

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

9 10 23 33 34
Meganumber: 22
Jackpot: \$16 Million

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DAILY 3

Daytime: 0 3 8
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1st: 01 Gold Rush
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

From the University of Utah Department of Public Safety report for October (2005-22280): "Unwanted Guest. A security officer from Primary Children's Medical Center called to report a man in that hospital who had no legitimate business there and wouldn't leave. University Police responded and were told by the man that he comes to Primary because he can find longer cigarette butts there because the doctors and nurses at Primary don't smoke their cigarettes all the way down like everyone else does. The man left when ordered to do so by the police."

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 301st day of 2005.
There are 64 days left in the year.

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 1636, Harvard College was founded in Massachusetts.

In 1793, Eli Whitney applied for a patent for his cotton gin (the patent was granted the following March).

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Truth is not introduced into the individual from without, but was within him all the time."

SOREN KIERKEGAARD
DANISH PHILOSOPHER (1813-1855)

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Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Firefighters from the Santa Monica Fire Department's Urban Search and Rescue bust through a wall with a hydraulic jack on Thursday during an extensive emergency training drill.

Rescue, we: Firefighters sharpen recovery skills

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD — Though the earth was still, and the city's structures still intact, Santa Monica's first line of defense was at the ready on Thursday.

The handful of men and women who would be first on the scene in the event of a major earthquake gathered near an abandoned building to practice rescuing people buried beneath rubble.

More than a dozen members of the Santa Monica Fire Department — supported by a large fire engine, two specialty trucks and equipment — practiced urban search-and-rescue techniques on the corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Berkeley Street, honing skills they'd use on victims in the event of earthquakes and other disasters.

"This is typically how we would handle a situation if a building collapsed," said Santa Monica Fire Capt. Scott Ziegert. "Earthquakes would be the primary disaster these guys would be responding to."

The firefighters, dressed in full-body yellow uniforms and hard-hats, worked together positioning a large drill against a wall for safe human passage. The drill



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press
SMFD engineer Paddy Cates helps fellow firefighter John Skorstad don his hazardous material suit during a drill at the city yards on Thursday.

is part of a diverse arsenal the men and women work with when calamity strikes, said firefighter Jimmy Scott, who's been with the department for 30 years.

"We're pretty much self-contained, and self-sufficient, to handle any kind of situation on site," Scott said.

Santa Monica's specially-trained Urban Search and Rescue team (SAR) consists of 18 firefighters, six of whom are available on any given shift, Scott said. They are part of truck company

See RESCUE, page 8

Leaders shaken by earthquake report

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE — The fact that thousands of Santa Monica buildings may not be able to withstand a major earthquake has prompted concern from some elected officials, who'd like the enforcement of seismic retrofitting laws to become a major city priority.

A recent report by the Daily Press (Oct. 21, Bracing the city for next quake) which indicated that hundreds, maybe thousands of Santa Monica buildings may not be able to hold up after a 7.0 earthquake — prompted reaction from some City Councilmembers, who fear the public may be in peril if updated building safety laws to protect structures during earthquakes aren't enforced.

While the 1994 Northridge earthquake presented an opportunity for City Hall to toughen up its own buildings within Santa Monica, records show there is still a long way to go before a citywide overhaul to retrofit structures is complete.

Ben Yousefi, assistant building official, explained that there are several types of buildings in Santa Monica, many of which may require varying degrees of attention before they meet City Hall's most recent seismic standards — put into effect three years ago.

SAY IT AGAIN

Meanwhile, Councilman Ken Genser, referring to the Oct. 21 article, said the council had previously instructed city staff to enforce the updated laws, which would require the majority of buildings within Santa Monica to be brought up to the latest standards so they might be able to successfully endure a major earthquake.

According to Yousefi, city staff has since deferred enforcing the upgraded standards except for those buildings up for major renovation or replacement.

If true, Genser said he is greatly concerned by city staff's lack of enforcement.

The councilman said city staff was previously requested to send

out notices to building owners, who would then have a certain number of days to prepare engineering reports and start ordering seismic retrofitting upgrades to their facilities.

"None of this seems to have been done," Genser said. "If that's true (staff has not enforced the upgrades) because the costs associated were too prohibitive, as the article indicates, then staff should have returned to the council to seek advice."

Genser — who believes City Hall must do a better job in general of enforcing the city code — said previous issues he's had with out-of-compliant commercial signs and banners pales in comparison to his concern about the lack of seismic retrofitting.

"I'm upset for two reasons," Genser said. "One is that the city has let these safety violations exist without any enforcement and didn't inform the council about it."

"Also, it's not their judgment to make."

Yousefi and Tim McCormick, city building official, were out of the office on Thursday and unavailable to comment.

See SHAKEN UP, page 7

STATE

Those who left loot asked to search vault

BY LAURA WIDES

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — State Controller Steve Westly is calling on Californians to "come search the vault."

Westly kicked off a campaign this week to find the owners of \$4.8 billion worth of items including checks, jewelry and antique gold coins from California's unclaimed property vault.

Californians owed money include actor Danny DeVito, who has a \$26 check waiting for him from All-State

See LEFT LOOT, page 9

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Take it easy, Gemini

Santa Monica Daily Press



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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Others observe your technique and explanations. They might think you have a lot more enthusiasm than they have. New information could have you changing directions. Tonight: Roll with the moment.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Your imagination could easily take you down a new path if you just let go of your conservative and logical side for now (not forever). You discover that an associate or partner is unusually generous. Tonight: Your treat.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ You might want to work from home, as you can accomplish more in solitude. You also might be working through a personal issue that you need some time to reflect on. You might be delighted by another's positive response. Tonight: Take it easy.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ You do well in a meeting, where perhaps you get more support than you'd anticipated with a project. Whatever you do, you do with excellence. Be careful with an associate. He or she might have very strong feelings about you. Tonight: Do your Friday-night thing.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★ You might be unusually finicky about money, but ultimately you will be better off. You might opt to put in some overtime or do another activity that might add to your financial strength. A Leo or two might gamble. Tonight: Your treat.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ You are very perky and content. You might be encouraged to take another look at plans because of information that heads in your direction. You might find yourself quite pleased at how fast you readjust. Tonight: As you wish.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Someone might come at you very strongly, setting you back. Know that you don't have to respond. In fact, no response might be appropriate for now. Use your ability to discuss difficult topics if need be. Tonight: Plans change.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Someone has a very strong way of letting you know what he or she is thinking. Go with the flow. Friends, crowds and others' projects or ideas benefit from your mood. You might decide that an item is worth spending the money on. You need to follow your heartfelt wishes. Tonight: Where the happening is.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Others expect a lot from you, and though on some level you might find this responsibility burdensome, you will gain from stepping up to the plate. You also discover that you probably have more get-up-and-go than many around you. Tonight: Leader of the gang.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Your creativity saves the day. What is interesting is that although you solve a problem, you might be changing your mind internally about the pros and cons. Be careful with a nefarious new person. He or she might be exotic, but also a problem. Tonight: Understand where others are coming from.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ A partner might be more dominant than you would like. Choose not to have the War of the Roses. Just go along for now. Your ideas, goals and attachments are in the process of change. Give yourself space. Tonight: Be with your favorite person.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ You might need to let others make their choices. You certainly are not in the power seat right now. Be smart — let everyone else play their cards. You might have to revise your opinions or perspective as a result. Tonight: Go along for the ride.



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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Mission 'Impossible': Actors take up OPCC's cause

By Daily Press staff

Some of Hollywood's top actors will relive on stage the misfortune of several people who ended up living on Santa Monica's streets but became self-sufficient with the support of a local social service agency.

Don Cheadle, Eva Mendes, Tim Robbins, Marisa Tomei and Alfre Woodard will star in a staged reading of "Impossible Boulevard: From Homelessness To Hope" at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City on Saturday, Oct. 29 at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the evening will benefit the Actors' Gang and the Ocean Park Community Center.

"Impossible Boulevard: From Homelessness To Hope" is adapted from the OPCC publication "40 Lives — From Homelessness to Hope," which was written in honor of the 40th anniversary of OPCC and is the history of OPCC told by clients, staff and volunteers.

"Impossible Boulevard" celebrates the human spirit as it captures true stories of circumstance, misfortune, triumph and independence. Putting a human face on the homeless condition, the book is a real-life testament of what is possible when compassion and commitment combine to empower people to rebuild their lives.

OPCC is a network of shelters and services for low-income and homeless youth, adults and families, battered women and their children and people living with mental illness. Individual tickets are \$250 and sponsorships with preferred seating are available. All tickets include a post-show reception with the cast. To purchase tickets or for information, call (310) 264-6646.

'Beetlejuice' makes holiday appearance

By Daily Press staff

A summer tradition of drive-in movies at the Santa Monica Pier has returned for Halloween. The haunted drive-in at the pier will screen "Beetlejuice" on Oct. 29 as part of the holiday festivities at the pier and throughout town.

Trick-or-treating starts at 4 p.m. at all the pier attractions and vendors. A costume contest will be held before the film, which airs at 6:30 p.m. Attendees are asked to sign up for the costume contest at the big screen starting at 5 p.m. Organizers ask people to bring a bag of candy to donate to the Police Activities League's Halloween party scheduled for Oct. 31.

Admission is free but tickets are required for entry. Tickets are available at all Santa Monica LACarGUY locations, as well as the Santa Monica visitor's centers located at 1400 Ocean Ave., on the second floor of the Santa Monica Place mall and the Convention and Visitors Bureau's walk-in center at 1920 Main St. Call (310) 458-8900 for additional outlets.

High water marks given by Danson

By Daily Press staff

Television and film stars Ted Danson and Amber Valletta visited Wild Oats Market on Montana Avenue earlier this month to help Oceana honor California Attorney General Bill Lockyer and Wild Oats Markets with the 2005 Ted Danson Ocean Hero Award for their leadership in preventing mercury exposure.

Danson presented the award named in his honor to Mr. Lockyer for his dedication to saving the world's oceans, citing his leadership in enforcing Proposition 65, a California law that requires supermarkets to provide warnings when their products expose shoppers to harmful contaminants like mercury. Valletta presented the award to Wild Oats for being the first national grocery chain to voluntarily post warning signs in all of its stores throughout the United States.

"Attorney General Lockyer has fought tirelessly to ensure that California lives up to the standards set by Proposition 65," Danson said. "Mr. Lockyer has put himself on the front lines of this fight."

Oceana's campaign informs families about Food and Drug Administration and Environmental Protection Agency warnings regarding the health threats of mercury in tuna, swordfish, tilefish, shark and king mackerel.



SURF REPORT

On Friday the NW swell filling in peaks with chest high + surf, SW remains small, knee to waist. Conditions are questionable given a storm will be passing through Thursday night, increasing runoff, and winds that may leave texture in the morning.

It will be mostly cloudy in the morning with areas of fog and a 20 percent chance of light rain.

Today the water is:

64°

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	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
MONDAY	9:39	3.8	11:18	0.8	6:58	3.8	2:53	4.3
TUESDAY	11:39	3.4	12:09	0.7	7:04	4.1	4:38	4.3
WEDNESDAY	12:09	0.7	12:32	2.9	7:18	4.3	5:49	4.4
THURSDAY	12:45	0.7	1:09	2.3	7:33	4.6	6:41	4.5
FRIDAY	1:20	0.4	1:42	1.9	8:02	4.1	7:37	4.0

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The Q Line

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A lot has been said in the media about the upcoming special election spurred by Gov. Schwarzenegger. Attack ads have been running, which many say have confused voters beyond reason. As a result, they are turned off and probably won't show up to the polls.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, "Do you see a need for a special election? 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 try to limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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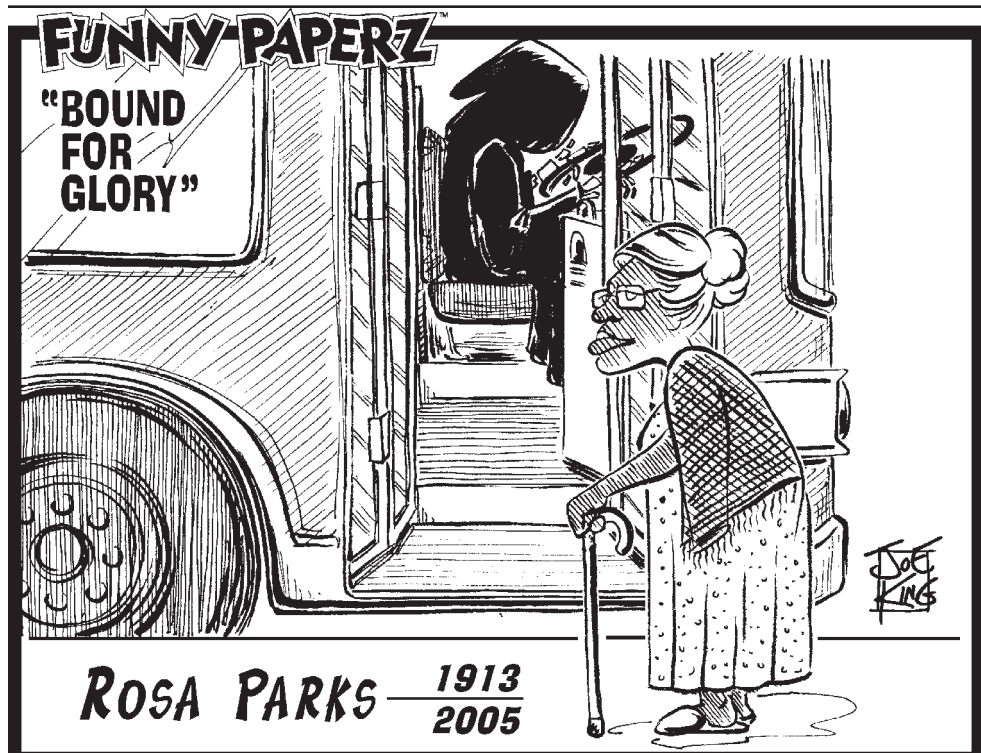
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OPINION



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where's the people's voice?

Editor:

The "horses" and "whale" murals along Ocean Park Boulevard, while not exactly premiere illustrations of artistic edifice, have been an icon of this community for some time and always bring smiles to our faces when we pass by or arrive back in town. I would just like to thank those artisans who are hard at work restoring these murals and eradicating the defacing brought on by graffiti vandals. While I know these professional artisans are being compensated for their efforts, it is well worth the money to save a piece of our communities' history and, well, fun.

However, it is a sad commentary that we must elicit the help of paid professionals to restore and guard our community's heritage and cannot muster the support from within our own — particularly with all of the creative and dedicated talent of those who live in Santa Monica.

That said, if our community organizations could spend less time serving as architects, city planners and NIMBY preservationists and become more intrinsically involved in neighborhood issues such as local park activities, stop signs, litter, crime, homelessness and even mural protection. They could be much more effective in the beautification of our neighborhoods while aiding the city and its various service departments in keeping our eclectic enclaves clean, safe and appealing to the eye while serving the social fabric of Santa Monica at large.

Indeed, the city of Santa Monica offers plenty of outlets for persons both individually and collectively to voice their concerns over city-wide projects, proposals and initiatives. The problem, as many of the community groups will argue, is that they cannot be heard or worse, completely disregarded. It's a hollow argument.

Even though there remains much cross-over with respect to what the needs of our collective neighborhoods constitute, the primary duty of a divisible neighborhood organization is to highlight the "micro" not tackle the "macro." While not ignoring the complex nature of issues affecting all of us, if to have a voice at City Hall, the various neighborhood communities within Santa Monica and their respective community organizations need to re-focus their efforts on what the folks who walk and congregate within their streets and blocks see, feel and hear on a daily basis.

Lance Schmidt
Santa Monica

Prop. 75 a bad deal for union types

Editor:

California voters should reject Proposition 75 because it would increase the power of the big business interests who are funding it at the expense of public employees. Prop. 75 is unfair because it forces political restrictions on public employees like teachers, nurses, firefighters, and police — and no one else. It would mute their voices on health care, schools, public safety, and other issues of importance to working people.

Prop. 75 would require members of public employee unions each year to authorize using part of their dues for political activities.

Unlike business stockholders, union members are informed about which candidates and measures their unions are supporting and can question union activity at membership meetings. Employees have an existing procedure for requesting that their dues or fees not be used for political purposes.

Business interests can use corporate funds for political campaign activities without permission from individual stockholders to do so.

This measure unfairly creates two sets of rules for contributors by targeting the customary fund raising methods of only one group of contributors.

Vote "no" on Prop. 75.

Sheila Field
Santa Monica

The best of neighbors are those that can stay



OUR TOWN

BY TED WINTERER

One of these days I ought to get TiVo or some other digital recording device for my television, although first I should figure out how to program my cell phone and operate my daughter's Leap Pad. Then I won't ever miss Manchester United versus Arsenal, or Donald Trump firing some poor soul.

In the meantime, a dimwitted civic affairs junkie like me is grateful for CityTV, which broadcasts reruns of City Council sessions. And so, after returning from a trip to New England, I belatedly watched the Sept. 27 meeting of our elected leaders, which I was told was a livelier-than-usual affair.

And indeed it was, with 50 or so concerned citizens turning out to comment on the "Opportunities and Challenges" confronting us as City Hall revises its blueprint for land use and transportation for the next 20 years. Almost all of these residents were alarmed, as was I, by a report which described "moderate" growth as the addition in the next two decades of 8,800 housing units to the 49,297 already existing in Santa Monica.

So I watched with great interest the responses of our councilmembers, trying to read the tea leaves which might predict our future. I was gratified to hear City Councilman Kevin McKeown insist that growth was not the answer to the woes caused by growth and argue for preserving our current as-built heights and densities. And I was pleased that City Councilman Ken Genser acknowledged that keeping our city's current scale is essential and offered ideas about curbing commercial growth, which is a primary contributor to traffic congestion.

However, I was troubled by the remarks of Mayor Pam O'Connor and City Councilman Richard Bloom, who seem determined to add height and density along transit corridors despite public sentiment in favor of maintaining current conditions. And O'Connor suggested that the motto "same neighbors, better neighborhoods" offered by several speakers was in some way xenophobic, as if those living here want to build a moat and wall around Santa Monica to deter newcomers.

I think she misconstrued the sentiment. The good citizens who spoke that night aren't fretting about hordes of outsiders migrating to Santa Monica. Instead, they're perturbed by the exodus of current

residents, displaced by the market forces and land use policies which cause older, affordable rental stock to be replaced by expensive condos and apartments. Sure, every one of these new high end developments has to create some lower-income housing, but it's not nearly enough. And, because of the way the funding rules are written, those units are often given to those who live outside the city rather than dislocated Santa Monicans.

Interestingly, at the same meeting City Councilman Herb Katz, with whom I often disagree regarding issues of growth and development, expressed concern that current trends will lead Santa Monica to become a city populated by only the rich and the poor, without a middle class. And he's right: Our first Sustainable City Report Card, while it gives Santa Monica an "A" for its efforts to ensure "variety in the housing stock to meet the range of household income levels in the community," bestows a grade of "D-" for the results.

While much of these woes are caused by vacancy decontrol and a superheated real estate market, one could also deduce that current municipal policies, while vigorous and well-intended, haven't been effective. And we're certainly not the only city battling to preserve socioeconomic diversity. In fact, two days after this council meeting The New York Times ran an article on a nascent movement in other cities "suffering from success" to build low-cost homes for purchase by median-income households, so that nurses, cops and teachers can live near their jobs.

So I'm delighted that this week our City Council approved for the first time the use of housing funds to build in the Pico neighborhood an affordable homeownership development for those with moderate incomes. It's a huge step forward, for it both adds an ownership option to the city's housing portfolio and addresses the harsh reality that market-rate homes are now affordable only by the affluent.

But we need to do more, such as exploring new funding mechanisms for lower- and middle-income housing, which will give priority to Santa Monicans. And we require new land use policies that curb the growth of market rate dwellings beyond the reach of so many and instead foster a diversity of rental and ownership options.

Then the same neighbors, in better neighborhoods, will still be around to welcome the new arrivals to our town.

(Ted Winterer is a writer who lives in Ocean Park. He can be reached at ourtownsmdp@aol.com.)



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EDITORIAL

Make the homeless uncomfortable



Anyone with an ounce of humanity in their heart would agree it isn't the homeless individuals for whom they have no compassion. Rather, they have no tolerance for the anti-social behavior the homeless exude, behavior that likely results from whatever landed them on the streets in the first place — be it mental illness, chemical dependency or an imbalanced cynicism toward the workings of society. Then there's just the reality of living on the streets, a life where it's less convenient to use a restroom or find a place to sleep that isn't viewed as trespassing or loitering.

There are a whole litany of laws in Santa Monica designed to dissuade the homeless, yet they continue to wander our streets — urinating and defecating where they can, sleeping on sidewalks, drinking in public, smoking dope in parks, diving through dumpsters, panhandling on the Promenade and scaring passersby with sometimes violent threats.

All of that illegal behavior gives a bad name to the law-abiding homeless individuals trying to make it on the streets and, hopefully, eventually to self-sufficiency.

It's a sad reality that the police can't keep up with all the infractions. Police officers can't make an arrest for misdemeanors without actually seeing the crime taking place. That's why residents must take it upon themselves to assist police by making citizen's arrests. When you see someone laying on a sidewalk, peeing in the alley or drinking in the park, call the police department's dispatch line at (310) 458-8491.

If the powers-that-be at City Hall really wanted to adequately respond to residents' No. 1 concern — the growing homeless population — they would make it as uncomfortable as possible for these individuals, forcing them to realize that seeking help from programs is the best option.

One former homeless person said in a LA Times article (Oct. 27, B1), referring to life on Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles, that when he was hassled enough the message finally got through.

"When it started getting really uncomfortable for me on the streets ... I had to make a real hard decision on what I was going to do," said Orlando Ward, now a spokesman for the Skid Row-based Midnight Mission.

The city of Santa Monica has no problem "disincentivizing" people from driving their cars by issuing tens of thousands of parking tickets a month. Or just maybe, it's to load City Hall's coffers. City Hall also collects a substantial amount of money through infractions by otherwise law-abiding citizens for everything from jaywalking to reckless bike riding. Those same people who "broke the law" most likely did it within feet of several individuals sleeping on the sidewalk or peeing in a nearby alley. The difference is they can pay the fine, the homeless can't.

If City Hall put even a fraction of the energy, time and money behind enforcing laws designed to curb anti-social behavior that it does into parking enforcement, this city would be much cleaner, much friendlier.

Santa Monica Police Chief James T. Butts Jr. made it a priority early on in his tenure here to clean up Palisades Park, which was infested with drug dealers and other criminals. Police targeted the area, making arrests for parole violations and busting up drug operations on a daily basis. Today, the park is, for the most part, free from such activity and safe.

The Ventura City Council recently voted to pass an ordinance that outlaws sleeping in public places, making it a crime that could land sleepy-heads in jail. The City Council is considering hiking the penalty from an infraction to a misdemeanor, which could mean jail time.

Elected leaders say they would use the new law as a tool to curb illegal camping, particularly in city parks. Translation: They want homeless individuals out of their city and this new law will do it. Sound familiar?

Under pressure from the business community, the Santa Monica City Council in 2002 passed two laws that were designed to dissuade homeless people from congregating downtown. Both of them — one preventing groups from handing out free food without a permit and the other prohibiting sleeping in doorways — did nothing to curb homelessness in Santa Monica.

There's no point in passing laws that won't or can't be enforced.

If the residents of Santa Monica rank the homeless population their No. 1 concern for at least three years in a row, based on a city survey, that should be enough of a mandate for the leaders and residents in this town to make it a priority to curb it.



John McGrail, C.Ht.

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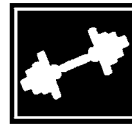


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CRIME WATCH

By Daily Press staff

Hotel guest pays dearly for free stay

At 8:06 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 18, the Santa Monica police responded to the 100 block of Colorado Avenue, at the Holiday Inn, regarding a fraud investigation. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to the hotel manager, who said he received a phone call from the victim who stated that someone had used her credit card without her permission. The manager checked the registry and noticed the suspect was still there. Santa Monica police officers went to the room, knocked on the door, and spoke to the suspect. During their investigation, the suspect claimed the credit card was in fact stolen. Donna Marie Hildebrandt, 41, was placed under arrest for commercial burglary and defrauding an inn keeper.

At 11:19 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 10, the Santa Monica police responded to the 2600 block of Virginia Avenue regarding a theft investigation. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to the victim, who said she was seated in her vehicle working on her laptop computer when two suspects approached her and one suspect smashed her window and took her laptop. The second suspect acted as a lookout. The first suspect is described as a male of unknown race, 17-19 years of age, six feet tall, wearing a blue sweatshirt and blue jeans. The second suspect is described as a male of unknown race, 17 to 20 years of age, wearing a sweatshirt and white shirt. The laptop computer is estimated to have a \$1,000 value.

At 1:25 a.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 19, the Santa Monica police stopped a subject at Bay and Neilson Way who matched the description of a robbery suspect. During their investigation, the subject was searched and officers recovered a small bundle of cocaine on his person. Theodore Roosevelt Bryant, 44, was arrested and transported to Santa Monica jail where he was booked for possession of a controlled substance. Officers from the Los Angeles police conducted a field show up, and the suspect was not implicated in the robbery.

At 1:06 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 19, the Santa Monica police responded to the 1200 block of Fourth Street regarding a forgery investigation at Circuit City. When officers arrived at the scene, they spoke to an employee who said the suspect presented a check for \$2,718.60 with a fraudulent Georgia drivers license. The employee had checked with the management and discovered the check was altered. Thomas Armond, 22, was arrested for burglary, forgery and attempted grand theft and transported to Santa Monica jail.

At 7:55 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 21, the Santa Monica police responded to the 2200 block of Colorado Avenue regarding a burglary investigation. When officers arrived at the scene, they saw male subject running from the location, and the officers later detained him. During their investigation, officers contacted the reporting party, who said they saw suspect inside the business carrying a bag. When confronted by security, the subject ran from the building. Officers recovered a black bag containing DVDs and other items. David Jackson, 33, was arrested and booked for burglary and probation violation.

This police report was prepared by Daily Press staff writer Ryan Hyatt.

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LOCAL



Officials question why buildings not up to code

SHAKEN UP, from page 1

Andy Agle, City Hall's interim planning director, didn't say whether or not the failure to notice most Santa Monica building owners was due to the costs believed to be involved with the retrofitting.

However, Agle also said that the lack of enforcement wasn't due to limited city resources for identifying and noticing, either.

STABILITY OF PRIVATE BUILDINGS

Across California, the tens of thousands of aging concrete buildings represent the state's largest remaining risk of serious damage in a major earthquake, seismic safety officials said in a recent report. Constructed as department stores, schools, parking structures and office buildings from the 1930s through the early 1970s, these buildings typically consist of large, open lower stories held by non-reinforced or poorly reinforced concrete pillars, experts say.

Many seismic experts say these structures — known as non-ductile concrete buildings — need to be brought up to current standards. Genser said he has obtained information from City Hall which indicates there may be as many as 500 such buildings in Santa Monica still needing to be better reinforced.

However, Genser said that, according to the information provided him by City Hall, there may be another building type that is in desperate need of retrofitting. Genser said that, according to his information, as many as 2,500 concrete rein-

forced masonry buildings in Santa Monica may still need seismic upgrades.

Agle neither confirmed nor denied Genser's information.

Of other safety concern, according to Yousefi, are steel moment frame buildings, which consist of beams and columns of steel welded together. During the 1994 quake, as many as 100 such structures suffered the most damage.

They were a popular form of construction during the 1980s boom in office buildings and many still need to be brought up to code.

Another problem are tilt-up buildings, Yousefi said. These are generally one- or two-story commercial or industrial warehouses that have concrete around the perimeter and have been popular since the 1970s.

Agle said City Hall has been successful in noticing two types of buildings, the majority of which have been brought up to code. They are unreinforced masonry and soft-story buildings, he said.

"I don't think other types have received noticing," Agle said.

Councilman Herb Katz agreed with Genser that his concerns over commercial signage infractions was relatively insignificant compared to the safety of buildings in the event of a major earthquake.

"Our problem in the city is that we're asking for enforcement, but I think we're focussed wrong," Katz said. "The focus should be on health, safety and welfare, then we can start looking at trash in the alley."

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



LOCAL

SAR team moves 10,000-pound concrete slab

RESCUE, from page 1

No. 1 and are housed at Fire Station No. 2 at 222 Hollister Ave. Members of the Urban Search and Rescue Team take four weeks of classes and conduct monthly routine drills, as well as take part in an annual regional drill, in order to stay abreast of their skills, according to Paul Weinberg, City Hall's emergency services coordinator.

To aid in their efforts, the SAR team has a large fire engine, equipped with an 80-foot ladder, and two smaller trucks that contain drills, shoring supplies, oxygen tanks, airbags and other specialty equipment.

The large engine alone cost \$900,000. It's so large that the engine has a rear driver's seat to direct the back wheels when the vehicle makes turns around corners,

Scott said.

The two smaller trucks cost approximately \$290,000 each. The SAR truck has \$250,000 worth of equipment, and the other truck, which generally accompanies the larger engine, has approximately \$100,000 worth of equipment, according to Ziegert.

When the SAR team responds to a disaster, the first course of action is for an appointed surveyor to scope the collapsed building and identify electric, gas and water lines, Scott said.

In the course of the inspection, the surveyor also is expected to identify potential entry points into the building.

To ascertain the whereabouts of victims who may be caught in the rubble, the SAR team may rely on witness testimony, Scott said. They also tap lines

and debris in the hopes victims will respond in order to get a better sense of their location.

Another method is to use cameras the trucks come equipped with to insert into the building to try to locate survivors.

After locating them, the SAR team will meet and plan a course of action to gain entry into the structure. To do so, they have a variety of tools available, saws and drills, to cut through any debris. Once a hole is created, they will shore it up with metal pipes or pieces of wood. They will insert airbags that clear a path into the structure.

Then, members of the SAR team, traveling in pairs, will take turns entering the structure to locate the victims.

In the meantime, a coordinator outside the building keeps tabs on the team's

whereabouts through radio devices and other monitors.

The coordinator also watches the team's oxygen level. As additional oxygen is needed, tanks are stitched out, and the team of two is replaced if they're not having success finding the victim, Scott said.

While the work can be exhausting, no timetable is placed on how long it will take to complete the rescue operation. The SAR team must adapt to each situation and handle each emergency one case at a time.

In a recent drill, the SAR team moved a 10,000-pound concrete slab using hand-held, non-mechanical tools.

"It showed us that if everyone works as a team, you can move anything," Scott said.



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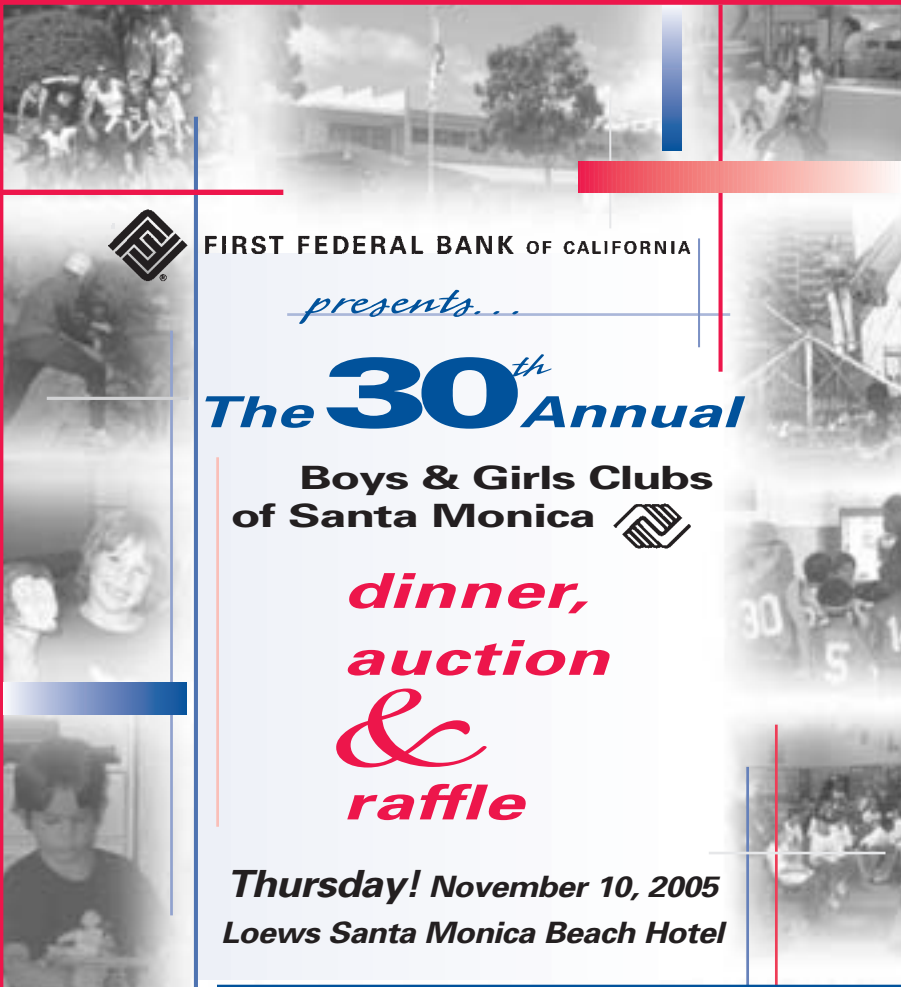
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STATE



Lawmakers renew push to break up 9th Circuit

BY ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Republicans in Congress are renewing their push to break up the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, arguing the nation's largest federal appeals court — the frequent source of rulings that infuriate conservatives — has become too big to be effective.

"I'm not aware in the Western world of a court this big," Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., said Wednesday at a Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing on the issue.

Opponents contend that the circuit's size was not, in itself, a problem. They charged that those seeking the change were motivated in part by politics.

"I think there are political reasons here. People say there aren't; I believe there are," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif.

The GOP-led House last year approved splitting the 9th circuit, but the measure did not get a vote in the Senate, which is unlikely to approve such legislation this time around, either.

The 9th Circuit covers nine states and has 28 judgeships. The circuit with the next-largest number of judges is the New Orleans-based 5th Circuit, with 17.

"Right now we have a caseload that is overwhelming, but with the population and the demographics in the area we can

only anticipate that it gets worse," said Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska.

Murkowski and Rep. John Ensign, R-Nev., have sponsored legislation to split the 9th Circuit in two. The resulting 9th Circuit would cover California, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands, and a new 12th Circuit would cover Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Arizona.

Murkowski and Ensign said that the new circuits would operate more efficiently and cases would be heard more quickly. Opponents were skeptical.

"It's an attempt to gerrymander the court to change the outcome of specific cases," said Glenn Sugameli, senior legislative counsel at Earthjustice.

The 9th Circuit has issued a series of rulings that angered Republicans, including the 2002 opinion that declared the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional when recited in public schools, and the 2003 ruling that the federal law outlawing marijuana does not apply to patients whose doctors have recommended the drug.

The U.S. Supreme Court dismissed the pledge ruling and overturned the decision on medical marijuana — a frequent fate of rulings by the 9th Circuit.

The House Judiciary Committee is set to vote Thursday on a bill by Rep. James Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., that would cut the circuit in two in the same way as the Senate legislation.

Feinstein contended that the proposals would put California at a disadvantage by leaving the populous state with disproportionately few judges.

"You can be sure that representing California I am not going to let an unfair distribution of caseload happen. I'm just not going to do it," she said.

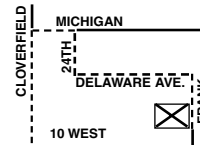
A half-dozen 9th Circuit judges testified Wednesday, including three in favor

of the split. Judges who were opposed said the three were the only judges on the circuit who favored the split.

"Given the stress on the administration of justice created by the combined forces of budgetary and natural disasters, this is not the time to consider fracturing the administrative structure of the courts of the west," said the 9th Circuit's Chief Judge Mary Schroeder.

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Bicycles, baubles and bills among the stash left behind

LEFT LOOT, from page 1

Insurance; actress Reese Witherspoon, who's owed nearly \$100 by Tiffany Co.; and California first lady Maria Shriver, who has more than \$300 waiting for her in the vault, according to the controller's Web site.

Once a year, the controller's office puts out ads listing owners of uncollected assets. Westly is making the process easier by creating a new Web link where people can quickly determine if the goods belong to them.

Among the more impressive of the unclaimed items is an 88-carat natural Blue Star sapphire ring worth \$25,000.

But before anyone thinks they might have a new bauble, Westly cautioned that most of the gems were turned over by banks from safe deposit boxes. Those claiming them must be listed as the owner or next of kin.

"There's a real uptick," Westly said of the number of the unclaimed items. "It happens more often than you'd believe. Someone passes away. Someone moves and doesn't change the address."

Last year the state opened 503,000 new unclaimed accounts, bringing the total number to about 7.6 million, said Garin Casaleggio, a spokesman for the controller's office.

Westly, a Democrat likely to challenge Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger next year for office, handed out reclaimed checks to

a group of Los Angeles residents at the First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Los Angeles.

Carlos Orellana, 32, of Los Angeles received one for \$2,688. The janitorial supply manufacturer had tucked away money in a bank account for years, but when he finally contacted the bank, he found the money had been turned over to the state.

"I just thought the money was gone" he said. "They told me I could get it back, but it was very complicated."

Orellana, a native of El Salvador, said he planned to use part of the money to buy his 4-year-old daughter Litzy the "Dora the Explorer" bicycle she wanted.

Westly also said his office was working on a version of the Web site in Spanish.

Banks, insurance companies and other institutions must forward unclaimed property to the state when an owner cannot be found. State officials check recent tax records for a more current address. If they find one, they notify people by mail.

But they can't do much beyond that, and the state holds the assets in perpetuity, earning interest on the money each year.

Laurence Martin, a former adjunct business professor at California State University, came to collect a check for more than \$14,000 from unclaimed retirement funds, but didn't get to go home with the money because his check was accidentally switched with another recipient.

"It's good to know the money hadn't disappeared," he said.

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Santa Monica Daily Press

INTERESTED IN YOUR DAILY FORECAST?
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Entertainment

Hot director changes with ‘Weather’

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer



BEVERLY HILLS — Hollywood director Gore Verbinski has found satisfaction in mediocrity — at least in what’s been captured in Nicholas Cage’s character in “The Weatherman.”

Verbinski, considered one of Hollywood’s most influential directors, grounds himself by jumping from genre to genre. He’s made movies about a mouse, created the famed Budweiser frog commercials and directed star-studded motion pictures with some of the biggest names in Hollywood.

In the midst of directing both the second and third installments of “Pirates of the Caribbean,” the former punk-rock guitarist has found that “average” just might be the key to success for his first drama, opening this month.

Do you think shooting a drama at this point in your career is a risky move?
“I think this one is risky emotionally. We didn’t spend a lot of money making it. What’s nice about it is there are no car chases and explosions. You can sit down with actors and take time talking about the film.”

How did the film come to you initially?
“I sent my agent looking for a drama. I wanted something quiet because I didn’t want to do anything that was big and I felt I was getting further away from directing. It was more like directing traffic and less like directing actors. The job was slipping through my hands it was constant triage making the pirate movies.

What drew you to this story?
“I like the idea of this guy who is trying to control his life and he sums up the weather in these sound bites and he thinks he can approach life the same way. It’s this idea of the struggle against mediocrity in one’s life. The question is ‘when do you realize who you are instead of who you could be?’ There are great people out there and then there are the rest of us.”

How do you feel about being called one of the most influential directors?
“Yeah, but my dad was a nuclear physicist and I was a musician going to film school. We are not developing the cure for AIDS here, we are just making movies.”

Did you ever struggle like Nic Cage’s character, David Spritz?
“Being average is horrific for almost everybody. There are times when we feel like everything is plotting against us. I’m interested in challenging myself and learning and growing and trying different things. Without the willingness to fail, you might as well sell real estate.”

What was your favorite part of the film?
“Getting Michael Caine to explain what a camel-toe is was really fantastic. The work that I am most proud of is the sequence when (Spritz) realizes his father is filet mignon and he is an Egg McMuffin. He finally accepts who is.”

What genre would you tackle next?
“I would certainly love to do a western.”

Who would star in it?
“Johnny (Depp) and Nic (Cage).”



Murky forecast for Cage flick

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

Nicolas Cage is not one to shy away from playing unsavory characters. Some of them, such as the loathsome publisher in “Vampire’s Kiss,” the career criminal in “Wild at Heart,” and the suicidal drunk in “Leaving Las Vegas,” rate among the Academy Award winner’s more memorable performances. In director Gore Verbinski’s “The Weather Man,” Cage portrays a most unpleasant fellow named David Spritz, a well-known Chicago TV personality in the midst of a personal meltdown. Getting audiences to embrace a serious sad-sap like Spritz poses a near-impossible challenge for any actor, even someone of Cage’s estimable ability, but to his credit the star manages to wring out a little sympathy, even makes Spritz semi-likable by film’s end. But the 100 minutes it takes to get there are, for the most part, a bummer. Supporting performances from Michael Caine, Hope Davis, Nicholas Hoult (“About a Boy”) and

Review

Gemmenne De la Peña are also strong, but the story is too flat, the stabs at humor too misguided for this movie to fully emerge from the mire.

Those of you who’ve seen the trailer know there’s a running gag in the movie that has Spritz being regularly pelted with food by passersby. This stunt gets old quickly, still it highlights the film’s central theme: That David gets no respect. Or, at least, he believes he doesn’t get the respect he deserves, from his famous author father (Caine), his estranged wife (Davis) or his troubled children — Hoult and De la Peña). Spritz will try anything to stop the further disintegration of his strained familial relationships, but the poor guy is clueless. The film chronicles his efforts and the many, many mistakes he makes along the way. As a character study, Verbinski has achieved something worthwhile. It’s too bad the main character is so damn difficult to pull for, his life so over-cast.

(Rated R for strong language and sexual content. Running time: 100 minutes)



‘Zorro’s’ blade dulled by his pint-size progeny

BY DAN DUNN
Special to the Daily Press

In director Martin Campbell’s lightweight “Zorro” sequel, young newcomer Adrian Alonso flat-out steals the show as the spunky progeny of the legendary hero. Unfortunately, the movie’s biggest strength is also its most glaring weakness: This second, PG-rated installment of the new Zorro franchise is, above all, a children’s movie in the vein of “Are We There Yet” and “Spy Kids,” with Campbell et al making little, if any, effort to gratify the post-pubescent set that turned out in droves to see the PG-13-rated first film.

Antonio Banderas and Catherine Zeta-Jones are delightful again as the swashbuckling masked man and his doughty better half, but this time out they’re reduced to playing second and third fiddle to their pint-sized co-star. The director has blunted Zorro’s edge, going to great lengths to ensure no bad guys were seriously harmed in the making of this film. Jealousy mixed with copious amounts of hootch throws Zorro off his game, opening the door for cute little Joaquin to step in and save the day. It’s the stuff of little boys’ fantasies and video games.

(Rated PG for sequences of violence/peril and language. Running time: 129 minutes)

Entertainment

In her 'Prime': Streep delivers again as a conflicted therapist

BY DAN DUNN

Special to the Daily Press

From writer-director Ben Younger ("Boiler Room") comes one of those rare adult romantic comedies in which all the pieces fit seamlessly in place. Younger's characters are well-rounded and deftly rendered by a stellar cast navigating a storyline that is clever, funny and, above all, genuine. Uma

Thurman has never looked lovelier as Rafi, a 37-year-old Manhattan fashionista reeling from a recent divorce who quickly rebounds with a 23-year-old painter named Dave (star on the rise Bryan Greenberg). Despite the significant age difference, Rafi's trusted therapist Dr. Lisa Metzger (Meryl Streep) gives the relationship her blessing. Lisa's not so accepting, however, of her own son's ongoing affair with a non-Jewish older woman. Wanna guess who his paramour turns out to be?

Streep, as usual, delivers a delightfully nuanced performance as a woman trying to reconcile a professional responsibility to her patient with maternal instincts. Greenberg, who spent several months prior to shooting



immersing himself in New York's artist community, acquits himself quite respectably opposite two powerhouses in his first major film role. Director of photography William Rexer has captured the Big Apple in all its splendor.

(Rated PG-13 for sexual content including dialogue, and for language. Running time: 105 minutes)

Going to 'Extremes' just not worth it

BY DAN DUNN

Special to the Daily Press

Billed as a triptych of terror from a trio of celebrated Asian filmmakers, "Three ... Extremes" is at times disarmingly brutal, and more other times

painfully dull; certainly not a piece of work I'd recommend to anyone but the most twisted J-horror fans and, perhaps, people I don't like very much. "Extremes" begins with a short by Hong Kong director Fruit Chan called "Dumplings," about a gynecologist turned chef (Bai Ling) who cooks up aborted fetuses and feeds them to rich women like Qing (Miriam Yeung) with the promise of reversing the aging process. And that's the easiest of the three shorts to, uh, digest. "Old Boy" helmer Park Chan-Wook's "Cut" — about a film director and his wife



held captive by a jealous extra — shows promise but lingers far too long. Takashi Miike's "Box" is better left unopened.

(Rated R. Running time: 125 minutes)

AFM opens up independent screenings to public

By Daily Press staff

Forty-four independent feature films are set to screen as part of next week's American Film Market's public previews screening program in Santa Monica.

Presenting a wide-array of films, most of which are making their world or U.S. debut, the public previews screening program of the AFM offers free badges to all individuals working in the entertainment industry, as well as Santa Monica residents, giving them the opportunity to see upcoming films before their general release.

The AFM public previews run from Nov. 2 through Nov. 8 at the AMC Santa Monica 7, 1310 Third Street Promenade. Industry executives and Santa Monica residents wanting to take advantage of the opportunity must register online for a badge, which will grant them access to all 44 films, as well as the AFM shuttle buses. Registrants can pick up their badges beginning Monday, Nov. 1 on-site at the AFM at the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, 1700 Ocean Ave. Registration applications and a complete schedule of the public previews' films, including screening information, film trailers and synopses are available at www.americanfilmmarket.com or <http://www.ifta-online.org/afm/premiere.asp>.

Since attendance at most of the AFM's 850 screenings is limited to acquisition and distribution executives, the AFM introduced the public previews screening program in 1999 to involve a broader cross section of those working in the film industry, as well as the Santa Monica community.

Here's a list of the films:

All About Love-Life After 8:30

(Cantonese) — Romance Drama; Dir: Daniel Yu; Cast: Andy Lau, Charlie Young, Charlene Choi; (100

min.); Company: Focus Films Limited

'All About Love' is an intriguing tale of love lost and the memories that bind us. The film sets to wow audiences while making us reflect on the complexities of relationships in contemporary times.

All for Love

(Korean) — Romantic Comedy; Dir. Kyu-dong Min; Cast: Jung-hwa Uhm, Soo-ro Kim, Chang-jeong Yim, Jung-min Hwang; (120 min); Company: CJ Entertainment

Four different stories tie together in an interesting way at the end.

Animal

(English) — Psycho-Drama; Dir. Roselyne Bosch; Cast: Andreas Wilson, Emma Griffiths-Malin, Diago Infante; (95 min); Company: StudioCanal

A genetic scientist, Samarcande, has decided to genetically modify a killer. He wants to create a saint out of a monster. But as the killer moves towards good, Samarconde gives in to his own demons, modifying himself to satisfy his violent ambitions.

Apartment 6

(English) — Horror; Dir. John Petros; Cast: Sarah Sunday, Joseph Orlando, Gio, Charmaine Lak (115 min); Company: Neptune 13 Pictures

A young woman's apartment is invaded by a dangerous entity.

Beat the Drum

(English/Zulu) — Drama; Dir. David Hickson; Cast: Owen SeJake, Mary Twala, Clive Scott, Noluthando Maleka; (114 min); Company: Kimmel International

A story of a young boy in Africa who leaves his village for the big city and discovers that HIV/AIDS is not

ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

'Living' out loud on 18th Street

By Daily Press staff

Halloween will come early at a local arts complex. 18th Street Arts Center presents its second annual Halloween fundraiser party, "Night of the Living," a large-scale event with live bands, performance artists, visual art exhibits, and a late-night dance party on Saturday, Oct. 29, from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.

The party will be held at 18th Street Arts Center, 1639 18th St., north of Olympic Boulevard. Proceeds will benefit 18th Street Arts Center, the largest arts nonprofit in Santa Monica. The event is curated and co-produced by LA Weekly, Swinghouse and KXLU 88.9 FM. Ticket prices are \$15 pre-sale, available at www.18thstreet.org/nightoftheliving.html, or \$20 at the door. Electronic band Cirrus headlines the event with two more bands to be announced. The late-night dance party will feature DJ's from KXLU. There also will be a tech-demo with renowned DJ equipment innovator, Ms. Pinky.

Founded in 1988, 18th Street Arts Center is Southern California's largest international residential art center of its kind. It is a nonprofit that supports artists and arts organizations dedicated to issues of community and diversity in contemporary society.

For more information, call (310) 453-3711, or haloween@18thstreet.org.

The Humanity of it all

By Daily Press staff

It will be a rockin' day at the pier next weekend, with nine hours of live music to benefit Hurricane Katrina victims.

The Santa Monica Pier Lessee's Association, in association with the Pier Restoration Association, will host a concert fundraiser to benefit Gulf Coast hurricane victims on Saturday, Nov. 5, from noon to 9 p.m. at the Santa Monica Pier. Admission is a \$5 suggested donation. All proceeds from the event are going to Habitat for Humanity.

The event will feature a full lineup of entertainment, including eight bands performing throughout the afternoon and evening. A raffle, food carts, beer garden, booths representing the businesses of the Santa Monica Pier and other family activities will be featured as well.

Businesses throughout the community are donating goods and services, and all performers are participating free of charge. Those scheduled to play include:

Timothy Blevins
Tom Nolan
Homemade Jam Band
Westside Crew
Jah Quest
Soundmind
Samurai Homeboys
Gila Monsters
Rumble Bees with special guest Joe Bonamassa

Key-note speaker: Durra does jazz

By Daily Press staff

Pianist Louis Durra will play a jazz concert with his trio on Sunday, Nov. 6, at 7 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica, 1260 18th St. Joining him will be drummer Jerry Kalaf and bassist Don Kasper. The trio will be performing jazz standards and their original music.

Durra has performed extensively on CDs, in live performances and on radio and TV. He has performed with a number of dancers and dance troupes, including The Jazz Tap Ensemble, Savion Glover, Derek Grant, Sam Weber and Eddie Brown. He toured Russia and the Baltic states last year with Just In Time, a jazz dance revue.

Durra has composed for film and television including the CBS daytime drama The Guiding Light, and various Movies-Of-The-Week. He also has scored and music-directed theatrical productions including at the Mark Taper Forum, the Will Geer Theatrum Botanicum, and South Coast Repertory.

Tickets are \$10.

For more information, call (310) 403-8627.

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the devil, but a real disease and returns to share his new found knowledge with his elders.

Birthday (The)
(French) — Comedy; Dir. Diane Kurys; Cast: Lambert Wilson, Michele Laroque, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Pierre Palmade; (100 min); Company: StudioCanal

Raphael has become a dazzlingly successful TV producer. He reads a manuscript that tells his life story that pulls no punches, written by a member of his old gang. He invites them all to celebrate his 40th birthday, and they will rediscover friendships.

Black Cloud
(English) — Action/Adventure; Dir. Rick Schroder; Cast: Eddie Spears, Rick Schroder, Russell Means, Tim McGraw; (97 min); Company: Creative Light Entertainment

A young Native American boxer overcomes obstacles to win a place on the U.S. Olympic boxing team.

Chasing Ghosts
(English) — Action/Suspense; Dir. Kyle Dean Jackson; Cast: Michael Madsen, Corey Large, Shannyn Sossamon, Michael Rooker; (95 min); Company: American World Pictures

A serial killer keeps taunting the police with clues and photos left behind at the scene of the crime. A veteran cop takes on a rookie cop, hoping to crack one last case before retiring.



Conversations With Other Women
(English) — Drama; Dir. Hans Canosa; Cast: Helena Bonham Carter, Aaron Eckhart; (83 min); Company: Fabrication Films

A man and a woman flirt with each other at a wedding reception, the sexual tension seems spontaneous. As the conversation deepens, their past life together is revealed. They go from the party to a hotel room, the night filled with passion and remorse...

Screenings: Wednesday, Nov. 2, 3 p.m. and Monday, Nov. 7, 1 p.m.

Day of Wrath
(English) — Action/Suspense; Dir. Adrian Rudomin; Cast: Christopher Lambert, Blanca Marsillach, Brian Blessed, James Faulkner; (95 min); Company: American World Pictures

‘Day of Wrath’ tells the story of Mendoza, a 16th century Spanish sheriff who stumbles upon brutal murders of high ranking nobles, and a conspiracy that threatens to tear apart the fabric of society during the darkest years of the Spanish Inquisition.

Disaster!
(English) — Animated; Dir. Roy Wood; Cast: Motley Crue; (85 min); Company: Bleiberg Entertainment Inc.

A clay animation spoof of big-budget action films, where a rag-tag group of misfits have three days to save the world from a killer asteroid.

El Cortez
(English) — Thriller; Dir. Stephen Purvis; Cast: Lou Diamond Phillips, Bruce Weitz, James McDaniel, Tracy Middendorf; (90 min); Company: BPix

Manny, an autistic ex-con, is seeking a

new life after 5 years in psychiatric prison. He gets a job at Reno’s Hotel El Cortez where he gets along fine until a vengeful cop emerges from his past. He soon becomes trapped in a maze of deceit and betrayal.

Empire of the Wolves (The)
(French) — Action/Suspense; Dir. Chris Nahon; Cast: Jean Reno, Jocelyn Quivrin, Arly Jover; (128 min); Company: Gaumont

Anna, the wife of a senior government official is having bouts of amnesia and terrifying hallucinations. Meanwhile, 3 women are sadistically murdered. The link between Anna and the victims becomes ever more clear as Anna’s horrible past is revealed ...

From Other Worlds
(English) — Science Fiction; Dir. Barry Strugatz; Cast: Cara Buono, Issach De Bankole, David Lansbury, Quinn Shephard; (88 min); Company: Shoreline Entertainment

A Brooklyn mom is abducted by aliens and returned to her home. A series of coincidences leads her to join forces with another supposed abductee who believes her story. As the plot thickens, a quirky comedy unfolds about misfits trying to save the world.

Gabrielle
(French) — Drama; Dir. Patrice Chereau; Cast: Isabelle Huppert, Pascal Greggory; (90 min); Company: StudioCanal

Paris, early 1900s. Provoking a cataclysmic crisis in her conventional, bourgeois marriage, Mme Hervey and her husband each take on the supposed virtues of the opposite sex.

Hating Alison Ashley
(English) — Comedy; Dir. Geoff Bennett; Cast: Dela Goodrem; (98 min); Company: Arclight Films

An angst ridden teen outcast, and a beautiful new arrival are surprised to discover they could be friends...if only they didn’t hate each other so much.

Headspace
(English) — Horror; Dir. Andrew van den Houten; Cast: Olivia Hussy, William Atherton, Larry Fessenden, Christopher Denham; (97 min); Company: Curb Entertainment International Corp.

25 year-old Alex must stop the demons of his nightmares from invading his world and killing everyone he knows.

Hellbent
(English) — Horror; Dir. Paul Etheredge-Ouzts; Cast: Dylan Fergus, Bryan Kirkwood, Hank Harris, Andrew Levitas; (85 min); Company: here! Films

The first ever Gay Slasher film! There is a serial killer loose at the famed West Hollywood Halloween Carnival. 4 gay friends will fight for their lives to make it through a night where costumes, beautiful people, drugs, music and sex are everywhere.

Hoboken Hollow
(English) — Horror; Dir. Glen Stephens; Cast: C. Thomas Howell, Dennis Hopper, Michael Madsen, Robert Carradine; (90 min); Company: American World Pictures

Based on a true story of a slave ranch in Texas. Several drifters find themselves confronted with the evil of Hoboken Hollow — a farm that many visit but few ever leave.

Jack-Fruit Thorn Kiss
(Vietnamese) — Drama; Dir. Nghiem Dang Tuan Nguyen; Cast: Tran Hoi Anh Nguyen, Yen Ngoc Duong, Khanh Trinh Ho; (115 min); Company: Vietnam Media Corp

“Jack-Fruit Thorn Kiss” is an enchanting romantic comedy, based in present

MUSIC

Rebel yell: Club takes to country

BY JAYA GUPTA
Special to the Daily Press



Black Rebel Motorcycle Club has had far more than its fair share of band-related turbulence: A fist through a wall one drunken night, resulting in major reconstructive surgery; the departure of their drummer while still on tour; their fallout with a major record label; and all of the other bloody skirmishes that the press didn’t catch wind of.

It would be an understatement to say that BRMC has had one hell of a time putting out their music.

In 2000, BRMC hit the indie market with their self-titled debut, released through Virgin Records. Though the album was both critically-acclaimed, receiving a coveted spot on the Los Angeles Times’ list of best records for that year, and well-received by audiences lucky enough to have heard it.

With its smoldering sexual connotations and lyrical numbness, thick fuzz-distortion and tribal drum pounding, BRMC may have become a critical success at the unfortunate expense of mass-appeal.

With a slew of immigration problems plaguing British drummer Nick Jago, BRMC fled to London in 2002. The following year, the three men — Jago, guitarist Peter Hayes; and bassist Robert Levon-Been — holed themselves up in a tiny studio, conveniently located above a pub, and came out with their sophomore record “Take Them On, On Your Own.”

The second offering documented again the residual numbness brought on by substance abuse, along with exquisite heartache. It offered commentary on everything from the American government to relationships.

This year, after a landslide of inhibiting factors, BRMC came back with “Howl.” The past couple of years have seen the departure and return of Jago, the exit of Virgin Records, and major hand surgery for Hayes.

Speaking from London, Hayes offered insight into “Howl,” the band’s next record and what he’d like to see more and less of in Los Angeles:

Question: How difficult was it to put out “Howl?”

Answer: “We never really relied on the record label. We’ve been artistically independent all along. By the second record, we could tell that they weren’t that into it. The people who signed us cared. The people higher up didn’t really like us. It’s kind of that music comes second after money. It left us room to mess around and make music the way we wanted to. As far as ‘Howl’ goes, we got started on the album before the tour (for “Take Them On, On Your Own”). Afterwards, I didn’t know if Nick was coming back, I didn’t know if I was. I was pretty fed up with the business side of it. After we found a different record label, it wasn’t horribly difficult to put it out. It’s just the penny-pushers of the record companies. Our music isn’t made for advertising. We just didn’t want to do it that way. There has to be a dividing line between art and commerce. I’m kind of paranoid that art is being taken

over. It’s feeding into a machine that’s gonna destroy art, whatever form it takes. That’s what I’m looking out for.”



Q: Was there something that caused you three to consciously explore more fully this grassroots musical style?

A: “It was something we talked about from the first record really. ‘Complicated Situation’ was written before the first record. ‘Gospel’ was recorded for the first record. We were going to use them as B-sides but they were strong songs and we thought they deserved a place on the an album.”

Q: What are you listening to now?

A: Dead Combo, Nassau, the new Ravonettes’ record, the new Warlocks album. Elvis Presley. I’m really at a place where I’m kind of hopeful that the new generation will get up and take a stand, make a statement about modern culture. I believe that if you don’t have much to say musically, you ain’t got much to say.

Q: Have you joined the iPod generation?

A: (Laughs) I don’t know if I’ve joined, but I have one. I’ve been kind of waiting for this as strange as that may sound. I’ve had this CD collection but I’d been living in cars and vans until I was 22 so I didn’t understand collecting stuff because there just wasn’t room. I have books in there. It’s much better than watching TV.”

Q: Would you say that you have a cult following?

A: “Well, you know, what do you really mean by cult? I think we have a loyal fan base. In America, it seems a little more faithful. “

Q: Are you thinking about the fourth record?

A: “We have some songs for the next one. It’s not acoustic and it’s not disco. (Laughs). I’m not quite sure where it’s gonna go. We’re not going to do the same thing over again. I like doing acoustic but it’s probably going to be louder, more psychedelic but in a different way. Right now I’m interested in one electric guitar and seeing how it can take up a lot of space. I’m not really sure how that’ll work but it’s something I’ll experiment with.”

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day Vietnam, about two young travelers who are in love but don't know it yet.

Joni's Promise
(Indonesian) — Comedy/Adventure; Dir. Joko Anwar; Cast: Nicholas Saputra, Mariana Renata, Surya Saputra, Rachel Maryam; (86 min); Company: Focus Films Limited

Joni is a reel courier for a cinema chain. When Joni is on duty, a reel will be delivered on time. That is his promise. One day, it seems the whole town is conspiring against him, just when something big is at stake: a promise to the girl of his dreams.

La Visa Loca
(Filipino) — Comedy; Dir. Mark Meily; Cast: Robin Padilla, Rufa Mae Quinto, Johnny Delgado; (107 min); Company: Unitel Pictures International

A satirical comedy about one man's obsession with obtaining an American visa. Story takes place during Holy Week in the Philippines. Script won 1st Prize-Palanca Awards (Pulitzer equivalent).

Last Drop (The)
(English) — Action/Adventure; Dir. Colin Teague; Cast: Billy Zane, Karel Roden, Sean Pertwee, Michael Madsen; (92 min); Company: Carnaby International
"Kelly's Heroes" meets "Ocean's Eleven" — "The Last Drop" is a daring heist that takes place during a war — it doesn't get more dangerous than that.

Le Petit Lieutenant
(French) — Psychological Thriller; Dir. Xavier Beauvois; Cast: Nathalie Baye, Jalil Lespert, Roschdy Zem; (115 min); Company: StudioCanal

Antoine moves to the big city with dreams of fighting crime. Captain Veaudieu, a recovering alcoholic, takes him under her wing. He fits easily into her team, until tragedy strikes and Veaudieu has to fight the memories she used to drown in drink.

Mama Jack
(English) — Comedy; Dir. Gray Hofmeyr; Cast: Leon Schuster, Mary-Anne Barlow, Alfred Ntombela, Lionel Newton; (104 min); Company: Distant Horizon Ltd

On the run from the law and a vengeful movie director, Jack goes into hiding. He turns to his makeup artist friend and emerges disguised as a black woman, Mama Jack.

Murder, Take One
(Korean) — Mystery; Dir. Jin Jang; Cast: Seong-won Cha, Ha-kyun Shin; (115 min);

A TV station airs a real-time show of an actual murder case investigation of a famous female copywriter. The detective in charge closes in on the suspect until the unthinkable happens.

Once Upon a Time in the Oued
(French) — Comedy; Dir. Djamel Bensalah; Cast: Julien Courbet, Karina Testa, David Saracino, Marilou Berry; (93 min); Company: Gaumont

1988: While everyone dreamed of making it big in the States, Johnny Leclerc, a boy from the suburbs of Paris, dreamed of making it as just a simple grocer in Algeria. Here is his success story. A comedy narrating this exotic, comic yet touching journey.

Only the Night
(French) — Psychological Thriller; Dir. Xavier Giannoli; Cast: Ludivine Sagnier, Nicolas Duvauchelle, Bruno Todeschini; (105 min); Company: StudioCanal

Coming home late one night from work, Julien encounters a young, beautiful disturbing woman in front of his building. Julien becomes obsessed by the mystery surrounding her and risks everything, including his girlfriend's love, hoping to save her.

Papa
(French) — Drama; Dir. Maurice Barthelémy; Cast: Alain Chabat, Martin Combes, Yael Abecassis; (77 min.); Company: Gaumont

A father drives through France with his youngest son, age 6. A strange and painful journey where father becomes son and son becomes father, father becomes father and son becomes son. A daddy, a boy, and upon arrival ... a family?

Princess Aurora
(Korean) — Thriller; Dir. Eun-jin Bang; Cast: Jung-hwa Uhm; (110 min); Company: CJ Entertainment

A sticker of a cartoon character is found on a dead body at a department store. Soon more bodies turn up with that same sticker.

Reeker
(English) — Horror; Dir. Dave Payne; Cast: Devon Gummersall, Derek Richardson, Arielle Kebbel, Michael Ironside; (92 min); Company: Cinema Management Group
Young strangers trapped at an eerie travel oasis in the

desert must unravel the mystery behind their visions of dying people while a decaying creature preys upon them.

Rules of Dating
(Korean) — Romantic Comedy; Dir. Jae-rim Han; Cast: Mae-il Park, Hae-jung Kang; (120 min); Company: CJ Entertainment

An English teacher and his assistant are involved in a rollercoaster romance after he makes sudden advances to her from day one.

Shoe Fairy (The)
(Mandarin) — Fantasy; Dir. Robin Lee; Cast: Vivian Hsu, Duncan Lai; (89 min); Company: Focus Films Limited

A lighthearted love story with a charming dose of fairy tale. Vivian Hsu plays a girl who is completely enamored with shoes. One day, she meets her "smiling dentist" Prince Charming and they seem destined for a happily ever after journey ... but are they?

Standing Still
(English) — Comedy; Dir. Matthew Cole Weiss; Cast: Mena Suvari, James Van Der Beek, Colin Hanks, Adam Garcia; (90 min); Company: Voltage Pictures

A group of college graduates reunite for the wedding of one of their best friends.

Thing About My Folks (The)
(English) — Comedy; Dir. Raymond De Felitta; Cast: Peter Falk, Paul Reiser, Olympia Dukakis, Elizabeth Perkins; (96 min); Company: New Films International

"The Thing About My Folks" follows a father and son who set out on an impromptu road trip in the wake of mom's unexpected defection.

Trespassers
(English) — Horror; Dir. Ian McCrudden; Cast: Michelle Borth, Alex Feldman, Johnny Hedrick, Kaiwi Lyman-Mersereau; (83 min); Company: Ocule Films
Friends on an exotic journey trespass a cursed land.

Tsotsi
(Tsotsi-Taal) — Drama; Dir. Gavin Hood; Cast: Presley Chweneyagae, Terry Pheto, Kenneth Nkosi, Zola; (96 min); Company: The Little Film Company

Based on Athol Fugard's book, this film traces 6 days in the life of a ruthless young gangster who shoots a woman and steals her car, unaware that her baby is in the back seat. Pumped with Zola's "Kwaito" music, this is a gritty portrait of ghetto life.

Typhoon (Trailer)
(Korean) — Action/Adventure; Dir. Kwak Kyong-taek; Cast: Jang Dong-kun, Lee Jung-jae, Lee Mi-yeon; (25 min); Company: CJ Entertainment

A South Korean naval officer hunts down a pirate that has been banned from both North and South Korea. He takes his revenge out on the two Koreas with vengeance.

Vegas Baby
(English) — Comedy; Dir. Eric Bernt; Cast: Kal Penn, Jonathan Bennett, Donald Faison, Charlie Talbert; (90 min); Company: Voltage Pictures

Five friends go on a road trip to Vegas for the bachelor party of their lives. But nothing goes according to plan.

Virgil
(French) — Comedy; Dir. Marbrouk El Mechri; Cast: Jalil Lespert, Jean Pierre Cassel, Lea Drucker; (90 min); Company: Gaumont

Every week Virgil comes to visit his father in prison and fuels the old man's dreams with tales of his boxing feats while crossing paths with Margot in the visiting room. The only hitch is that Virgil hasn't boxed in years and his father is being released.

Voice
(Korean) — Horror; Dir. Equan Choe; Cast: Ok-bin Kim, Ji-hye Seo, Ye-ryun Cha; (104 min); Company: CJ Entertainment

A girl is killed by a mysterious voice and one day her best friend starts to hear her voice. As more and more people start to hear voices of the dead, the plot thickens.

Wig (The)
(Korean) — Horror; Dir. Shin-yun Won; Cast: Min-seo Chae, Sun Yu; (104 min); Company: CJ Entertainment

Two sisters lives are turned upside down as one loses her voice from an accident and the other her hair while undergoing chemotherapy. The sister is given a wig, and the memories of the life and death of a woman the hair once belonged to overtakes her.

You Are My Sunshine
(Korean) — Drama; Dir. Jin-pyo Park; Cast: Do-yeon Jeon, Jung-min Hwang; (122 min); Company: CJ Entertainment

A country man falls in love with a beautiful waitress at a coffee shop. He later finds out that she is also a prostitute at night but stays with her even after finding out that she has contracted the AIDS virus.

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Mill making nuclear fuel from Japanese uranium

BY PAUL FOY
Associated Press Writer

SALT LAKE CITY — Trucks carrying 500 tons of crushed uranium ore from Japan are starting to arrive at southeastern Utah mill for processing into nuclear fuel.

It's a routine event, according to the company, but environmental activists contend the International Uranium Corp. is taking foreign waste rock for disposal, not processing, and accuse government regulators of lax oversight. They contend that the shipments are a sign that Utah is becoming an international dumping ground for radioactive waste — not just a national one.

A series of e-mails exchanged among state and federal regulators, and released to The Associated Press by the Citizens Education Project, show officials initially were confused about what was coming to Utah. The e-mails variously refer to the material as radioactive waste, uranium ore, waste rock or unprocessed ore from a defunct Japanese uranium mine looking to get rid of the stuff.

The distinction is important. International Uranium's White Mesa Mill near Blanding can accept uranium ore without special permits or monitoring, but Utah wouldn't allow it to take radioactive waste without the approval of Gov. Jon Huntsman and the Legislature — and that would require a permit from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission that could take years to resolve.

In one e-mail, a subordinate wrote Dane Finerfrock, director of the Utah Division of Radiation Control, on Oct. 7 that "looking back on this whole experience, it appears that more could have been done to inform DRC about the physical and chemical characteristics of the material."

The subordinate, Loren Morton, an environmental program manager, added in the message, "Perhaps we should think about how the license should be amended to prevent this from happening again."

That got an endorsement a few days later from Dianne Nielson, executive director of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, who wrote to both

officials that "some sort of rule change is a good idea" to better monitor the White Mesa mill, one of only two uranium-processing mills in the country.

The e-mails show that state officials eventually were satisfied by the State Department that the material from Japan was unprocessed ore.

"It's been proven to be ore, so we can accept this under our state radioactive-materials license," Ron F. Hochstein, president of International Uranium Corp., told the AP on Wednesday.

The ore arrived from Kobe, Japan, in 550 rubberized bags aboard the Panamanian freighter "Bright Stream" at Everett, Wash., on Oct. 17. Trucks carrying the ore, 20 tons at a time, have started arriving at the Utah mill, with shipments scheduled to continue over three to four weeks, Hochstein said.

"This is no different than any other ore we've taken from our mines, and it's not waste material. It's ore," said Hochstein. He said International Uranium Corp. has mines in Arizona, Colorado and Utah, although the Utah mines are inactive.

Steve Erickson, executive director of the Citizens Education Project, said that based on the market price and concentration of the Japanese ore, International Uranium can expect to earn no more than \$9,300 processing it for fuel for nuclear-powered plants.

Erickson suggested the company had to be getting paid much more money to take the ore off the hands of Japan's Atomic Energy Agency, which couldn't find a place for it in that country.

Hochstein declined to disclose the financial arrangements.

Utah already has Envirocare, which operates the nation's largest low-level radioactive waste dump in Utah's west desert and has plans to seek approval for more radioactive waste. Those plans were put on hold at the behest of state politicians fighting a stockyard for highly radioactive spent fuel rods in canisters at an Indian reservation in Skull Valley. Last month, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission gave its approval for that disposal site in Tooele County.

Computer networking company donates \$40M to assist Katrina-impacted schools

BY EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS
Associated Press Writer

JACKSON, Miss. — John Chambers, president and CEO of Cisco Systems Inc., said a Mississippi woman whose family lost everything in Hurricane Katrina inspired his company's \$40 million donation to schools affected by the monster storm.

The first \$20 million will go to south Mississippi schools to provide wireless Internet service and other technology services. The other \$20 million will go to schools in other states affected by the Aug. 29 hurricane.

Chambers announced the donations Tuesday during the annual fall meeting of the Mississippi Economic Council, the state chamber of commerce.

He said shortly after Katrina, he was preparing to speak to 5,000 Cisco sales people in San Francisco when he heard a convention center employee speak in a Southern accent. Chambers said he asked

where she was from, and she said Mississippi.

He said he immediately asked about her family.

"She said, 'My family is OK, John, but we lost everything,'" Chambers recalled.

He said as tears welled in the woman's eyes, she asked him: "Could you mention us in your presentation to your 5,000 people?"

Chambers said the woman — whose name he never learned — also told him his company could make a big difference in hurricane recovery.

San Jose, Calif.-based Cisco is the world's largest maker of computer networking gear.

Chambers said the United States is falling behind many other countries in education. He said he sees Mississippi, which ranks near the bottom of many education listings, as a place where improvements are needed and will be welcomed.

NATIONAL □ INTERNATIONAL

Report: 2,200 companies paid Iraq with oil-for-food kickbacks

BY EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press Writer

UNITED NATIONS — About half of the 4,500 companies in the U.N. oil-for-food program paid \$1.8 billion in kickbacks and illicit surcharges to Saddam Hussein's government, according to a U.N.-backed investigation obtained by The Associated Press.

The report — which was to be released in full Thursday by the committee probing claims of wrongdoing in the \$64 billion program — indicates that about 2,200 companies participated in extensive manipulation of the U.N. oil-for-food program in Iraq.

The investigators reported that companies and individuals from 66 countries paid illegal kickbacks through a variety of devices while those paying illegal oil surcharges came from, or were registered in, 40 countries. The names will be included in Thursday's report but were not in the key findings obtained Wednesday by the AP.

Thursday's final report of the investigation led by former U.S. Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker strongly criticizes the U.N. Secretariat and Security Council for failing to monitor the program and allowing the emergence of front companies and international trading concerns prepared to make illegal payments.

According to the findings, the Banque Nationale de Paris S.A., known as BNP, which held the U.N. oil-for-food escrow account, had a dual role and did not disclose fully to the United Nations the firsthand knowledge it acquired about the financial relationships that fostered the payment of illegal surcharges.

The oil-for-food program was one of the world's largest humanitarian aid operations, running from 1996-2003.

Under the program, Iraq was allowed to sell limited and then unlimited quantities of oil provided most of the money went to buy humanitarian goods. It was launched to help ordinary Iraqis cope with U.N. sanctions imposed after Saddam's 1990 invasion of Kuwait and became a lifeline for 90 percent of the country's population of 26 million.

But Saddam, who could choose the buyers of Iraqi oil and the sellers of humanitarian goods, corrupted the program by awarding contracts to — and getting kickbacks from — favored buyers, mostly parties who supported his regime or opposed the sanctions. He allegedly gave former government officials, journalists and U.N. officials

vouchers for Iraqi oil that could then be resold at a profit.

Tracing the politicization of oil contracts, the new report said Iraqi leaders in the late 1990s decided to deny American, British and Japanese companies allocations to purchase oil because of their countries' opposition to lifting sanctions on Iraq. At the same time, it said, Iraq gave preferential treatment to France, Russia and China which were perceived to be more favorable to lifting sanctions and were also permanent members of the Security Council.

Volcker's previous report, released in September, said lax U.N. oversight allowed Saddam's regime to pocket \$1.8 billion in kickbacks and surcharges in the awarding of contracts during the program's operation from 1997-2003.

According to the new findings, Iraq's largest source of illicit income from the oil-for-food program was the more than \$1.5 billion from kickbacks on humanitarian contracts.

The smuggling of Iraqi oil outside the program in violation of U.N. sanctions poured much more money — \$11 billion — into Saddam's coffers during the same period, according to a finding in the new report.

Volcker's Independent Inquiry Committee calculated that more than 2,200 companies worldwide paid kickbacks to Iraq in the form of "fees" for transporting goods to the interior of the country or "after-sales-service" fees, or both.

The report to be released Thursday chronicles Saddam's manipulation of the program and examines in detail 23 companies that paid kickbacks on humanitarian contracts including Iraqi front companies, major food providers, major trading companies, and major industrial and manufacturing companies.

According to the findings, the program was just under three years old when the Iraqi regime began openly demanding illicit payments from its customers. The report said that while U.N. officials and the Security Council were informed, little action was taken.

The report is the fifth by Volcker and wraps up a year-long, \$34 million investigation that has faulted Secretary-General Kofi Annan, his deputy, Canada's Louise Frechette, and the Security Council for tolerating corruption and doing little to stop Saddam's manipulations. The investigation also accused Benon Sevan, the former head of the U.N. oil-for-food program, of taking \$147,000 in illegal kickbacks.

Katrina claimed 16 schools, another 24 seriously damaged

SCHOOL AID, from page 14

Chambers said an initial \$20 million is earmarked for seven individual schools or districts — five of those in the Hattiesburg area. The company said the schools were selected because they sustained some damage from the hurricane, but they were not destroyed and could be rebuilt quickly.

The schools are Forrest County Agricultural High School, with 500 students; Forrest County School District, 2,400 students; Hattiesburg School District, 4,700 students; Lamar County School District, 7,200 students; Petal School District, 3,700 students; Moss Point High School, 900 students; and Harrison Central High School, 800 students.

The schools will receive money to improve technology, online curriculum and professional development, the company said.

Another \$20 million, the company said, would be made available over the next two to three years to other states for school systems devastated by Katrina. A company spokeswoman said specific decisions will be made later about where the second \$20 million will be spent.

Melvia Fountain, principal of Hattiesburg's Rowan

Elementary School, said the Cisco donations will make her students "productive citizens in a global society." She said most of her students come from economically struggling families who can't afford computers.

"Because they don't get that at home, we at school have to provide all we can. And we've been doing that with limited funds," Fountain said.

Katrina caused billions of dollars of damage throughout south Mississippi. State Superintendent of Education Hank Bounds said the storm destroyed 16 schools, severely damaged 24 and caused less extensive damage to 263 others.

The hurricane also destroyed about \$40 million of computers and other technology equipment, \$40 million worth of textbooks and \$235 million of teaching supplies in the public schools, Bounds said.

Bounds said while those losses need to be replaced, education programs throughout Mississippi need improvement.

"Obviously, the perception of public education is not where you want it," Bounds told about 1,000 people at the MEC gathering. "The only way you can change perception is to change reality."

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Prince Charles mulls his royal relevance

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Feeling important can be difficult — even for a prince.

Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, says he struggles against the perception of being royalty disconnected from the public.

"It's very easy to just dismiss anything I say. ... It's difficult," Charles, 56, says in an interview to air Sunday on CBS' "60 Minutes" (7 p.m. EST).

"The most important thing is to remain relevant," he says. "It isn't easy, as you can imagine."

Charles says he's combated this by working on environmental and social class issues. An avid organic farmer, he has developed a village called Poundbury built of native or recycled materials where people of all income levels live.

"What I've tried to do is put my money where my mouth is as much as I can ... by actually creating models on the ground."

He has also founded 14 charities.

"Worrying about this country and its inhabitants — that's my particular duty," says Charles in the rare American TV interview. "And I find myself born into this particular position. I am determined to make the most of it."

Charles and his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall, begin a weeklong tour of the U.S. on Tuesday.

NEW YORK — Janet Jackson has been exposed — and this time, Justin Timberlake is nowhere to be seen.

A video clip showing Jackson sunbathing naked has been circulating on the Internet and was still playing on some Web sites Thursday. The 40-second paparazzi video was shot from bushes near the singer.

Jackson's publicist didn't immediately return a call from The Associated Press on Thursday for comment.

Her lawyers were reportedly attempting to have the video taken off the Web. On one site, a freeze-frame was still up Thursday, but the video link had been taken down — replaced with the message "removed because lawsuits aren't really my thing."

The exact source of the video and when it was shot was unclear. Photos taken at the same time popped up online last year.

Jackson found herself in the middle of controversy last year when Timberlake revealed her right breast — the now infamous "wardrobe malfunction" — at the end of their set during the halftime show of the Super Bowl.

Last week, her former brother-in-law, Young DeBarge, accused her of having a "secret" child — a daughter, Renee, now 18 — with ex-husband James DeBarge.

The 39-year-old singer issued a statement Wednesday saying: "I do not have a child and all allegations saying so are false."

Jackson's brother Tito defended her in an interview that was to air Thursday night on syndicated TV entertainment show "Extra."

"I do not have a nephew or niece or whatever it is that's being said right now," he said. "I'm pretty sure it bothered her a little bit, but she's going to go on and be strong like Janet always is. ... She'll be OK."

NEW YORK — Angelina Jolie, often photographed with her two children in her arms, says she wants to adopt again.

"It's a very special thing," the 30-year-old actress told People magazine at the recent Worldwide Orphans Foundation benefit in Manhattan. "There's something about making a choice, waking up and traveling somewhere and finding your family."

Jolie has a 4-year-old son, Maddox, who was adopted from Cambodia, and a 9-month-old daughter, Zahara, adopted from Ethiopia.

"Most of the night I just thought about how quickly I want to adopt again," she said. "There are so many wonderful places. There are many parts of Asia, Africa, South America, so sooner or later I'll end up everywhere, I'm sure."

Jolie announced at the Oct. 24 benefit that she is joining with Dr. Jane Aronson, the foundation's founder, to build a pediatric AIDS center in Ethiopia.

"I know some of the kids that were next to my daughter (at the orphanage); two of them passed away, with symptoms very similar to hers," she told People. "I really do believe that if I didn't get her out at that time, that she wouldn't be here. She was days away."

Is Maddox old enough to understand what adoption means?

"We've always addressed it," said Jolie, who is a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations. "I say, 'You're from Asia, you're from Cambodia. Asia is not Mommy's continent, it's your continent.' ... He knows where Zahara came from. It's pretty amazing."

Jolie credits Aronson, her children's pediatrician, with saving Zahara's life. "It was really tough. You need this wonderful, calm doctor who tells you everything is going to be OK."

LOS ANGELES — A former associate who is suing Michael Jackson for more than \$3 million has been accused by the entertainer of concealing and misappropriating funds.

Jackson filed the cross-complaint against Marc Schaffel in Los Angeles County Superior Court on Oct. 18, his lawyer, Brent Ayscough, said Wednesday.

The original lawsuit, filed in November, claimed that Jackson owes Schaffel \$800,000 for producing two 2003 television specials and \$2.3 million for payments and loans made to the entertainer over the past three years.