss monetary figures.

The Citizenship Education Fund and the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition sued Williams and his company, Freedom Pictures Inc., last year, saying he wrongly took the footage he collected of Jackson.

But Williams claimed he didn't receive the pay, health benefits and time off he was owed while working for Jackson from 1999 to 2002.

John Kendall, a Chicago lawyer representing the two plaintiffs, said that in the settlement Rainbow/PUSH received the royalty-free license to use the film.

Both parties said the remaining tapes that Williams shot were divided among Williams and the plaintiffs. Williams estimates he shot more than 166 hours of tapes.

NEW YORK — "Who loves ya, baby?" Ving Rhames does.

Rhames has signed with USA Network to a weekly series of "Kojak," debuting in March, Bonnie Hammer, president of USA Network and the Sci Fi Channel, said Tuesday. Filming begins in Toronto in January.

Production wrapped in August on a two-hour original movie, which will now serve as the premiere episode for the nine-week original series, the network said.

Telly Savalas starred as the stylish, crime-dome Lt. Theo Kojak in the police drama, which aired from 1973-78.

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