

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

The rise and fall of Santa Monica's living wage



Andrew H. Fixmer/Daily Press

Yolanda Orejel, a Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel housekeeper, places labels on door hangers before walking door to door Friday campaigning for Measure JJ.

Worker puts everything on the line for a 'living wage'

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Yolanda Orejel risked everything when she packed her bags and left her hometown in Mexico in search of a better life in Los Angeles.

But 20 years later, Orejel finds herself living in nearly the same conditions that she so desperately was trying to escape.

"I can eat a little better and I have nicer clothes," she said through an interpreter. "But otherwise there aren't many things that are different."

Orejel, a housekeeper at the Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, said she needs Santa Monica's proposed living wage ordinance to pass if she is to move out of her single-room apartment in downtown Los Angeles that she shares with her two teenage sons.

The single mother's \$200 weekly salary (after taxes) affords her the \$450 monthly rent on her apartment. After that, there is barely enough left to cover her bills.

Orejel, 35, said she has tried to take on second jobs, but when she returns home after cleaning rooms all day, she is so tired she barely has the strength to make dinner.

See HOUSEKEEPER, page 4



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Jack De Nicola, general manager of The Lobster, says the proposed living wage unfairly targets his restaurant and will hurt his bottom line. Martin Cervante, a sous chef, (left) worked his way up in the restaurant business, starting as a prep cook making minimum wage. Sous chefs regularly make between \$35,000 and \$50,000.

Local restaurant feels the squeeze from living wage law

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

In the effort for many low-income workers to realize the American dream, those same dreams pursued by dozens of Santa Monica business owners will be squashed by the city's proposed living wage, they fear.

"It goes against everything this country is about," said Giacomo "Jack" De

Nicola, the general manager at The Lobster restaurant. "It is going to cost me three quarters of a million dollars a year, which is going to make one restaurant virtually unprofitable."

The Lobster is one of hundreds of businesses that would be affected by Measure JJ, if approved by voters on Nov. 5. The law would require businesses in the coastal zone that make more than \$5 million in annual revenue to pay their workers \$10.50 with health benefits or \$12.25 without.

See RESTAURANT, page 4

Court may prevent Poundstone from getting children back

By The Associated Press

SANTA MONICA—Comedian Paula Poundstone has been complying with her probation requirements and could have regained custody of her children had her attorney not challenged the court's jurisdiction in child custody matters, a judge said Friday.

Superior Court Judge Bernard J. Kamins said at a status hearing in Santa Monica Courthouse he would have returned custody of the three adopted children to Poundstone, according to her attorney, Rich Pfeiffer.

But an appeals court this week halted all proceedings in the case while the panel reviews an August court challenge. Pfeiffer had alleged the criminal court overstepped its jurisdiction when it decided on the children's visitation and custody rights.

He said he plans to withdraw the challenge. A hearing is scheduled Jan. 31.

"It's the process that's worrisome," Poundstone told

KCAL-TV. "I want my kids back now and I'm not happy until that happens."

Poundstone lost custody of the children after pleading no contest last year to a felony count of child endangerment and a misdemeanor charge of infliction of injury on a child. The endangerment charge involved driving while

drunk with children in her car.

She was sentenced to five years probation in October 2001. The children were placed with a friend of Poundstone's who is a court-approved foster parent. Poundstone is allowed to see the children, but the visits are monitored.

Homelessness, marijuana on SF's ballot

BY MARGIE MASON
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Depending on their mood, voters here could drastically slash monthly cash payments to the homeless and at the same time endorse the concept of city-grown pot for use by medical marijuana patients.

Both options are on San Francisco's Nov. 5 ballot, along with an alternative proposal on homelessness offering a gentler approach to one of the city's most

intractable problems.

The marijuana proposal, the first of its kind in the country, would not trigger an immediate start-up of a municipal pot patch. It is a "sense of the voters" measure that would make it official city policy to explore the establishment of a marijuana growing-and-distribution program.

The initiative is a response to a series of raids by the federal Drug Enforcement Agency on marijuana distribu-

See BALLOT, page 5

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HOROSCOPE

Vanish when you can, Scorpio



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)
★★★★ Sit back and let others take action. Now, isn't this a nice change? Others look for you, perhaps a bit disappointed that you're not around. Sometimes people need to miss someone in order to appreciate him or her. Tonight: Join in.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Understand that you don't hold all the cards. Allow others to make the first move. You might be disappointed at first. Clear out an errand or two. You'll relax more. A family member adores you and lets you know it. Isn't that nice? Tonight: You don't have to go far.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Your playfulness delights a child or a new friend. This person also has a way of amusing you. You really enjoy your free time together. Discover a mutually fun pastime. Share hobbies. Strengthen the bond that exists. Tonight: Chat during dinner and get to know someone better.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ For the moon child, spending time at home proves to be delightful nearly anytime. Clear out a key project. Finish what you need to get done so that you can kick back and enjoy your family. A new purchase might be possible. Play with the budget. Tonight: Favorite dinner and a great movie.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ That extra effort pays off, whether it is a phone call, pitching in to help a neighbor or doing something long overdue. You'll smile as a result, and so will everyone else. Take time to chat with those in your life. Don't rush off. Tonight: Whatever works.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ You decide that enough is enough! Replace an object or item that seems to clog up the works and slow the ever-efficient Virgin down. You're not so concerned with your budget right now. Treat yourself, as well as a dear friend or loved one. Tonight: Out on the town.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Take an action you have been putting off for way too long. Your high energy makes this long-overdue task a snap! Get together with friends; you'll have a great time among crowds. You also might opt to throw a party. Tonight: Clearly where the action is.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Stay back. Do your own thing right now. Find someone you respect with which to brainstorm or air out a personal issue. You'll get great advice! Treat this person to a special meal or another type of happening he or she would love. Tonight: Vanish when you can.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Join others with a common goal. Together you'll accomplish a lot more. What could be a chore for one person becomes a great project together. Do more for others. It feels good. Willingly step into new experiences. Let go of your ideas of what does and doesn't work. Tonight: Take swing dancing lessons.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Take charge. Make a decision that can help an older relative or loved one. This person might give you a bit of flack at first. Talk to a partner or dear friend. Postpone plans until later on in the day, if you must. He or she will understand. Tonight: A must show.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Wanderlust hits. Make some calls and find a friend who might be up for an adventure. Explore the planetarium. Find your nearest natural history museum. Others might be most intrigued by your bohemian style. Tonight: Try a new type of cuisine.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ A partner sorely wants your attention. What he or she might do to get it could shock you. Consider your plans. Sit down and talk to this loved one. What could appear to be a burden develops into a fun time. Run with the moment. Tonight: Be a duo.

QUOTE of the DAY

"I think the world is run by C students."
— Al McGuire

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1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite #202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401

PUBLISHER Ross Furukawa ross@smdp.com EDITOR Carolyn Sackariason sack@smdp.com STAFF WRITER Andrew H. Fixmer andy@smdp.com NIGHT EDITOR Patrick McDonald PRMcDonald@aol.com PRODUCTION MANAGER Del Pastrana del@smdp.com PRODUCTION ASSISTANT Alejandro C. Cantarero alex@smdp.com CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE Angela Downen angela@smdp.com	CLASSIFIED REPRESENTATIVE Paula Christensen paula@smdp.com MEDIA CONSULTANT William Patrino william@smdp.com MEDIA CONSULTANT Freida Woody freida@smdp.com MEDIA CONSULTANT Ryan Ingram ryan@smdp.com CIRCULATION MANAGER Kiutzu Cruz kiutzu@smdp.com SPECIAL PROJECTS Dave Danforth dave@smdp.com STAFF MASCOT Maya Furukawa ross@smdp.com
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LOCAL



Look, Ma! No hands



Ross Furukawa/Daily Press
Marvin Ordonez of Los Angeles digs into the PAL Halloween Carnival pumpkin pie eating contest on Halloween night. He was awarded second place, and finished his pie in 10 seconds flat.

Let your voice be heard

By Daily Press staff

If you want to help guide where the money goes to fund human services within the city, let your voice be heard in the next three months.

"Community Voices 2002," is a program designed to let citizens tell officials how to prioritize grant money for human services in the next three years. The city's human services department has developed a profile of the Santa Monica community and determined the range of human service needs for the city.

There will be about 30 different discussion groups and public hearings held throughout the rest of the year to debate the priorities.

A list of public hearings and their dates can be obtained through the division. Call (310) 458-8701 for more information. There will be a Community Voices gathering on Jan. 11 from 9 a.m. to noon.



The powerful northwest swell is fading, but there's still enough energy for three to four-foot waves today. The 290-degree swell angle hits best along the South Bay where there's the best western exposure. Expect chest-high surf, with some head-high sets hitting occasionally on the better tides.

Swell continues today when surf should drop back into the waist- to chest-high range.

Sunday, still nothing new (nothing predicted until late next week). Expect waist- to chest-high waves, better size in the south, and fair conditions at most breaks.



Low-	12:41 a.m.	0.14'
High-	7:02 a.m.	5.92'
Low-	1:19 p.m.	0.25'
High-	7:21 p.m.	5.31'

Location	Saturday	Sunday	Water Quality
County Line	3-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Zuma	3-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A
Surfrider	2-3'/Fair	1-2'/Fair	A
Topanga	2-3'/Fair	1-2'/Fair	A
Breakwater	2-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	B
El Porto	3-4'/Fair	2-3'/Fair	A

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Open meeting for St. Joseph Center planned

By Daily Press staff

St. Joseph Center will hold an open community meeting in St. Clement's Hall at Third Street and Marine Street on Tuesday, Nov. 12 at 7 p.m. to discuss its plans to rebuild its facility on Hampton Drive.

The center has been providing human services to the community since 1976, and its programs have helped more than 900 families each year with child care, tutoring, parenting programs, and services for seniors and veterans.

The center provides 11 programs and services on seven sites in West LA, Santa Monica, and Venice, empowering low-income individuals and families toward self-sufficiency.

For more information, call 310-396-6468 ext. 324.

In other St. Joseph news, more than 100 business and community leaders gave a birthday toast last week and made their 16th annual contribution to the St. Joseph Center Childcare Scholarship Fund to benefit young children of the homeless and working poor.

Hosted yearly by Joyce Rey, Cecelia & Clifford Waeschle, and Coldwell Banker, this year's proceeds of more than \$32,000 will go toward the care and education of homeless and low-income children in the SJC's Child Care & Parenting Program.

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LOCAL

Living wage has business owners worried about future

RESTAURANT, from page 1

The ordinance, which predominately targets businesses that benefit from the tourism industry, was passed by the city council in July of 2001 as a way to lift low-wage workers out of poverty. Many entry-level workers at luxury hotels along the beach are paid \$8 an hour with no health benefits. At the unionized hotels, of which there are two in Santa Monica, the workers are paid more. Proponents of the measure argue those businesses have more than enough money to pay their employees — many of whom live in poverty conditions — a decent wage.

"We feel like we are in this battle between the unions and the hotels," De Nicola said. "It's misguided. It's easy to get behind a blanket cause like some Robin Hood thing of taking from the rich and giving to the poor but ultimately it doesn't do anything."

The Lobster, which is located on Ocean Avenue and Colorado Boulevard overlooking the Santa Monica Pier, makes more than \$5 million a year. About 10 percent of De Nicola's staff aren't paid what the proposed wage would require. None of them make less than \$7.50. Those employees are either prep cooks or dishwashers.

Despite hardship exemptions for which businesses can both apply for and help write, De Nicola believes he will be required to pay all of his 100 employees at least \$12.25 an hour, whether they are tipped or not. Waiters currently make about \$20 an hour, while bus boys get about \$15 an hour.

"What is a hardship exemption? What does that mean?" he said. "The exemption is a completely nebulous thing."

According to the language of the ordinance, employers who immediately would be exempt from the law either have young, first-time seasonal workers, or are able to prove the business would be non-viable if it had to pay its workers more. An exemption also could be granted if the business could prove that if it did raise wages it would actually counter what the law is intended to do. That means if a business had to downsize its workforce to remain economically viable, it could be exempt

because people would lose their jobs.

Under those rules, The Lobster would be exempt. Or would it?

"I would have to economize as much as I can which means people will lose hours," De Nicola said. "It will eat away at our profit margin but is that enough to be exempt? I don't know."

De Nicola said the law is unclear on that point. An exemption is not automatic, and it's uncertain how the proposed city administrative body reviewing exemption applications would make that determination. Hardship could be based on profit margins or on whether the business can stay afloat, he said.

The criteria for review hasn't been determined, however a panel of business owners, community members and city officials will be created to set those parameters after the law is passed, supporters of the measure say.

"We will not go out of business but it will take a large investment and turn it into nothing," he said. "I don't think anyone will get an exemption because if one does, why wouldn't the other?"

De Nicola and many other business owners who are fighting a fierce battle to shoot down the ordinance are worried about a government entity or unknown person

examining a private business' balance sheet and making a decision on undetermined criteria.

Payroll at the Lobster, which opened in 1999 and is owned by 10 investors, will go up 20 percent if the living wage is passed and an exemption isn't granted, De Nicola said. Typically, restaurants have a 7 percent profit margin.

De Nicola said he would support a living wage that gradually increases over time and is applied city-wide. But businesses shouldn't be singled out or bear the brunt in a futile attempt to solve a much larger social problem, he said.

The jobs that are targeted in the living wage are entry level and are not designed to be careers, De Nicola said. He expects people to educate and train themselves to be skilled workers so they can become self-sufficient like his immigrant Italian grandfather did when he came to America.

One of those skill sets is learning the English language. Many low-wage workers speak only Spanish, which doesn't help them get better jobs, De Nicola argues.

"No one is saying that it's not harder now ... the gap between the rich and poor is worse than it has been for decades but there still is opportunity," De Nicola said. "I believe people need to take responsibility for themselves and their actions."

Housekeeper fights for higher wages

HOUSEKEEPER, from page 1

To help lift the estimated 2,000 Santa Monica workers like Orejel out of poverty, the city council approved an ordinance last year requiring businesses near the coast that make more than \$5 million in annual revenue pay their employees between \$10.50 and \$12.25 an hour, depending on whether health benefits are provided.

Opponents of the ordinance have asked voters to decide Nov. 5 whether to enact the living wage ordinance, which is known as Measure JJ.

About six months ago Orejel joined the fight for the measure, and for the past week every day after work she

drives herself to the campaign headquarters of Santa Monica's Allied for Responsible Tourism, which is campaigning in support of the measure.

Once there, she tirelessly stuffs envelopes and walks neighborhoods with other activists, hoping to drum up enough support for a law that she thinks is critical to making life better.

She dreams of sending her sons to college and of saving enough money to buy a house some day. But in the short term, she wants to get off the state's MediCal program and be less dependent on subsidies.

See HOUSEKEEPER, page 5

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LOCAL □ STATE



Marijuana proposal is the first of its kind in country

BALLOT, from page 1

tion centers that give or sell pot to people with a doctor's recommendation.

"Of course we're pushing the point here," said San Francisco Supervisor Mark Leno, the initiative's author. "But we're forced to do this because the federal government has continued to proactively interfere with our most ill and vulnerable citizens' access their medicine."

Greater controversy has arisen in the homelessness debate. The result is two rival measures — one tough and one soft.

The tough-love "Care Not Cash" initiative was put on the ballot by petition after it appeared city supervisors would not support it. The opposing supervisors then pushed for a measure to lessen the blow to the city's estimated 7,300 homeless.

The "Care Not Cash" proposition would reduce the \$320-to-\$390 monthly cash allowances for the homeless, which some argue is often used for liquor or drugs, to as little as \$59 a month. The remainder would be reallocated to create more services and affordable housing.

"We provide more cash than any other county in California, and there's no time

limit for how long you can be on the program," said Supervisor Gavin Newsom, who proposed the measure. "There's no city in the United States that allows more people to die in its shelters and emergency rooms and on its streets."

The other measure, "Exits From Homelessness," would not reduce the cash allowance for families, pregnant women and senior citizens, and would reinstate the payment for any homeless person if more permanent housing is not arranged after 180 days in a shelter.

It also requires the city to provide 1,000 housing units and 700 substance abuse slots within two years. It would cost an estimated \$24.5 million, an amount critics say is not there to spend.

Board of Supervisors President Tom Ammiano was instrumental in getting the "Exits From Homelessness" measure on the ballot. He said the "Care Not Cash" option was too severe.

"There were punitive aspects to it I didn't agree with," Ammiano said. "It takes advantage of people's frustrations."

If both homelessness measures win majorities, the one with more votes takes precedence.

Worker afraid of losing job

HOUSEKEEPER, from page 4

"It's not just about a better quality of life," she said. "It's about improving everything."

Orejel comes from Michoacan, a mid-sized city about 250 miles northwest of Mexico City. Growing up, her father was a construction worker and her mother picked strawberries.

Finding work in Michoacan was difficult, and the jobs that were available paid so little that Orejel said it wasn't enough to buy food. So when she turned 17, she came to Los Angeles looking for opportunity.

But once here, she "found the stories about how easy it is to find a job and how much better the pay is in America overstated. She struggled to find work, and ended up peddling clothes on the street for many years.

Two years ago, finding herself unemployed during one of the country's most prosperous times, the state found Orejel a job cleaning rooms at the Doubletree.

While she is grateful for her job, she says housekeepers in other areas of Los Angeles are not required to clean as many rooms as she is and they are paid better.

When the tourism industry took a nose dive after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, hotels eliminated dozens of entry-level positions. That's when Orejel said her workload was increased from the nine suites she used to clean to the 14 she's charged with today.

And economists have said if Measure JJ is enacted there will be between 180

and 200 low-income jobs lost at hotels and other businesses throughout the city.

Orejel said she knows she could be one of them but it's worth the risk if the living wage ordinance helps her and others achieve a better life.

"It's not just about a better quality of life. It's about improving everything."

— YOLANDA OREJEL

Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel housekeeper

"I'm terrified I could lose my job," she said. "That's a very real possibility."

When asked what she would say to a fellow co-worker who lost their job if the living wage was enacted, Orejel appeared baffled.

"I would be without words," she said. "I don't know what I would say to them."

But Orejel said she knew what she would ask an owner of a business that would be affected by the living wage. She said she would want to know why they pay their workers so little when they make so much money.

"And I would tell them how much better they can make their workers' lives and how much better off everyone will be if JJ passes," she said.

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LETTERS

Police and fire unions should apologize

Editor:

Voters just received the third mailing from the Santa Monica Police Officers and Firefighters Union. It says Measure HH (VERITAS) supporters are thieves: "Warning from Santa Monica Police Officers: Thieves Are Trying to Steal Our City."

The mailings allege that there is a conspiracy of "out-of-town corporate millionaires" who will "take over Santa Monica" and install their "political puppet District by District." Really? Who has the big money? Measure HH collected \$56,000 this year.

The anti-HH forces are amassing a \$350,000 campaign, a large portion aimed at Measure HH. SMRR will have \$200,000+, hotel unions \$100,000+, and the police and fire union \$50,000+. Businesses contributed less than half of our \$56,000. The majority of our donations were from small contributions. 90 percent were \$250 or less, and 80 percent were \$100 or less.

If there really were a dangerous out-of-town conspiracy, as the police allege, we would be far more vulnerable under our current at-large system. As almost everyone knows, it would be more difficult for "out-of-town" corporations — or unions — to dominate Santa Monica elections if council members were elected from small districts where independents are on their "home turf" and can run without money from unions or corporations.

Our officers are among the highest paid in the nation. A large portion of the city's revenues come from businesses involved with major corporations, including the hotels, restaurants, and car dealerships.

These are the same out-of-town corporations the police and firefighters call "thieves." Without their revenue, we could not provide police officers and firefighters with such excellent salaries and retirement plans.

The three mailings were created to deliver false information so close to election day that it would be impossible to correct the tremendous damage they would inflict. The first attack mailer was a veiled threat that if voters approved district elections, the police and fire department might not respond to emergency calls for help. When questioned by the press and community leaders, the union apologized, saying it wasn't intentional, just bad wording. The second strike was a mailer which tried to create confusion about historic districts. When called a second time, the union again apologized, saying it was another mistake in the words. Now, the third strike, a chilling "WARNING FROM SANTA MONICA POLICE OFFICERS" that Measure HH (VERITAS) supporters are thieves. Whatever the alibis were for the first two mailers, with this latest piece there can be no doubt that the Police and Fire Unions are deliberate in these blatant lies.

On behalf of the thousands of people who support Measure HH (VERITAS) and the hundreds of people who donated to Measure HH, citizens as well as businesses, we call upon the police officers and firefighters to forth with deliver a written apology to every household where they sent these knowingly false, defamatory mailings. Let the police and firefighters show the same respect to the community that we have shown to them. Let the police and firefighters clearly tell our citizens, especially our youth, that in a great democracy like ours, people will have different political points of view. No one should be called a thief or criminal simply because they have a different opinion from the police and firefighter unions.

Lastly, dear voter, ask yourself this question: If we had an accountable City Council that respected the rights of everyone, do you think it would remain silent while the police and fire union engaged in these threatening, false, and libelous mailings? Look again! The six entrenched politicians on the Council who oppose Measure HH reforms greatly benefit from this misconduct.

Fellow citizens, in the privacy of the voting booth, do not be intimidated by police misconduct. Stand up for democracy! Vote Yes on Measure HH (VERITAS).

Irene Zivi
Paul DeSantis

Yes on Measure (HH) VERITAS Committee

Measure JJ will hurt those it's intended to help

Editor:

For quite some time now, I have been reading the opinions published on Measure JJ. One overriding theme has jumped out over this time, and that is those who are for JJ seem to have no logical arguments in their favor. Yes, in a perfect Utopian world it would be nice to have everybody make more money, with no consequences. Unfortunately, we do not live in an Utopian world, and Measure JJ has some serious consequences.

If measure JJ does pass, prudence (and basic economic common sense) would demand a response from those business affected (mostly Santa Monica hotels). Contrary to popular belief, most of the business' affected by Measure JJ are not making money hand over fist, and would simply be put out of business if they were to not respond to this attack on their financial well being. A response could come in a number of forms, and will most likely be a combination of a number of adjustments. Two of the most common adjustments hotels (chosen in this particular case because it will be the largest business segment affected) could make to combat a dramatic increase in labor costs, will be either raise their current room rates, or cut back on, and/or replace the affected labor. Let us look at the economic realities and consequences of each of these scenarios.

Many say that in response to Measure JJ, business' (again we will use hotels) should just raise their prices. These people obviously have no idea how a capitalist economy works. I can guarantee that even right now, before Measure JJ has gone to the voters, if the hotels felt they could raise their rates without seeing an adverse affect

on their occupancy they would. It's simple, if room rates were to rise, occupancy percentages would fall, and the hotels would lose even more money. There is no hotel general manager in this town sitting in their office thinking to themselves "I could be making a larger profit, but why bother." The fact is, given a raise in hotel rates many consumers would choose areas other than Santa Monica to stay, pure and simple. To even think about raising room rates, you would have to offer something more to guests, i.e. raise service levels, and that will certainly not happen under Measure JJ. Which conveniently brings me to the next point.

Another way the hotels can offset their increased labor costs would be to simply cut back on that labor. In essence, hurting the very people Measure JJ is supposed to help. Labor is one of the largest costs incurred by service oriented business. Which leads them to watch those numbers very carefully, even in current economic conditions. A few extra labor dollars here and there can be the difference between making a profit, and closing the doors. It is obvious that Measure JJ will increase current per person labor costs. Hotels must, and will respond to this simply by not having as many total labor hours. Whether you're working six people at \$6 an hour, or three people at \$12 an hour, you're still spending \$36 an hour on labor. Yes, that means people who currently have jobs now, will lose their jobs. This also means that the tourists who come here will experience a decline in the quality of service. Which should, in theory, lead to a decline in occupancy citywide. Another scenario that seems to have been overlooked is the change in the labor pool that will occur. If businesses have to pay a worker \$12 an hour, they will look for higher qualifications from that worker. If businesses are going to pay \$12 an hour, they will look for people with college degrees, not high school degrees. Yes, that again means that Measure JJ will hurt the very people it is intended to help.

For those of you who say that you support Measure JJ because you're looking out for the overworked and underpaid workers in the city, think about this. The fact is most of the workers here in Santa Monica do not live in Santa Monica, and cannot vote on their own fate. Let me also tell you from personal experience that most workers in the hotels do not want this measure to pass because they fear what will happen to their jobs. In other words, if you vote for Measure JJ, your vote could cost many jobs, the very jobs of the people whom you claim to help. Let the people whose jobs Measure JJ are affecting decide their own fate. The people who work for the affected business have a choice for whom they wish to work. We live in a capitalist economy. If they feel they are underpaid, and that their talents will be better rewarded elsewhere, they can find another job. Minimum wages were put into effect in this country primarily to stop the usage of what was in essence slave labor. Any economist will tell you that a government imposed wage that is higher than the naturally economic efficient wage will hurt an economy because it creates inefficiency. That inefficiency is illustrated perfectly by the arguments in this letter. Make no mistake about it, Measure JJ is an attack on the very well being of many business in Santa Monica. They will have no choice but to respond, and the consequences to that will be devastating for this community.

Brad Busby
Playa Del Rey

Employee at Le Merigot Hotel in Santa Monica

Opponents of EE are lying to you

Editor:

As a co-founder of Citizens for School District Reform, and a longtime children's advocate I am stunned and appalled by the way in which the opponents of Proposition EE have lied to the community in an attempt to make their case.

Their goal, which can be clearly discerned simply by reading their ballot argument, is to cause EE to fail as a way of fermenting citizen revolt and putting pressure on the Santa Monica City Council to direct more budget dollars toward education and other "community" needs.

I too would like to see more of our city budget dedicated to our schools and local youth programs but I believe it is morally repugnant to try and achieve that goal by misrepresenting the school district's performance over the past two years, and thereby putting the education of 12,500 SMMUSD students at risk.

Contrary to what the opponents of EE would have you believe, we have seen some extremely positive changes take place in our district over the past two years.

These changes include the creation of a blue-ribbon Financial Oversight Committee. It is chaired by Rand Corp. Executive Vice-president Michael Rich, and peopled with some of the top business minds in our community.

A key recommendation of the financial oversight committee called for the district to do a better job of handling its contract negotiations to ensure that salary costs were more in line with revenues. As the result of a great amount of teamwork between the union and the district, the new teachers contract calls for a 0 percent pay raise this year and a financially responsible 2 percent raise next year. The contract stands as a powerful example of the district's renewed emphasis on fiscal accountability.

It also demonstrates Superintendent John Deasy's commitment to running as tight a ship as possible. During the first year of his tenure, the district amassed a surplus, and he personally raised more than \$3 million in philanthropic and foundation grants to fund district programs.

Perhaps most impressive is the way Deasy has jumped in and taken a hands-on approach to the Prop X school construction projects. As a result of his efforts the chairman of the \$4 billion Jacobs Construction Co. appeared in person before our school board and agreed to make adjustments which have improved the quality of the work being done and substantially increased the amount of product we are receiving

OPINION



LETTERS

LETTERS, from page 6

for our money.

The bottom line, is that the bottom line is very important to our superintendent and it is being watched closely.

The district has also been moving ahead on a variety of other fronts including:

■ Restructuring SAMOHI to create a more effective learning environment.

■ Developing and implementing a community driven strategic plan to help ensure all children succeed.

■ And dealing quickly and effectively with the demands of community groups such as the Mothers For Justice.

So when the opponents to Proposition EE tell you nothing has changed with SMMUSD they are lying. And when, in the 11th hour, they suddenly start harping about the unfairness of the tax, know that this is just another calculated attempt to defeat Proposition EE as a means of mounting a political attack on the city council.

And perhaps that wouldn't be such a bad thing if the financial situation of our schools weren't so serious.

The state of California has a \$38 billion deficit. Last year the state made mid-year budget cuts for the first time in history. This year it has announced that it is going to make mid-year cuts again — bigger ones. And these mid-year cuts are in addition to the \$5 million in cuts that have already been made to next year's SMMUSD budget.

If we don't pass the parcel tax the negative effects on our school system will be immediate and painful.

This is not a fire drill. This is the real thing. There is no magic box, no hidden money. As good as our superintendent is, he is not a magician. If the money isn't there the programs and services must be cut.

Please think about this when it's your turn to stand up and vote.

Think about the benefits of having a school system that stands tall as a reflection of the best we have to offer, and that enriches children's lives, while enhancing the value of every piece of property in this town.

Quality schools make a quality community. Vote yes on Proposition EE.

John Petz
Santa Monica

Small business will feel pain by JJ

Editor:

Recent revelations that the city is looking at an even larger budget deficit next year than projected should make us all think twice about any program that will cost the city money and benefit a very narrow few. The Living Wage is just such a measure.

Slated to cost the city close to \$5 million a year, Measure JJ just does not make sense. With the city having to cut costs for schools, essential city services why should we as taxpayers and residents support a law that will only benefit a very few. I am a small business owner and parent and I can tell you — the Living Wage is a bad deal for our city and will cause more harm than good for the men and women it proposes to help.

As a restaurant owner, I am concerned about the discriminatory element of this proposed law. Restaurants, despite what most people think, do not operate with lots of margin for error. An increase in costs of just pennies can often make or break a business. In my business alone we operate on very tight margins. The ripple effect of such an enormous increase in living wage would clearly not make any sense to operate a business in Santa Monica.

This is not just a fight by the big hotels! This bad law will affect all businesses large and small. We are fighting for the survival of our business in Santa Monica. Let's not forget about business like Midnight Special Book Store, Broadway Deli, The Reel Inn, and many more small business ... each of who face potentially devastating impacts by this bad law. With the city ill prepared for the coming of this law, the "so called" exemptions will not go into effect for sometime, and in the interim, businesses will be forced to meet the new higher wage standards, and may be forced to close their doors.

I hope you will look at the facts, and vote no on Measure JJ.

Selwyn Yosslowitz
Santa Monica

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STATE

A lot of finger-pointing in failure of wildfire safety bill

BY SCOTT SONNER
Associated Press Writer

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE — Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., blames the Sierra Club, frequently her ally, for Congress' failure to pass legislation last month to thin national forests and reduce wildfire threats in the West.

Sierra Club President Carl Pope, in turn, says Republican leaders are responsible. And a timber industry leader points the finger at Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., accusing the Democratic leader of "election year politics."

All sides agree it's unlikely that Congress will act before adjournment to seek consensus on reducing the threat of wildfires, such as those that charred about 6.7 million acres across the nation this year.

"You have a very polarized community when it comes to fire and how they view fire," Feinstein said.

The former mayor of San Francisco has averaged a 91 percent scorecard rating from the League of Conservation Voters the past six years, but confounded environmentalists by insisting that logging be used to help ease wildfire threats.

She said she will press the Senate to hold hearings early next year and that she will attempt to build support among conservationists and others for an emergency program she hopes to develop with Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Republicans on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Feinstein said she was close to securing a bipartisan agreement with Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, that would have sacrificed some trees to reduce fuel loads and made 7 million acres of forests near urban areas safer from fires.

"I think the Sierra Club did it in, to be honest with you. There was just real opposition," Feinstein told reporters after a speech to an environmental conference last week at Lake Tahoe.

Feinstein said the Sierra Club made it impossible for her to gather the support she needed among Democrats to cut off debate and force a vote.

"So the effort kind of collapsed," she said.

Chris West, vice president of the timber industry's American Forest Resource Council based in Portland, Ore., said Feinstein is partially right. But he puts the blame more squarely on Democratic leaders.

"From our perspective, the reason nothing moved in the Senate that was workable was because of Daschle. It was all election-year politics," West said.

Craig, the senior Republican on the Senate Energy forests subcommittee, offers a similar account of the Senate's refusal to consider his proposal.

"The Dianne Feinsteins of this world have every reason to be frustrated and angry. I think she felt herself a friend of that organization, only to have them bite her as hard as they did," Craig said.

"She kept going to her leadership and got nothing. In the end, Tom (Daschle) did not want to put his people at risk tak-

ing a tough vote — which was the right vote — on something the environmental people have so effectively polarized," he told The Associated Press this week.

Pope said there was agreement on a plan to do emergency thinning in as much as 23 million acres the Forest Service identified as overstocked forests near homes, known as "urban interface" areas.

But he said GOP leaders refused to provide funding unless normal environmental reviews for projects outside those areas were suspended, too.

"From our perspective, the reason nothing moved in the Senate that was workable was because of Daschle. It was all election-year politics."

— CHRIS WEST
American Forest Resource Council

"Basically, they blackmailed the Senate. And we said, 'No, that blackmail is not acceptable.' So in that sense, yes Sen. Feinstein is correct" about the group's role in blocking legislation, he said.

Aides to Daschle said he was willing to expedite thinning, even in some areas outside "urban interface zones," but not with the prohibitions on legal challenges GOP leaders demanded.

"We agreed that some streamlining of the process makes sense, particularly if you focus most of the resources on thinning in the urban interface zone. But the notion of depriving folks of opportunities they have now for judicial review was going too far and something we were not prepared to support," said Eric Washburn, a senior legislative to Daschle.

The conflict centers on disagreement over the amount of logging that should be allowed to remove unnaturally high levels of brush and small trees that have resulted from decades of suppressing fires. In the past, fires periodically cleared forests of such undergrowth.

Critics say the thinning programs are abused to remove larger, commercial-sized timber and, in some cases, increase fire risks.

Feinstein said she understands environmentalists are distrustful of proposals to use logging to reduce fire threats.

"What we really need to do is build confidence and work with environmentalists to try to come together, just as they have here," she said at Lake Tahoe where competing interests have united to work to restore the lake's clarity.

Feinstein also criticized the Bush administration for failing to provide necessary money.

"Grooming the forests has to become a major priority for this administration," she said. "To this date ... it isn't."

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Measure JJ discriminates by applying to some, but not all businesses and employees in Santa Monica.

Example: Luxury Union hotels are exempt, but many non-profit and charitable organizations will have to pay.

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Please vote NO on JJ.



NATIONAL

Study: Corporations manipulate prices to avoid taxes

BY JIM ABRAMS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Buying lawn-mower blades from Australia for \$2,326 each or selling ATM machines to France for \$97 apiece might seem overly generous to America's trading partners. But a study released Friday found corporations using such implausible pricing last year to avoid paying \$53 billion in U.S. taxes.

Under the practice known as transfer pricing, corporations move income out of the United States and into the hands of foreign affiliates, effectively putting profits out of reach of the Internal Revenue Service. In addition to being a means to evade taxes, such pricing schemes are common to criminal money laundering operations.

Tax losses from price manipulation rose from nearly \$45 billion in 2000 and \$35.7 billion in 1998, said finance professors Simon J. Pak of Pennsylvania State

University Great Valley and John S. Zdanowicz of Florida International University, who have been studying the issue for more than a decade.

The two professors said in the study that their tax loss estimates were probably conservative because they only analyzed commodities that could be identified by measures such as kilograms, tons or units. If non-quantifiable goods were included, "our estimated tax loss would be significantly higher," they said.

"This is a very aggressive area of tax abuse," said Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., chairman of the Appropriations Committee subcommittee that oversees the Treasury Department. Dorgan secured a \$2 million grant in this year's budget for the researchers, saying he hoped to "convince the Treasury Department and the IRS to get serious" about the issue.

Treasury Department spokeswoman

Michele Davis said, "We're looking at all the complexities in the tax code that provide incentives for people to conduct transactions that minimize their tax burden."

Under the scheme, a U.S. company buys a product at an inflated price from an overseas subsidiary, keeping the money within the corporation while vastly reducing its taxable profit in the United States. Similarly, a manufacturer can write off losses from selling a product overseas at an undervalued price, while the profits are retained by the overseas partner.

Among overvalued imports were cotton dish towels from Pakistan at \$153 each, tweezers from Japan at \$4,896 a unit and plastic buckets from the Czech Republic at \$973 each. Undervalued exports included missile launchers sold to Israel for \$52 a unit, clinical thermometers sold to Germany for 6 cents each, and bus and truck radial tires sold to Britain

for \$11.74 each.

Japan led other trading partners, accounting for \$12.2 billion in lost U.S. taxes due to transfer pricing in 2001, followed by Canada with almost \$5 billion and Germany with \$4.6 billion.

U.S. Customs Service spokesman Dean Boyd said his agency has for more than a decade been tracking transfer pricing used not only to avoid taxes but also to launder money. "This type of overvaluation and undervaluation is certainly something we have to be concerned about," he said.

Boyd said that since Sept. 11 the Customs Service's Numerically Integrated Profiling System has also been used to investigate terrorism financing. He said importing gold into the country at vastly inflated prices is "an easy way to export funds from the United States," but that many other commodities, including licorice roots, have been used to launder money.

FDIC files \$548 million lawsuit against Ernst & Young

BY MIKE ROBINSON
Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO — The government filed a \$548 million fraud and negligence lawsuit Friday against accounting giant Ernst & Young in connection with the failure of a savings and loan in 2001.

The lawsuit, brought by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., accused Ernst & Young of misstating Superior Bank's assets and deliberately delaying reporting of the error for fear it would hurt an \$11 billion sale of the accounting firm's consulting arm.

In a statement, Ernst & Young said: "Clearly, Superior Bank's failure was not caused by any action of ours and we intend to vigorously defend claims against the firm."

Federal regulators seized Superior Bank, based in the Chicago suburb of Oakbrook Terrace, in July 2001. The savings and loan was the biggest insured U.S. financial institution to fail in nearly a decade. The lawsuit said the cost to the FDIC was \$750 million.

The thrift had lost millions on risky, high-rate home loans to borrowers with tarnished credit.

The Chicago-based Pritzker family and their equal

partner in Superior, New York developer Alvin Dworman, admitted no liability in Superior's failure and no sanctions were imposed on them by thrift regulators.

The lawsuit said Ernst & Young admitted in January 2001 after lengthy denials that Superior's assets were overvalued by \$270 million. After further investigation,

the value of the assets had to be reduced by an additional \$150 million, the lawsuit said.

Ernst & Young, which is based in New York, blamed Superior's problems Friday on the thrift's failure to follow through on a recapitalization plan and the deterioration of the economy.

Judge affirms arm patch drug testing

By The Associated Press

BOSTON — A federal judge Friday rejected a bid for freedom from a jailed man who disputed the reliability of a drug-testing adhesive patch that detected cocaine in his system.

U.S. District Judge William Young said five of Henry Alfonso's six positive tests for cocaine appeared reliable.

Alfonso, 32, of Fall River, was arrested in December on charges of

dealing the prescription painkiller OxyContin. He was released on bail but was sent back to jail in July after the patches he had to wear on his arm as a condition of his release showed the presence of cocaine.

The patches, which absorb sweat and test it for drugs, are used in more than 40 federal court districts.

Alfonso claimed that he tested positive because of cocaine residue left in his apartment by a previous tenant, or because of traces of

cocaine on cash his wife brought home from her job as a stripper.

PharmChem Inc., a Texas company that makes the patches, said it would take more than the trace amounts described by Alfonso to create a positive reading.

Federal courts in at least two districts — in New York and Nevada — have stopped using the patches because of questions about reliability.

Alfonso is scheduled to stand trial next month on the OxyContin charges.

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DID YOU KNOW?: The word 'corr' actually means 'odd' in Irish.

INTERNATIONAL



Quake shakes up town



Luca Bruno/Associated Press

An aerial view on Friday after an earthquake hit S.Giuliano di Puglia, near Campobasso, Southern Italy. An elementary school building, seen at center, collapsed when the quake struck Thursday, with at least 21 children feared dead.

Human Rights Watch condemns suicide attacks

BY JAMEY KEATEN

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM — Palestinians who launch suicide attacks against Israeli civilians are guilty of "crimes against humanity," and Yasser Arafat has not done enough to deter them, an international human rights group said Friday.

Human Rights Watch called for the prosecution of those responsible and said no Israeli military action or violations of international law justified such attacks.

"The people who carry out suicide bombings are not martyrs, they're war criminals, and so are the people who help to plan such attacks," Kenneth Roth, executive director of the New York-based group, said in a statement. "They clearly fall under the category of crimes against humanity."

In an interview with Associated Press Television News on Thursday, Arafat condemned suicide attacks as "immoral."

But on Friday, he was critical of the 170-page report, saying the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian areas was the root cause of the violence.

"We have to blame the occupation for what is going on," Arafat told reporters outside his office in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

The report, titled "Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks against Israeli Civilians," was the first of its kind by Human Rights Watch. The London-based human rights group Amnesty International issued a similar study in July.

Human Rights Watch examined bombings by Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Those militant groups have most often claimed responsibility for attacks.

The group said Hamas' spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and Islamic Jihad leader Ramadan Abdullah Shallah should face criminal investigation for their roles in the attacks.

Three Hamas leaders in Gaza said they would not comment before seeing the report.

According to figures compiled by The Associated Press, 80 suicide bombings have

left 294 people dead since the latest round of Mideast fighting began Sept. 29, 2000.

Human Rights Watch said it did not find evidence that Arafat or the Palestinian Authority ever had a hand in attacks against Israelis, but said the authority has not done enough to prosecute those responsible.

"The greatest failure of President Arafat and the PA leadership is their unwillingness to deploy the criminal justice system to deter the suicide bombings, particularly in 2001, when the PA was most capable of doing so," Roth said.

The report said Arafat and the Palestinian Authority "bear a high degree of political responsibility for the atrocities."

The report said the Palestinian leader apparently could not control groups such as the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades — a militia loosely linked to Arafat's Fatah movement.

Nabil Abu Rdenah, an aide to Arafat, said Israel's occupation leads to violence and the world should be working to get Israeli forces out of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"The report should have criticized the Israeli policy of occupation which is behind all the violence," Abu Rdenah said.

Joe Stork, Washington director for Human Rights Watch, said the organization was not advocating the end of the Palestinian intifadeh, or uprising, but questions the use of an "any means necessary" approach of some Palestinian militants.

"We don't take issue with them (the Palestinians) taking up arms — we are not a pacifist organization ... but the question is what they do with those arms," he said in Jerusalem. "They should not be targeting civilians. There is no excuse for these kinds of attacks."

Israeli attacks that have killed Palestinian civilians do not justify the suicide bombings, the report said. Many Palestinians say Israel's superior military force has left them with no other option.

"Even in the face of Israeli violations of international law, Palestinian armed groups must refrain from deliberate attacks against civilians," Roth said.

U.S. says old Gulf War resolutions authorize military action in Iraq

BY DAFNA LINZER

Associated Press Writer

UNITED NATIONS — The latest U.S. quest for Security Council action on Iraq is based on previous Gulf War resolutions that it believes still authorize attacks on Baghdad. The references to the two older resolutions continue to hold back support from allies fearful of triggering another war.

The new U.S. draft resolution, crafted with British support, hinges on an interpretation of the 1990 Security Council vote which launched Operation Desert Storm — the U.S.-led war to oust Iraqi forces from neighboring Kuwait.

The vote authorized member states, working with the Kuwaiti government, to use "all means necessary" to expel Iraqi troops and restore international peace and security in the area.

When the Gulf War ended in February 1991, the council suspended the authority to wage war and authorized a cease-fire contingent on Saddam Hussein's agreement to dismantle his weapons of mass destruction under the terms of a U.N. inspection regime.

Iraq accepted the terms but then spent years interfering with inspectors and prevented them from continuing their work at the end of 1998.

Today the council is split over whether Iraq's obstruction nullifies the Gulf War cease-fire.

"It all boils down to whether the cease-fire is still in effect," said one council diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "Either you believe the war hasn't ended and thus the authorization still exists or you believe that Iraq's original acceptance of the terms of the cease-fire shuts down the authorization."

Still, the diplomat said the Gulf War resolution doesn't authorize the United States to act on its own. "It's very clear that it's about working in concert with the Kuwaiti government. So Kuwait would have to give its acceptance and that's not the case right now."

Kuwait told the Security Council two weeks ago that it wants the council to give Iraq a chance to cooperate with inspectors

and opposes the use of military force.

The new U.S. draft resolution, which is being negotiated in the council, significantly beefs up arms inspections and threatens Saddam with consequences if he obstructs them.

In an effort to win council support, Washington agreed to massage the text to include some minor concessions on the new weapons inspections regime.

The revisions were quietly welcomed, but didn't pierce the core of the debate over whether the United States was seeking the authority to act unilaterally if Iraq fails to comply with inspectors.

Powerful players France, Russia and China want that addressed clearly and took Washington to task earlier this week over the references to previous resolutions which are mentioned in the first and third paragraphs of the new U.S. text.

"We continue to see hidden triggers in the form of these references to the old resolutions," a French diplomat told the Associated Press.

U.S. diplomats will not answer outright whether their current draft would clear the way for a war. But they believe they already have international legal ground to act if necessary.

"The U.S. strongly feels it doesn't need (new) authorization because it has authorization from past resolutions and from Congress," said Richard Grenell, spokesman for the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Several international law experts agree.

"Legally this resolution isn't necessary for authorizing force but it puts the administration in a much better position if Saddam doesn't cooperate," said Lee Feinstein, who served as the deputy director of policy planning at the State Department in the Clinton administration.

If Iraq scuttles the inspections again, Washington could have a strong case for regime change, he said.

"The administration could argue that the only way to fulfill resolutions on disarmament and on restoring peace and security to the region is to oust Saddam," said Feinstein, now with the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations.

Swiss court upholds book ban on bin Laden's half-brother

By The Associated Press

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — Switzerland's highest court Friday banned the sale of a book accusing Osama bin Laden's Swiss half-brother of having close links to the terrorist mastermind.

The Federal Tribunal said the ban would remain in force pending the outcome of a libel lawsuit that Yeslam Binladin and his Saudi Investment Co. filed against the book in a Geneva court.

"The Forbidden Truth," by French authors Jean-Charles Brisard and Guillaume Dasque, suggested that Binladin, who spells his name differently from his half-brother, bankrolled the al-Qaida network blamed for the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

It is on sale in neighboring France.

A local Geneva court earlier placed an injunction on the book, but that order was overturned by a separate Geneva state tribunal. The supreme court ruling restores the earlier injunction.

Binladin, 52, has lived in Switzerland since 1985, becoming a citizen last year.

He was born in Saudi Arabia, one of the children of Mohammed Ben Oud Ben Laden and his 22 wives, and one of 54 brothers and sisters of Osama bin Laden.

He has claimed he only met his younger half-brother three or four times in his life, all before Osama bin Laden left Saudi Arabia in 1981.

In the wake of the Sept. 11 terror attacks, Binladin said his whole family condemned Osama bin Laden for his acts and beliefs.



SPORTS

Shin may put damper on WTA Championships for Davenport

BY TOM A. MCFERSON

Special to the Daily Press

With only a few days to go before the top women in professional tennis meet at next week's Home Depot WTA Championships, an injured shin is still a cause for concern for Lindsey Davenport.

Davenport on Thursday admitted that the injury, an inflamed tendon in her right leg, was still causing her pain and keeping her from her normal practice schedule. She has only begun doing on-court workouts in the last couple of days.

The WTA Championships, which begin next Wednesday at Staples Center, feature the top 16 ranked women in singles and the top eight ranked teams in doubles. Americans dominate the field, with Serena Williams, Venus Williams, Jennifer Capriati, Monica Seles, Davenport, and Chanda Rubin.

Davenport, who missed the majority of this year after knee surgery, made it her goal last summer to qualify for the end of year WTA Championships, an event she has played in every year since 1994. That goal was accomplished two weeks ago in Switzerland, where Davenport reached the final of The Swisscom Challenge.

The shin injury was a result of that tournament, however, and the two other events that immediately preceded it. Although Davenport "may have pushed it too much" trying to qualify, it was important for her to end the year on a positive note.

"I'm really looking forward to it," Davenport

said about the event. "I'm kind of looking forward to being a floater, to spoiling the draw."

She finds herself in the unusual position of being unseeded in this year's tournament.

**"I'm really looking forward
to (the Championships.)
I'm kind of looking
forward to being a floater,
to spoiling the draw."**

— LINDSEY DAVENPORT
Professional tennis player

This is the third location in three years for the tournament, which last year moved from New York to Munich, Germany.

Lukewarm excitement and half-filled arenas prompted the WTA to move the tournament again, this time to Los Angeles.

Davenport says that there is a "buzz" to this year's event, and that the players are excited about the new location.

The top qualifiers are Serena Williams, Venus Williams, Jennifer Capriati, Justine Henin, Kim Clijsters, Monica Seles, Daniela Hantuchova, and Jelena Dokic.

For ticket information call 1-866-524-7687.

Kings blaze the trail



Rich Pedroncelli/Associated Press

Sacramento Kings forward Peja Stojakovic, left, leaps after the ball as it goes out of play as Portland Trail Blazers forward Ruben Patterson, right, looks on during the third quarter at Arco Arena in Sacramento on Thursday. Stojakovic scored 26 points to lead the Kings to a 100-72 win over the Trail Blazers.

After the schmoozing, New York, San Francisco await decision

BY JOHN MARSHALL

AP Sports Writer

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — One bid began with a failed attempt to land the 1996 Olympic Games. The other was dreamed up during a World Cup soccer game in 1994.

Years of planning, schmoozing and waiting will end Saturday when the U.S. Olympic Committee's board of directors will choose New York or San Francisco as the American candidate to host the 2012 Summer Olympics.

"Both cities have put forth impressive cases, and it's going to be very difficult to choose between them," said Anita DeFrantz, a U.S. member of the International Olympic Committee. "I can't tell you which one is going to win, but it should be close."

The USOC's 123-member board will vote at its annual meeting in Colorado Springs. The winner will move on to the international competition, where it will face a strong field that could include Toronto, Rome, Paris, Moscow and Rio de Janeiro. The IOC will vote in 2005.

Organizers have submitted bids detailing everything from the type of electrical system in the media room to transportation studies that break down the number of buses, trains and even bicycles — 9,152 at Stanford on Day 10 — going through each venue during the games.

Each city will get an hour to make a final presentation to the

full board on Saturday.

New York will focus on the city's cultural diversity and its "Olympic X", a cross-shaped pattern of commuter trains and ferries that organizers say will keep athletes from having to travel on the city's roadways.

Organizers also will show a video that includes a mock ticker-tape parade in Manhattan and fireworks being shot off over the Statue of Liberty.

Bid organizers in San Francisco have touted their bid as one that caters to athletes, with mild weather — an average heat index of 76 during the games — and 80 percent of its venues already in place. Bid organizers also have created a "Ring of Gold," four connected sites that contain 92 percent of the venues.

The natural beauty of the Bay Area, from towering redwoods to scenic vistas to its waterfront location, is another focal point.

"It should be a close vote because of the unique features of both cities," USOC president Marty Mankamyer said. "I think either one would be a good choice and would represent the United States very well."

New York's bid was sparked by a soccer game.

Dan Doctoroff, New York's deputy mayor and founder of the city's bid, came up with the idea while attending a World Cup game between Italy and Bulgaria at New Jersey's Meadowlands in 1994. Doctoroff said he had no interest in soccer before being invited to the match, but came

away stunned at the crowd's reaction to two foreign countries.

"It was the most incredible sporting event I had ever seen," Doctoroff said. "To me, it epitomized the thing that makes New York so unique. You take two teams from anywhere in the world to play that game, and only in New York would both teams feel like they're playing at home."

Failure spawned San Francisco's bid.

The Bay Area Sports Organizing Committee was cre-

ated in the 1980s to bring events to the area and was later used to bid on the 1996 Summer Olympics. That bid was awarded to Atlanta, but BASOC officials worked over the next few years to bring the World Figure Skating Championships and the

World Cup to the Bay Area.

The current bid was originally designed for the 2008 Games, which later went to Beijing, but USOC officials decided 2012 would give the United States its best chance to host its third games in 16 years.

David Bell would like to return to Giants for more than one year

BY JANIE MCCAULEY

AP Sports Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — David Bell would like to return to the San Francisco Giants as long as it's for more than one year.

The 30-year-old third baseman declined his \$3.5 million option with the team Thursday and filed for free agency.

"I had to make a decision this week," Bell said Friday. "To be honest, it was an easy decision. Not because I didn't want to play with the Giants, but because I want to play for more than one year. It should be to no one's surprise."

Bell played an integral part in helping the Giants reach the World Series for the first time since 1989. They lost to the Anaheim Angels in seven games.

Acquired from Seattle in January, Bell hit .261 with 20 home runs and 73 RBIs in the regular season and helped solidify the team's infield defense. He also was a positive presence in the clubhouse, being selected for the 2002 "Willie Mac" award,

which is voted on by the team for the most inspirational player. It was established in 1980 in honor of Hall of Famer Willie McCovey.

The Giants hope to have him back, but they have many offseason personnel issues to resolve, including whether to re-sign 2000 National League MVP Jeff Kent.

"He knew we had a desire to have him," assistant general manager Ned Colletti said of Bell. "He's looking for something more than one year. There are quite a few players right now that we're juggling, where they fit and if they fit."

Bell said he had already been contacted from a couple of teams, but would not say who. The Giants have exclusive negotiating rights with Bell until Nov. 11. After that, he is free to sign with any team.

"I want a longterm contract," Bell said. "I enjoyed it. It couldn't have gotten much better until the very end."

Bell, who has played eight years in the majors, is the son of former Colorado manager Buddy Bell and grandson of former major leaguer Gus Bell — both All-Stars.

COMICS



The Dinette Set by Julie Larson

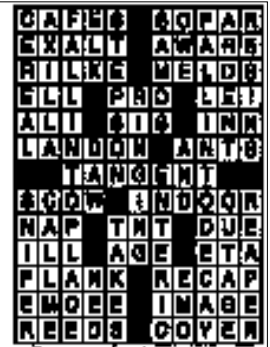


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- ACROSS**
- 1 Take greedily
 - 7 Opposite of "avid"
 - 11 Nabokov book
 - 12 Heaps
 - 13 Let up
 - 14 Parting word
 - 15 Words of action
 - 16 Custom
 - 17 Sailor's saint
 - 18 Threat
 - 19 Con
 - 21 Stag party guests
 - 22 Trendy wrap
 - 23 Brewery sight
 - 25 Nevada city
 - 27 Moon
 - 29 Point
 - 33 Company division
 - 34 Graze
 - 36 Computer symbol
 - 38 Over there
 - 39 Try out
 - 40 Baked base
 - 41 Part talk
 - 42 Covered with trees
- DOWN**
- 2 Dynamic inventor
 - 3 Break-in indicator
 - 4 Casino employee
 - 5 Western tribe
 - 6 Knee protector
 - 7 The Evil One
 - 8 Popular country band
 - 9 Ads
 - 10 New York's — Island
 - 16 Corinne
 - 18 "State and Main" director
 - 20 Flock of comedy
 - 22 Cure-all
 - 23 Confused
 - 24 I'm unable to comply
 - 26 Drops in on
 - 28 Natural gift
 - 29 Ruined
 - 31 Colander's tin
 - 32 Trimmed
 - 34 Stereo tuner
 - 36 Bow material



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edge city

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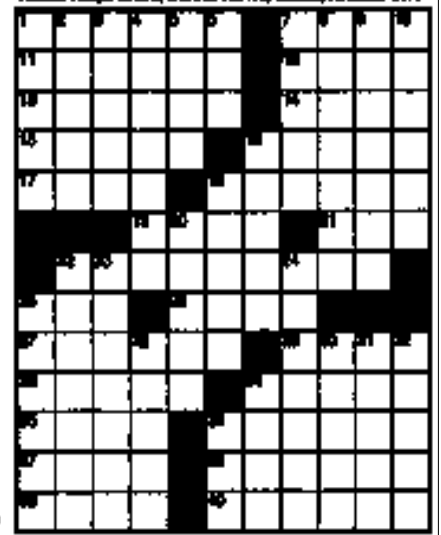


Speed Bump® By Dave Coverly



DOWN

- 1 Spartan, for one



11-E

STUMPED?

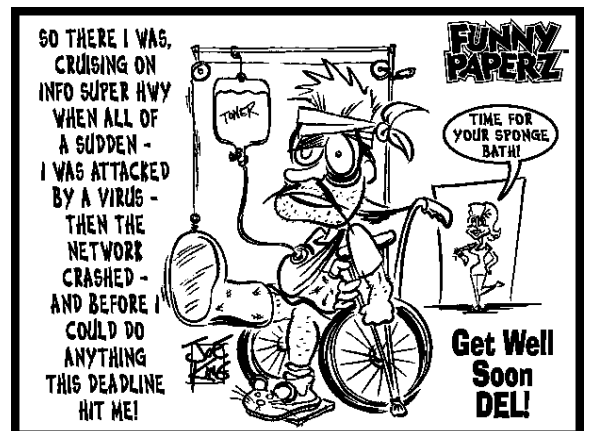
For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-498-8181 \$49 per minute, touch-tone only. (15+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Skull injuries with a happy ending

• In August, in Goshen, Ind., Chad Hershberger, 45, survived having his skull split wide open by an exploding piece of metal in a septic-tank accident. (He initially remained conscious while being treated for the 2-inch, ear-to-ear gash but later underwent major surgery and lost his left eye.)

• In June, a 20-year-old man accidentally fired his spear gun, hitting himself in the head, while fishing near Chania, Crete, but survived despite being in the water for six hours before being discovered and enduring three hours' surgery just to remove the spear (which had entered his jaw and broken through the top of his skull); because the spear passed through a nonactive part of the brain, the man was soon back on his feet with no serious problems.



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Calendar

Friday, November 1, 2002

movies

Loews Broadway Cinema
1441 Third St. at Broadway
Comedian (R) 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15, Jackass (R) 11:45, 12:45, 2:00, 3:15, 4:30, 5:45, 7:00, 8:15, 9:30, 10:45. The Truth About Charlie (PG-13) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00.

Mann Criterion
1313 Third St.
The Ring (PG-13) 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00, 12:40. Sweet Home Alabama (PG-13) 11:30, 2:10, 5:05, 7:55, 10:35, My Big Fat Greek Wedding (PG) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:05. Punch-Drunk Love (R) 11:15, 1:45, 4:20, 7:10, 9:45, 12:15. The Transporter (PG-13) 11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:40, 10:15.

AMC Theatre SM 7
1310 3rd Street
Red Dragon (R) 12:45, 4:00, 7:20, 10:15. Santa Clause 2 (G) 11:00, 11:50, 1:40, 2:30, 4:20, 5:10, 7:00, 7:50, 9:40, 10:25. White Oleander (PG-13) 1:00, 4:10, 7:30, 10:00. I Spy (PG-13) 11:35, 12:30, 2:10, 3:00, 4:40, 5:30, 7:15, 8:05, 9:50, 10:35.

Landmark Nu-Wilshire
1314 Wilshire Blvd.
Bowling for Columbine (R) 1:30, 2:30, 4:15, 5:15, 7:00, 8:00, 9:45, 10:30.

Laemmle Monica
1332 2nd St.
Auto Focus (R) 12:00, 2:30, 5:05, 7:45, 10:20. Real Women Have Curves (PG-13) 12:15, 2:30, 4:50, 7:25, 9:45. Secretary (R) 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 9:50. Spirited Away (PG) 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00.

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
It's A Wonderful Life 11:00am

The Weight of Water (R) 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Today Community

The Santa Monica Church of the Nazarene invites you to celebrate their 75th Anniversary in this community. It will feature a gospel music concert with the Revised Standard Version Quartet on Saturday, Nov. 2, 7:00p.m. Santa Monica Church of the Nazarene, 1001 18th Street, Santa Monica. (2 blocks north of Wilshire Blvd.) Ph. (310)453-4445. Public is welcome.

Psychic Faire & Spiritual Healing Festival - 1pm to 4pm, 1721 21st Street, between Michigan and Olympic. Readings \$8.00 contribution or 3 for \$20.00. Admission and healing are FREE. For information or directions call (310)587-3536.

Rescue Me Pet Foundation invites you to adopt a beautiful healthy cat or kitten. Visit our show 11/2-3, Sat & Sun 12-4pm, at Centinella Feed, 1448 Lincoln Blvd, Santa Monica. Adoption donation covers shots, spay/neuter,

worm & flea treatment. 310 452-9568. Readings

Weekly Storytime 11:00 a.m. Come to Barnes & Noble for Saturday readings with the kids! Call 310-260-9110 for more information.

Theatre/ Arts

Puppetolio! presented by the Santa Monica Puppet & Magic Center. All ages, 3 and up. This musical revue features marionettes, ventriloquism, magic and more. Shows are always followed by a demonstration, Q & A, and a tour of the Puppet workshop and Museum. Saturdays and Sundays at 1pm and 3pm. Wednesdays and Holidays at 1pm. Seats are \$6.50. 1255 2nd Street in Santa Monica. Reservations/Information (310)656-0483. www.puppetmagic.com

The Empty State Theater at 2372 Veteran Ave. in W. Los Angeles proudly presents: "The Fortune Room Lounge Show" A musical improv show featuring the "Stella Ray Trio" and "The Lucky Players". Every

Saturday night at 10:00 p.m. Admission is \$10.00, drinks included w/admission. Lots of parking! For information or reservations please call (310)470-3560.

MAGICOPOLIS presents HOCUS POCUS! (Fish Bones Choke Us). The stage explodes with a colorful mix of Magic, Special Effects, Sleight of Hand, Comedy and Music that's sure to delight audiences of all ages. At MAGICOPOLIS, 1418 Fourth Street, Santa Monica. Fridays & Saturdays at 8pm, \$20. Saturday & Sundays at 2pm, \$15. For tickets call 310-451-2241.

Sunday

Community

Puppetolio! presented by the Santa Monica Puppet & Magic Center. All ages, 3 and up. This musical revue features marionettes, ventriloquism, magic and more. Shows are always followed by a demonstration, Q & A, and a tour of the Puppet workshop and Museum. Saturdays and

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Almost Vaudeville. 2 pm and 5 pm. UnUrban Coffeehouse. 3301 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, (310)315-0056.

KEEP YOUR DATE STRAIGHT

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



BACK PAGE

Glitch dropped decimal from thousands of hotel bills

BY RUSS BYNUM
Associated Press Writer

Thousands of guests at Holiday Inns and their sister hotels were billed amounts that even room service, pay-per-view movies and a few stolen towels couldn't explain: \$6,500 to \$21,000 per night.

A credit processing error dropped the decimal point in bills for about 26,000 people staying at Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express and Crowne Plaza hotels last week. The guests were charged 100 times what they owed.

A charge of \$100, for example, ballooned to \$10,000, busting the credit limits of many cardholders and temporarily overdrawing the bank accounts of customers who paid with debit cards.

Atlanta-based Six Continents Hotels, which owns the three chains, said the glitch showed up on bills from Oct. 24 through Sunday. It affected less than half the chains' U.S. customers, said spokeswoman Carolyn Hergert.

Room rates at the three chains range from \$65 to \$210 per night.

The hotels' credit processor, First Horizon Merchant Services of Englewood, Colo., said most banks had reversed the bad charges by Friday.

"This was no fault of Six Continents in any way, shape or form. Basically it was a programming error."

— VICKY NATION
Operations for First Horizon, vice president

"This was no fault of Six Continents in any way, shape or form," said Vicky Nation, executive vice president of

operations for First Horizon. "Basically it was a programming error."

Betty Williams of Columbus, Ind., paid for two rooms Saturday at a local Holiday Inn, where her granddaughter held her wedding reception. She said her receipt showed \$176, but her credit card was billed \$17,600.

She found out Wednesday while grocery shopping at a Wal-Mart, which rejected her card.

"I called my credit card company and they said I had an \$18,000 balance," said Williams, 74. "They said there's a \$17,600 charge from the Holiday Inn, and I said, 'Wow, we only stayed one night!'"

Cardholders should not worry about the bad charges blemishing their credit, said Visa spokeswoman Janet Yang. "It wasn't the fault of the cardholder," Yang said.

Six Continents set up a hot line for customers with billing questions: (800) 621-0555. Callers should ask for Operator 28.

Overcharged guests will get two free nights at any hotel operated by the three chains, Hergert said.

Research finds way for beer to taste as good in winter

BY KARREN MILLS
AP Business Writer

MINNEAPOLIS — Researchers hope a new study will help develop a way for brewers to manufacture a beer that tastes as good in the dead of winter as it does on a hot summer day.

The study will investigate how growing conditions and locations can affect

hops, barley and other ingredients and change the flavor and aroma of a brand of beer from batch to batch.

The Department of Agriculture has awarded a \$300,000 grant to a subsidiary of Brooklyn Center, Minn.-based Mocon Inc. to study how variables affect beer ingredients, and to develop a high-tech instrument that will adjust the beverage to a brewer's standard.

"That's the ultimate goal of the brewer. They know what their gold standard is. Their sensory people can define what is the gold standard," said Don Wright, Microanalytics' technical director. "This is what we want to be able to produce (in) every batch."

Mocon's Microanalytics subsidiary in Round Rock, Texas, is working with Sierra Nevada Brewing, a prominent

microbrewery in Chico, Calif., and a taste panel at Texas A&M University on the two-year study, which was announced Wednesday.

The aim of the beer study, once the aroma and flavor components have been identified, is to create a quality control detector that can adjust the components to a standard level and is easy to use on the production floor.

DID YOU KNOW?: A study conducted in Germany appears to show listening to loud rock music causes homosexuality in rats.

3 NEW WAYS To Live, Love, Eat!



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\$2.95 + tax.



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Enjoy a drink and appetizer
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