

FREE

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Police in Sandown, N.H., charged Suzanne Viviani, 47, with threatening her daughter (age 22) with a knife held to her head because the daughter had snatched cocaine out of Suzanne's bra during a confrontation in August. (The two women reconciled and were booked into the same jail cell.) And in October, 40 miles away in Belmont, N.H., police charged Jacqueline Weiner, 36, with assault after her husband, Steven, held Jacqueline's 10-year-old son down while she stabbed him repeatedly in the arm with a kitchen knife because the boy and his brother had destroyed Jacqueline's favorite toy animal.

■ People Who Shouldn't Have Access to Matches: David Mason, on a Braathens airline flight home to England from Norway in February, set fire to some pornographic magazines he had brought aboard, saying he had been offended by the pictures; he was convicted in August of endangering a flight (although cabin attendants had quickly extinguished the fire). And in Pine Bluff, Ark., in September, Leroy Brown, 19, set fire to a pair of his wife's pants (because those were what she was wearing when she had a tryst with another man), but was not able to put the fire out before it destroyed the couple's home.

TODAY IN HISTORY

IN 1984, the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr. — father of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. — died in Atlanta at age 84.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"If you hate a person, you hate something in him that is part of yourself. What isn't part of ourselves doesn't disturb us."

HERMAN HESSE
GERMAN NOVELIST (1877-1962)

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Residents, merchants to share parking

Experimental plan to put business traffic in neighborhoods during day

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

City Hall giveth, and City Hall taketh away.

Just as Santa Monica residents started getting used to their exclusive access to curbside neighborhood parking, elected leaders Tuesday night unanimously agreed to start letting local merchants back on the block.

At stake are what's known as preferential parking areas, nearly 100 specially zoned sections of Santa Monica where it's illegal to park without a special permit from City Hall. Those permits histori-

cally have been given only to neighborhood residents.

"I don't think it's a perfect solution, but I think it's the best one we can come up with," City Councilman Ken Genser said. "We have to try and somehow find solutions for businesses, particularly smaller businesses that are directly affected by preferential parking zones."

The debate over parking pits residents, who have fought hard for their special parking areas, against local merchants.

Business owners complain the city's major roadways are clogged with cars, turning off potential customers and leaving their employees with no place to park. Residents say they're forced to spend hours circling their own neighborhoods because outsiders use their streets as parking lots.

Officials hope there's room for compromise. By limiting the number of permits given to businesses and restricting the hours they can be used, officials hope to maximize use of the spaces with minimal conflict.

Resident Chuck Allord, an outspoken critic of City Hall, said the plan was sure to meet resistance in the community.

"If you approve this, commercial parking in residential neighborhoods ... you're going to have a huge backlash," said Allord, one of just two people to speak to the council on the matter. Allord added the proposal may lead to a loss of handicapped spaces and increased parking in alleys.

Though it agreed unanimously to try giving merchants preferential passes, the City Council made

See PARKING, page 5



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press
Residential preferential parking zones like this one on 11th Street near Wilshire Boulevard will be shared with merchants, so they can provide parking for their employees.

Kids get a dose of freshness in Santa Monica



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press
Santa Monica Farmers' Market coordinator Stephen Vodantis explains organic vegetables to fifth graders on Wednesday.

BY KATHLEEN BISHOP

Special to the Daily Press

DOWNTOWN — When you're 10 years old, chances are you aren't too concerned with how fresh your food is, or even where it came from.

But about 100 kids from the inner city now may think more critically when food is served in front of them. Fifth graders from Los Angeles' Vermont Elementary School visited Santa Monica's bustling farmers' market Wednesday as part of a program aimed at teaching them about fresh food and smart cooking.

Ivon liked the different sizes and flavors of potatoes. David learned about honey. Luis didn't know there were so many kinds of fruits and vegetables.

Every year the American

Institute of Wine and Food, a national non-profit organization made up of food professionals as well as amateur food lovers, sponsors Days of Taste, which consists of three days of field trips and good eating for students. In addition to the market visit, students cook and eat lunch at a local restaurant and help prepare a meal when a chef visits their classroom.

Cindy Baker's fifth grade class was one of three that participated in the program this year. They toured the market, learned about different kinds of food and bought their favorite items with the \$3 coupon each student received.

Laura Avery, who manages Santa Monica's Farmers' Market, said they host the students to teach them about freshness and seasonality of a wide array of foods.

See DAYS OF TASTE, page 5

East Coast retailers feel heat over West Coast port gridlock

BY ANNE D'INNOCENZIO

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — With the start of holiday shopping just weeks away, toy companies and other purveyors of seasonal merchandise are living through a nightmare — merchandise that's stranded aboard cargo ships amid

the gridlock at two West Coast ports.

"This is terrible. There are a lot of order cancellations" from retailers tired of waiting for their deliveries, said Isaac Larian, president and chief executive officer of MGA Entertainment Inc., maker of the popular Bratz dolls.

The backlog — the result of an

ever-growing flood of cargo from Asia into the twin ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach — means some toys and other merchandise will be in short supply this season, even as manufacturers and retailers take steps to ease the problem.

Larian said some retailers have canceled orders with MGA

Entertainment over the past month because his company missed delivery deadlines, and he predicted MGA Entertainment's fourth-quarter results will suffer.

MGA Entertainment and other companies including Spin Master Ltd. are resorting to such strategies as flying in hot products from

See RETAILERS, page 7

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Willingly work hard, Aquarius

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))**
★★★★ Opulent thoughts mixed with work-able ideas come from a partner or associate. You gain clarity in a personal matter involving a friend or a long-term goal. Confusion surrounds a group. Let it be. Tonight: Go along with another's plans.

 **TAURUS (April 20-May 20))**
★★★★ Your work comes together, surprising you as well as others. You could find associates more fiery than usual, but a boss finally opts for more clarity. You might find that many don't understand a sudden switch. Relax — there is time to explain. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

 **GEMINI (May 21-June 20))**
★★★★★ You see a situation from a completely different perspective than many. Work hard to demonstrate your ideas and creativity. Finally, you clear the air with a boss or authority figure. Don't listen to gossip. Tonight: Work as late as you need to.

 **CANCER (June 21-July 22))**
★★★★ Your creativity soars because of news that heads your way. You might be surprised by a family member and what he or she is willing to do. Take action, and allow your creativity go with the flow. Take up a new hobby. Tonight: Do what you enjoy. Let your hair down.

 **LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**
★★★★ Feistiness emerges on the home front, be it from you or from someone else. Expend your energy by moving furniture, raking the lawn or doing some other physical activity. You say the right words at the right time. Others seem full of surprises. Tonight: Lie low.

 **VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**
★★★★★ Be careful how you express your feelings. Your words come off a lot stronger than you realize. You find that partners and others in general seem not to hear you. Accept a work change or adjustment. Tonight: Out and about.

 **LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**
★★★★ How you present yourself can make a significant difference in the end results. You might sense confusion or idealism around your workplace or regarding a health issue. You can be sure you won't be bored, as a child or new friend does the unexpected. Tonight: Playing and having fun doesn't need to cost.

 **SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**
★★★★ You might get a jolt or two, but you will handle it. Be careful about taking a strong stand. You come off much stronger than you intended to. Don't try to settle a domestic or personal issue today. Tonight: Relax with munchies and a drink.

 **SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**
★★★★ You might find yourself suddenly angry, though you might not be sure why. Let others express themselves and reveal what they are thinking. You'll get key information only if you are mum. Tonight: Vanish and do your thing.

 **CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**
★★★★★ Aim for more of what you want. Your strong drive comes through in whatever you take on. Just be careful how much you commit to. You find out some news or gossip that tosses new insights and information into your lap. Tonight: Mull over news.

 **AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**
★★★★ You still might confuse people more than you want to. You have an inspired idea, but others have a hard time getting it. Financial news could be surprising. Expect a change at work. You might be put off or angry. Tonight: Willingly work hard.

 **PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**
★★★★ Something you might not have wanted to face suddenly occurs. You might be confused and need to gather new information. Demonstrate your ability to research and get the facts. Detach rather than react. Tonight: Off to the movies or get tickets to a concert.

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LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Play it again, Samohi

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica High School Theatre Arts Program and The Santa Monica Civic Light Opera will open the first show of the 2004-05 season this Friday with the Woody Allen romantic comedy, "Play It Again, Sam."

The show is at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, Nov. 12 through Dec. 18 in the Humanities Center Theatre on campus at 601 Pico Blvd. There is a special 7 p.m. preview on Thursday, Nov. 11. Tickets are \$15. Flex-passes and discounted season subscriptions are available for \$40 and \$50, respectively. Both offer premiere seating and a \$5 discount on each ticket. Discounts are available for students under 18 and groups.

Tickets for all '04-'05 productions are available at the SMCLO box office in the Humanities Center Theater, by calling (310) 458-5939, or at www.smclo.org.

The mainstage season includes "The Music Man," bonus productions of "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf," David Ives' One-Acts, and the SMCLO's professional-alumni-student production of "My Fair Lady."

The SMCLO serves as the educational partner to the school's Theatre Arts Program, enhancing the student experience through mentoring by alumni and theatre professionals, and developing productions for the Humanities Center and Barnum Hall stages.

For more information, contact Brett Fisher, producer and managing director at (310) 458-5939.

Strike up the band at SMC

By Daily Press staff

In continuing celebration of Santa Monica College's 75th anniversary, the SMC Symphony Orchestra will perform on campus Sunday, Nov. 14 at 4 p.m., showcasing alumnus Yohei Nakamiya, a violinist studying at California State University at Northridge.

Nakamiya was born in Sapporo, Japan in 1981 and began playing piano at 3 years old. Soon after, he took up the violin. He is a senior at Cal State Northridge and hopes to do his graduate studies at the University of Southern California. He has played in various opera productions, has been a part of the Northridge String Quartet and Piano Trio, and is a member of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra.

The program also will feature "Two Slavonic Dances" by Antonin Dvorák, with guest conductor Kirill Gliadkovsky, an adjunct music professor at SMC; Ernest Chausson's "Poème for Violin and Orchestra;" and Benjamin Britten's "The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra," which will be narrated by adjunct voice professor Dennis Parnell. The orchestra is under the direction of SMC music professor James Smith.

The concert will take place in the SMC Concert Hall at 1900 Pico Blvd. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased by calling (310) 434-3000 or (310) 434-4323.

Vanessa Carlton pretty in PINK

By Daily Press staff

Pop singer and pianist Vanessa Carlton will be promoting Victoria's Secret PINK line on Third Street Promenade Sunday, Nov. 14 with a free concert for students.

Carlton will begin at 6 p.m. and perform for an hour. Early arriving students will be able to enter the exclusive stage area and see Carlton perform songs from her new album, "Harmonium." Following the concert, a select number of students are invited to attend a private shopping event that will include a meet and greet with Carlton, door prizes and other giveaways.

"Harmonium" is the follow-up to Carlton's 2001 multi-platinum debut, "Be Not Nobody."

Victoria's Secret PINK line of lingerie and sleepwear targets a younger crowd by combining the sexiness of Victoria's Secret with spirit and youthful energy.



SURF REPORT

Thursday will see a modest mix of new WNW ground swell and steady SW Southern Hemi. Good NW and combo exposures in Northern LA through the north half of the South Bay are in the knee-waist-chest high zone. Standout combo breaks see a few bigger sets. The Southern South Bay is mainly knee-waist high. Surf drops Friday along with the fading swells. Winds are variable Thursday morning, building W 6-10 knots for the afternoon.

Today the water is:

65°

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	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	11:19	2.8	11:20	0.7	5:55	4.3	4:31	4.2
SUNDAY	11:57	2.1	11:51	0.7	6:08	4.7	5:29	4.4
MONDAY	N/A	N/A	12:33	1.4	6:25	5.1	6:18	4.5
TUESDAY	12:20	0.8	1:08	0.7	6:44	5.5	7:05	4.5
WEDNESDAY	12:49	1.0	1:45	0.0	7:08	6.0	7:51	4.5
THURSDAY	1:18	1.2	2:25	-0.6	7:35	6.4	8:39	4.4
FRIDAY	1:50	1.5	3:08	-0.9	8:06	6.7	7:51	4.5

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The QLine

Even though the votes are in for the City Council race, there's still much debate as to what the election results really mean for Santa Monica. Voters on Nov. 2, in addition to re-electing three incumbents, overwhelmingly supported newcomer Bobby Shriver, who received votes from more than half of the Santa Monicans who turned out at the polls.

So this week Q-Line wants to know, **"What do you think these results mean?"**

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



Back to Basics: Back to Balance

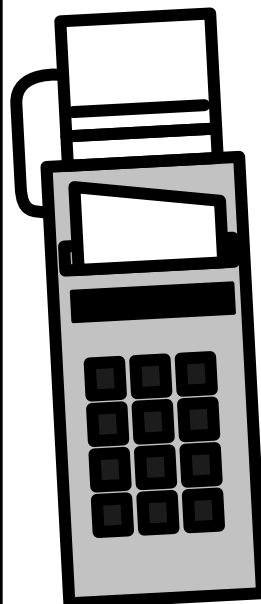
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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An ode to hedges

Editor:

I think that I shall never see
Codes as lovely as trees.

Trees that when planted in a row,
Make a hedge around the lawn you mow.

A hedge that when finally tall in our town,
Building and Safety will order you to chop it down.

And will they serve you in a friendly way?
Oh no, they'll fine you big, and give you only a day.

Hedge height codes are made by fools on the Planning Commission,
But now Bobby Shriver has given us a new tradition.

Lorraine Shamey
Santa Monica

It's time to live with the voters' choices

Editor:

(In response to Suzanne Brand's letter, SMDP, Nov. 3, page 4).

If you are tired of Bush bashing, fasten your safety belt. It's going to be a bumpy four years — unless he really crashes and burns before the four years are up (which is unlikely, since any other president who so horribly mismanaged the country would have been impeached a long time ago). So even if he does crash and burn, I'm sure they'll applaud and try to amend the two term law and elect the fool for yet another four years.

Another far, far, far more intelligent Republican president, Theodore Roosevelt, once stated that it was the patriotic duty of every American to speak out and be vocal and critical of the government. But the present day brand of Republicans tell us that it is unpatriotic to dare breathe a word of criticism leveled at Bush or his toadies.

Implying that Ed Silverstein may not have read the Bible cover to cover is meaningless. If he has, he is no doubt aware that the Bible has enough inconsistencies to suit the narrowest of minds that presume to think that their views are the only views. And Suzanne, it is not people like Ed Silverstein who forget this is America, it is the suppressive people who forget we are in America, where we still (hopefully) have the

right to disagree and form our own opinions on God, the Bible and the government.

On another note, with the great exception of electing Bobby Shriver and dumping Mike Feinstein, no one in Santa Monica has retained the right to criticize the City Council's decisions since we re-elected three incumbents. Everyone was so verbal in their criticism of the council, and the way to show your displeasure was to vote the incumbents out. However, we as voters have just patted them on the back and sent the message they are doing a great job. So live with it.

Marilyn Brennan
Santa Monica

Prop. 63 just what the doctor ordered

Editor:

Proposition 63 victory — mental health expansion — is good news for the city of Santa Monica. Ballot returns indicate 53 percent support stateside. In Santa Monica, city funding levels for social service programs are not guaranteed. Prop. 63 provides a steady source of state funding. The Disabilities Commission and the City Council went on record by supporting the initiative.

Mental illness is the nation's most prevalent disability. In Santa Monica, 53 percent of disabled youth ages 5 to 15 on the 2000 census reported having a mental disorder. At OPCC's Daybreak Shelter for women who are homeless and mentally ill, there was a 21 percent increase in clients seen from the previous year. As a social service provider, I agree that the food giveaways for the homeless should be tied to the use of shelter beds or shelter services.

Santa Monica residents will benefit immeasurably, especially in the successive years, by the funding provided by Prop. 63. Santa Monicans, the mentally disabled and the agencies which serve this community, should be and are very grateful of the ballot outcome.

Richard Hilton
*Member, Santa Monica Disabilities Commission
Executive Director, West Los Angeles Council for the Disabled*

Veteran's Day means something different these days

Editor:

I display my American flag on Veterans Day. I have a lot of sympathy for our soldiers who have fought and died for what they thought was right. No thanks to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and his neoconservative pals in the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans. Their lack of planning and poor decisions from the beginning of the

See **LETTERS**, page 5

Nine days out: A long night's journey into rapture

NEWS ON THE EDGE

BY RON SCOTT SMITH



This one is difficult.

I've got the chills, and the fingers are jumping around all out of control, so forgive the misspellings, the commas, the content. I called in sick but my dear editor would have none of it, and baited me on, filling my head with visions of green bottles of beer, football and fried chicken tenders. But, editor, I said, I've been sleeping in night sweats, and awakening in nausea for nine straight days now. My doctor was heartless, and prescribed no painkillers. He forbade me to watch any news broadcasts whatsoever, except for Channel 13, weeknights at 11. He warned me that listening to talk radio on the AM band would result in a catastrophic turn for the worse, that it could thrust me into an advanced state of dementia.

I've been sure, since that early January morning in 1994, that's what the end of the world sounds like — that ungodly cacophony created when every car alarm within earshot was jolted on by the Northridge earthquake. If there's an audio track in hell, that sound would be playing in a non-stop loop.

But a new sound emerged last Tuesday night to compete with the chorus of car alarms for what the end of the world might sound like. It was the ghoulishly fair and balanced sound of Brit Hume's

voice on Fox News Channel, as he proudly declared, "We are now able to call the state of Ohio, with its 20 electoral votes, for President Bush ..." He kept talking in that deathly monotone that got him to where he is, but his words trailed off now as I descended into a state of panic.

I tripped over the exercise ball as I ran to get the pants, the flashlight and the transistor radio, a few extra batteries and the couple gallons of water I kept hidden behind the couch for just such emergencies. I knew the lights and the TV would be going out soon, and that marauding bands of looters, rapists, robbers and thugs would soon be marching up and down Broadway. Damn that postal service, the AK-47 I ordered when Bush okayed their return into decent society had not yet arrived in the mail, so I ran outside to find my neighbor who wore the six-shooters in the holsters on both hips during the 94 quake aftermath, figuring he's got this end-of-the-world thing down to a science, and that I'm hanging with him.

There he was, I recognized the swagger from behind, but noticed he wasn't wearing the guns. I ran up to him and said twice, "Bob, have you heard the news, Bob, have you heard the news?" He turned around with the most serene smile I have ever seen, and replied, "Ron Scott, relax, don't worry, be happy, we are saved. God has spoken, feel the rapture my friend, surrender." I said, "Thanks Bob, yes, feeling it, got to go, see ya, wouldn't want to be ya." Not that being him was a bad thing — that's just how I always said goodbye to him.

Geez, man, there's a bunch of zombie-like fellow citizens out here walking around in a daze, certain they're about to be lifted upwards into heaven, and this is southern California. Imagine what's going on in Nebraska. Looks like you're off to see the wizard again, Toto.

I walk over to the church on Lincoln to see if there are any clues as to what the hell is going on around here, or at the very least, to get a list of "what to bring, what not to bring" to the rapture. When I went in, there were two female figures knelt down near the altar. As I got closer, looking for any helpful rapture brochures or printed material, I noticed it was Mary Cheney and her life-partner, and I overheard them asking forgiveness for allowing her daddy to use sexual orientation like theirs as the wedge issue that split the electorate wide open and laid it out to bleed, bright red. I couldn't help but notice the light glancing off their identical wedding bands as they held their hands to their lips.

"I will hunt them down and I will kill them, I will hunt them down and I will kill them," started going through my head over and over as I left that church and it wouldn't stop. It was as if I had been programmed, brainwashed — that Manchurian Candidate thing — where I knew I had to hunt them down and kill them, but I didn't know who they were. I concluded I was just playing follow the leader. Bush said early on, beginning way back on Sept. 12, 2001, and repeated it so often it became a sort of religious mantra of his, that "I will hunt them down and I will kill them." Of course he added some more colorful things like, "I'll

smoke 'em out of their caves" and "wanted dead or alive," and cool stuff like that. So poor John Kerry knew he'd have to jump in there somewhere to make it clear he would be no slouch when it came to "hunting them down and killing them" because he must have said it about ten thousand times during his campaign, until it started sounding ridiculous in the broken-record kind of way that Bush sounded ridiculous.

So there I was, mumbling about hunting guys down and killing them, clutching my rapture "things-to-do" list, while treading down dark streets where all manner of angelic derelicts laid on panels of cardboard trying to get a decent night's sleep, and every one of them just happened to open their eyes at exactly the moment I passed by to stare daggers right through me. I tried to lift the spirits of one frail, seventyish-looking woman by mentioning the impending rapture but she gave me the finger. Out in front of the Boys and Girls Club I think it was, I stumbled over a handsome young man with a great haircut that looked so familiar as he sat up on his cardboard and told me in a recognizable Carolinian accent, "There are two Americas, you know?"

I know that guy, I thought, who is that? But it wouldn't come to me. He shouted one last thing out to me as I walked on into the darkness, "We will hunt them down and we will kill them."

(Ron Scott Smith can be reached at edgeofthewest@aol.com. To read past columns go to [archives, at www.smdp.com](http://archives.atwww.smdp.com).)

LOCAL



City hopes underground parking will ease burden

PARKING, from page 1

no long-term commitment to it. The issue is expected to resurface later this winter, when council members also will address how many permits should be handed out and in which areas.

When discussing the matter in June, members of the Planning Commission indicated the passes for merchants should be restricted, according to a city report.

"Several commissioners generally did not support this concept," a city staff report reads. "It was recommended that if the city agrees to a demonstration program, the provision for employee permits should not exceed 20 percent of the spaces ... Further, it was suggested that conditions should be attached to the employee preferential parking permit such as not being allowed to sit in parked vehicles during lunch/breaks and not being allowed to play car audio equipment or dump trash."

The controversial idea to share resident-only parking zones with neighboring merchants was floated Tuesday during the City Council's review of parking issues along the city's major east-west roadways, including Montana Avenue, and Wilshire, Santa Monica, Pico and Ocean Park boulevards.

Also agreed upon were proposals to minimize the impact of valet parking stands;

shorten time limits at public lots on Wilshire Boulevard; allow businesses to build underground parking lots on Pico, Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards without a long approval process; allow one-story, enclosed lots in residential areas behind businesses on Wilshire Boulevard; study long-term plans for pedestrian and bicycle flow; and get rid of excessive red curbs.

Genser and City Councilman Herb Katz both expressed frustration at inconsistencies in the size of parking spaces and red curbs throughout Santa Monica. By way of example, Genser said five new parking spaces could be created on his office block, mostly by making the size of the spots uniform. Genser suggested each area be reviewed before city workers repaint a curb or parking space.

City Hall staffers countered that the current, complaint-driven process for re-evaluating parking spaces seemed to be working well, adding there were budget and workload limitations hindering the city from re-evaluating red curbs and parking spaces citywide.

"It would be good to remember a couple things," City Manager Susan McCarthy said. "When you consider the kinds of comments that we get about service levels from our departments ... truly, this is not something that they can do systematically, without another increment of resource and a special project."

Farmers' Market hosts local school kids each week

DAYS OF TASTE, from page 1

"We tell them about how it's grown by a farmer, how it's fresh, how they drove it here at two in the morning," she said. "We try to show them that food doesn't just appear on the table."

The students gathered under a tent at Arizona Avenue and the Third Street Promenade, listening to market coordinator Stephen Vodantis talk to them about gourds, guava and juicy raisins.

Persimmons were the biggest hit with the kids, who wore Days of Taste T-shirts and clutched their organic purchases.

"They're just very surprised with how good it tastes and the different colors and sizes of everything because at the super-

market everything is so uniform," Vodantis said.

Darien Morea, a catering manager and cookbook author, is volunteering for Days of Taste as a group leader for her second year. She said the institute sponsors the program in the spirit of enlightenment and education.

"We want to introduce them to something new, to the joy of cooking and to nature," she said. "There is just so much for them to learn."

The market also hosts one school group each Wednesday from the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District as a part of an educational food program that originated with the district's organic salad bar.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS, from page 4

occupation of Iraq should have gotten them fired long ago.

What are these guys still doing in power? Why hasn't President Bush held these guys accountable for their mistakes? They are responsible for many of our brave soldiers dying. Ms Exxon Mobil might know the answer. This administration doesn't want us to see the difference between terrorism and the Iraqis fighting for their country, the ones fighting for freedom — from the U.S. I hope there is a God so that these worshippers of the almighty dollar can suffer an eternity of seeing in graphic details the pain and deaths caused by their greed and fanatical ideology.

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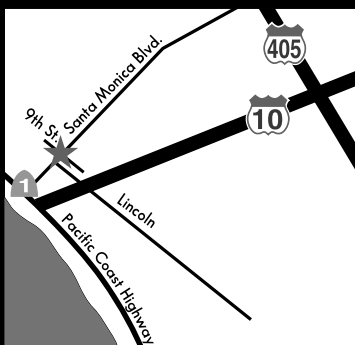
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STATE BRIEFS

Hostage taker shot

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — An armed man demanding media attention took a pregnant employee from the Mexican consulate hostage Tuesday and was shot on a sidewalk and critically wounded by police. The woman was rescued unharmed.

Officers responding to a report of a kidnapping in progress confronted a suspect about 8:30 a.m. outside the consulate and shots were fired, Sgt. Catherine Plows said.

The suspect, apparently shot in the head by police, was taken to a hospital where he was listed in critical condition, police Assistant Chief George Gascon said.

"Motive at this time we just do not know. We haven't been able to converse with the suspect," Police Chief William Bratton said during a press conference. "The information that we have is that his demands were to the effect 'Call 911. I want the media here.' Whatever his interests were in his having the media respond to the consulate, we just don't know at this time."

The suspect was identified by police, who did not immediately release his name, and authorities were seeking a search warrant for a San Fernando Valley home, Bratton said.

Officials warn Californians in flood plains

By The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — Millions of California residents and billions of dollars worth of homes and businesses are located in flood plains protected by century-old levees that are in danger of failing, the state's two top flood control officials warned Tuesday.

"Our current flood management system is broken," said Lester Snow, director of the California Department of Water Resources, as videotape of past floods and levee failures flashed on a giant screen. "If we don't fix it, we're going to have disaster after disaster after disaster."

The system is underfunded, has a potentially deadly backlog of repair problems, is encouraging entire subdivisions in flood-prone areas, and likely faces more pressure as climate conditions change, Snow and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Col. Ronald N. Light told several hundred water managers.

Moreover, recent court rulings on liability will cost taxpayers millions of dollars and could bankrupt some local reclamation districts, they said at a two-day conference sponsored by the nonprofit Water Education Foundation.

"Circumstances have changed dramatically since the system was conceived and constructed," said Light, who heads the corps' Sacramento district. "Today we have a system that is stressed, deteriorating, and in danger of failing."

Reagan stamps unveiled

By The Associated Press

SIMI VALLEY — Ronald Reagan is going onto the nation's postage stamps, in a picture that shows the 40th president with a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eyes.

Five months after Reagan died of Alzheimer's disease complications at 93, widowed Nancy Reagan unveiled a giant replica of the stamp during a brief ceremony Tuesday at the hilltop Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

"If he were here today I know that Ronnie would be very touched," Mrs. Reagan said. "He considered it an honor of a lifetime to be president. And I know he would say, 'Now don't make such a fuss.'"

Mrs. Reagan smiled widely, nodded and applauded as a curtain fell away from the giant portrait.

The stamp won't be available for sale until February but it was decided Nov. 9, the 15th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, would be a good day to unveil it. The ceremony on the library's replica of the White House South Lawn was steps away from a chunk of the Berlin Wall.

"The famous Reagan smile reflected in the stamp's image radiates confidence. It signaled that he believed in himself and in us, his fellow countrymen," said Postmaster General John E. Potter.

Cottrell defense delivers opening statements

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A graduate student was present during an arson spree of sport utility vehicles last year but did not personally carry out the attacks, defense lawyers told jurors Tuesday.

The defense said during its opening statements in federal court that William Jensen Cottrell, 24, had thought the stunt was to graffiti the vehicles and was "shocked" when two friends began hurling Molotov cocktails instead.

"This is not what he expected," attorney Michael Mayock argued.

Cottrell, a physics student at the California Institute of Technology, faces nine counts of arson, conspiracy to commit arson and using a destructive device stemming from the attacks at San Gabriel Valley dealerships and homes. He could receive 35 years to life in prison if convicted.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Beverly Reid-O'Connell said that Cottrell knew of plans to firebomb the vehicles. Prosecutors said jurors would hear testimony from a friend who claims Cottrell said he helped fill detergent bottles with gasoline.

The defense sought to explain Cottrell's involvement with claims that he suffered from a type of autism known as Asperger's syndrome. Lawyers said the condition made it difficult for him to understand the intentions of his alleged accomplices and an "easy dupe."

STATE



Toys from Asia: Congestion at customs

RETAILERS, from page 1

Asia, but that won't make up for all the merchandise still tied up at the docks. And so some retailers are just giving up.

"If stores can't get it in the right place and at the right time, they would rather do without," said John Taylor, toy analyst at Arcadia Investment Corp., based in Portland, Oregon.

The twin ports have become the nation's main entry point for cargo containers. About 43 percent of all 20-foot containers from the Far East arrives at these ports, according to Peter H. Powell, chairman of the National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America, which oversees activities at the nation's ports. He estimates that this season the cargo volume to the West Coast ports has increased 10 percent to 13 percent from a year ago — when congestion was already a problem.

It's not just imported goods that are causing the pileup. With U.S. exports increasing — they reached a record \$97.5 billion in September, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday — there's more out-bound cargo for the ports to handle.

More dock workers are being hired, allowing the ports to become 24-hour operations, but there's still a labor shortage, and some ships wait at least a week to be unloaded. Powell said the work force increase will help, but it's a temporary solution that doesn't take into account future growth in imports.

The congestion affects companies across the economy, but the toy business is taking a particular hard blow because 80 percent of its products sold in the United States are made in Asia. And holiday sales account for up to 60 percent of toy makers' annual sales.

Since the problem is unlikely to be resolved anytime soon, retailers might need to consider other long-term options besides the Los Angeles-area ports. Alternatives include ordering good earlier next year, or rerouting cargo to other U.S. ports.

They also have the option of flying merchandise in, but Larian noted that air-lifting the season's most popular toys from Hong Kong and China wipes away 10 percent to 20 percent of the products' profit margins.

Charlie Woo, CEO of Megatoys Inc. — a Los Angeles-based toy company that makes baby dolls, dollhouses and radio-controlled cars — is in a similar predicament, as the backup of his merchandise has worsened over the past few days.

About 20 percent of the company's holiday merchandise is either on the ships or sitting on the docks.

"I have been talking to (stores)," he said, hoping to forestall cancellations, but he fears a 5 percent to 10 percent drop in holiday sales this year.

Companies need to "be thinking now" about long-term solutions, according to Ken Walker, principal at Kurt Salmon Associates, a retail consulting company, who is working with various retail clients on ways to solve the problem.

But every alternative comes with risks. For example, ordering merchandise earlier adds to inventory costs.

And if companies decide to reroute their products to eastern ports like New Orleans, New York and Norfolk Va., they have to add another seven to 10 days to their timetable, Powell said. Furthermore, companies need to find ports that will be big enough for the larger fleet of vessels that now carry 8,000 twenty-foot containers, he said, much larger than the older ships that carry 2,500 to 4,500 twenty-foot containers, Powell said.

Another possibility is having toys manufactured in countries beyond Asia. But looking for new places to make products is complicated and time-consuming. Companies must develop new relationships with factories and make sure they produce high-quality products.

Some retailers such as Sears, Roebuck and Co. started rethinking other alternatives months ago, after realizing that the congestion wasn't improving. Chris Brathwaite, a spokesman at Sears, said a portion of this season's cargo is being diverted to other ports, and that Sears has expedited truck deliveries to ensure that advertised merchandise made it to stores on time.

Larian, of Van Nuys, Calif.-based MGA Entertainment, said his company is thinking about rerouting the cargo to different ports like Seattle and Vancouver next year. But that will mean downsizing three warehouses in the Los Angeles region and building others closer to the new ports, which will add costs that will have to be passed on to the consumers, he said.

Harold Chizick, a spokesman at Spin Master, said that looking for other alternatives will be a top priority after the New Year, but he declined to be specific.

The congestion is a "recurring problem that is happening every year that keeps getting worse," he said.

"Right now, we are in the same boat as everyone else, and we are just reacting to the situation by paying big premiums for quicker service," he added.

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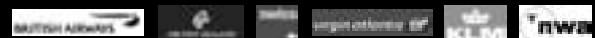
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STATE □ NATIONAL



Foreman dropped in Peterson murder trial

BY BRIAN SKOLOFF
Associated Press Writer

REDWOOD CITY — The judge in the Scott Peterson murder trial removed the foreman from the jury Wednesday, the second time in two days a juror has been sent home.

The judge did not disclose why he removed juror No. 5., a man in his mid-40s who has both medical and law degrees. The juror was replaced by an alternate whose son-in-law now owns a restaurant that Scott and Laci Peterson themselves once owned.

Judge Alfred A. Delucchi told the new panel to start all over with their deliberations — for the second day in a row.

“You must therefore set aside all past deliberations and begin deliberating anew,” he said Wednesday.

Jurors sat impassively, some grim-faced, as the judge announced the change. They have endured a five-month trial and have been sequestered since deliberations began Nov. 3.

The dismissal marks the third time a juror has been removed in the high-profile case.

On Tuesday, a juror was removed after reportedly doing her own research on the case — a violation of court rules. In June, a juror was dismissed after he was spotted talking to Laci Peterson’s brother.

The trial started with six alternates, and Wednesday’s move leaves the jury pool with just three remaining alternates.

The new juror has a distant connection to Scott and Laci Peterson.

His daughter is engaged to a man who owns a restaurant in the town where Scott and Laci Peterson graduated from college. The son-in-law had worked for the Petersons when they owned the cafe, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

Juror No. 6, a man who works as a firefighter and paramedic, was elected as the new foreman.

During the trial, he at times seemed uninterested in the proceedings. He was seen rolling his eyes on occasion, specifically during the playing of tape-recorded conversations between Peterson and his girlfriend, Amber Frey.

“He was one of the jurors who seemed most bored during Amber Frey’s testimony,” said Jim Hammer, a former prosecutor who has been observing the case. “He seems very mainstream, which is good for the prosecution.”

Hammer said it is too soon to say the jury is in disarray.

“I wouldn’t call it a runaway jury,” he said.

Jurors are deliberating whether Peterson, 32, killed his pregnant wife on or around Christmas Eve 2002 and dumped her weighted body in San Francisco Bay. The remains of Laci and the fetus were discovered a The former fertilizer salesman faces up to life in prison or the death penalty if convicted.

Mine manager said he was fired for speaking out on toxic waste

BY SCOTT SONNER
Associated Press Writer

RENO, Nev. — The Bureau of Land Management’s former project manager for a contaminated mine site in Nevada said Wednesday he was fired because he refused to stop speaking out about dangers posed there by radioactive and other toxic wastes.

In a federal whistleblower complaint seeking more than \$1 million in damages, Earle Dixon of Carson City said BLM state Director Bob Abbey fired him in October in retaliation for his aggressive research and public comment on the health and safety risks to workers and the community near the former Anaconda copper mine on the edge of Yerington.

A copy of the administrative complaint obtained by The Associated Press said Dixon refused to go along with repeated attempts by BLM management and the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection to downplay the issue.

BLM spokeswoman Jo Simpson said Wednesday the agency was not surprised the complaint had been filed but had no direct response to the charges.

“We welcome the investigation and we believe the investigation will bear out that our actions were appropriate,” she said.

NDEP spokeswoman Cindy Petterson said the state agency has made no attempt to downplay the seriousness of the mine’s pollution. She said personnel changes BLM made in the management of the project a month ago “has led to an improvement in the process.”

The complaint says cleanup costs at the abandoned mine owned by Atlantic Richfield Co. have risen dramatically — from an estimated \$10 million or \$20 million to potentially more than \$200 million — as a result of research Dixon conducted or directed on dangers from uranium and other toxins.

Tests this summer found unusually high levels of radiation in soil samples at the mine. Earlier groundwater tests showed high concentrations of uranium in wells on site — up to 200 times the U.S. drinking water standard.

“The site is an environmental compliance mess. There is nothing in compliance — not groundwater, not air, not soil,” Dixon told the AP. “It needs to be addressed. I was trying to move forward and get it addressed and that’s not what the BLM or NDEP wanted.”

“Every time I would try to put real technical comments in there and cite things relative to Superfund guidelines, they would take out those parts and water it down,” he said in an interview Wednesday.

Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, a Washington D.C.-based watchdog group, filed the formal whistleblower complaint with the Labor Department in San Francisco last week on behalf of Dixon, an environmental protection specialist who earlier taught at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and spent eight years doing research for the U.S. Energy Department at the Nevada Test Site.

The complaint said Dixon was at least partly responsible for documenting radiation readings, contamination of soil and water, and Arco and BLM noncompliance

The complaint says cleanup costs at the abandoned mine owned by Atlantic

See MINE, page 9

NATIONAL



Dog days at the court: justices consider when cops can use canines

BY GINA HOLLAND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Driving 6 mph over the speed limit got Roy Caballes pulled over. But what happened next landed him at the Supreme Court, which considered Wednesday when police can use drug-sniffing dogs.

Caballes was wearing a suit and driving a new Mercury when he was stopped on an Illinois freeway in November 1998. It looked like he would get off with a warning until Krott the drug dog showed up and sniffed out \$250,000 worth of marijuana in Caballes' trunk.

Caballes' conviction eventually was overturned on grounds police had no reason to search his car.

Dogs trained to find drugs and bombs are becoming more common in airports and elsewhere — even the Supreme Court — because of terrorism concerns. Police also often use them for routine traffic stops.

Justices will decide whether people who have given police no reason to suspect illegal activity have a constitutional protection against dog searches.

The Supreme Court has tried in recent years to better define someone's right to be left alone in their homes and vehicles. In this case, the court must clarify earlier opinions that found that drug dog use is not necessarily a search that falls under the Fourth Amendment ban on unreasonable searches or seizures.

"A sniff is not a search," justices were told by Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan.

Chicago attorney Ralph Meczyk, representing Caballes, countered. "It is accusatory. It is profoundly embarrassing."

Justice David Souter appeared troubled by the prospect of more use of dogs.

"We're opening a large vista for dog intrusion," said Souter, adding that he was worried about officers canvassing garages and neighborhoods with animals. Police "can take a dog to a front door and

ring the bell and see what happens."

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a petite 71-year-old, said "dogs can be frightening, humiliating."

Madigan responded that millions of people have dogs as pets.

Christopher Wray, a Bush administration lawyer who joined Madigan to defend dog searches, noted that beagles — generally seen as unimposing — are used in airports to detect illegal vegetables and other canines have a long history in crime-fighting.

Several justices, including key swing voters on civil liberties cases, seemed reluctant to restrain police.

Justice Stephen Breyer said police officers can sniff for contraband during a traffic stop, why not a dog? It's a fact of life, he said, "you might run into people and animals with sharp noses."

Justice Antonin Scalia said drug dogs have been around a long time and "the Republic seems to have survived." And Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said that canines just sniff around cars, not inside them.

However, Justice John Paul Stevens said an opening for dog searches in run-of-the-mill situations would also allow the use of mechanical devices to search people.

Caballes was pulled over for driving 71 mph on a stretch of Interstate 80 with a 65 mph limit. Caballes said he was moving from Las Vegas to Chicago because his girlfriend had broken up with him. The state trooper noticed air freshener in the car and asked for permission to search Caballes' trunk. Caballes refused, but officers searched it later anyway after the dog indicated there were drugs in the trunk.

His conviction for drug trafficking was thrown out by the Illinois Supreme Court. Illinois was supported by 28 states and several law enforcement groups in its appeal to the high court.

The argument inspired many canine jokes. Caballes' lawyer at one point asked if he was an underdog in the case.

Labor department set to investigate mine firing

MINE, from page 8

with federal pollution standards, including possible public exposure to radioactive and toxic metals in airborne dust.

Jeff Ruch, PEER's executive director, said federal law makes it clear "you cannot be discriminated against for implementing the Clean Air Act or the Safe Drinking Water Act.

"You can't be fired for doing your job and Earle Dixon was fired for doing his job," Ruch said from Washington.

Among other things, Dixon insisted on personally observing sampling, collecting

worker safety-related data and developing a formal site health and safety plan "that would draw attention to the problem by forcing workers to wear respirators, a visible red flag to the community," the complaint said.

The complaint said BLM responded by criticizing him for his disclosures, ordering him not to speak to the press, and censoring and editing his technical communications and memos.

The Labor Department will investigate the complaint for 30 days, then recommend whether the case should advance to a hearing before an administrative law judge.

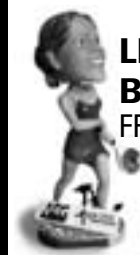
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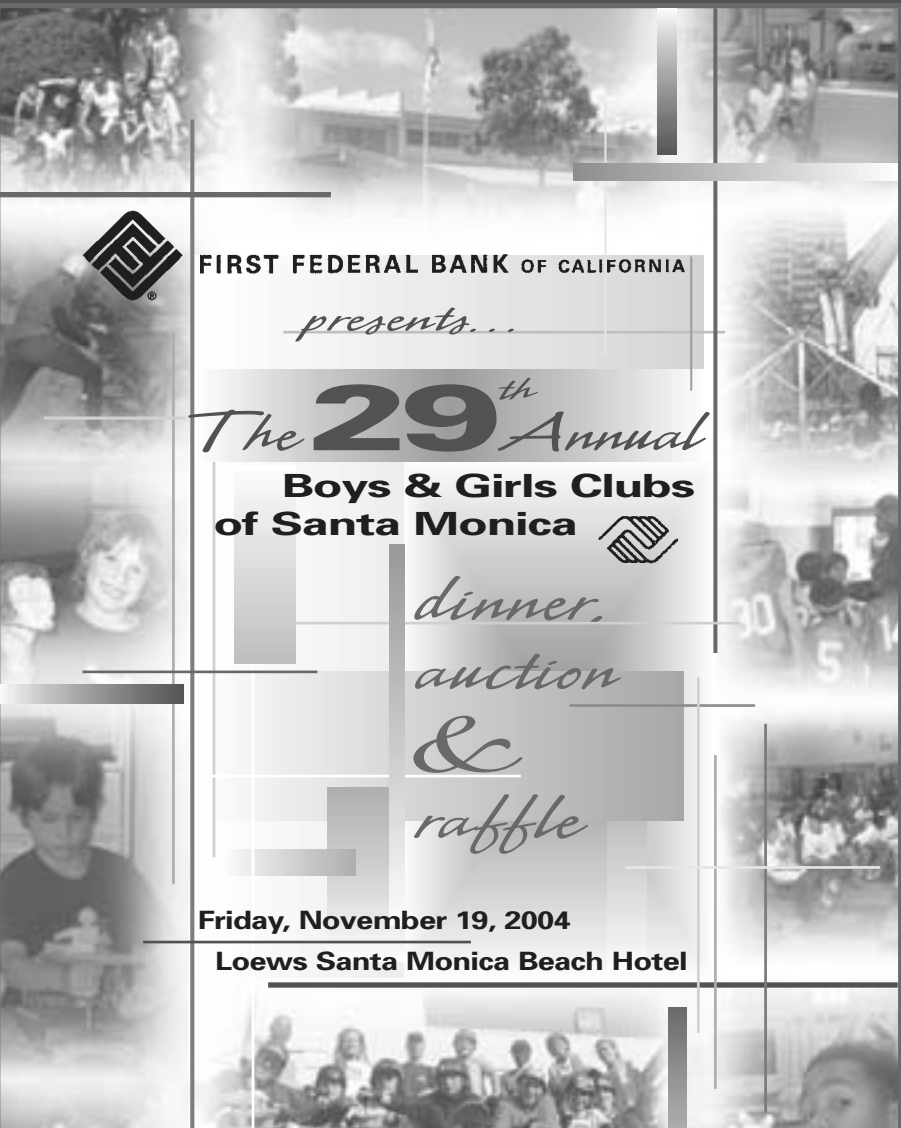
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NATIONAL

Media company hawks hit-series predictor

BY DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK — It shocked many pundits when ABC's new series "Desperate Housewives" and "Lost" became the breakout hits of the new television season. But not the folks at Initiative, a top New York media agency, who say they've developed a new tool to help predict which shows will succeed or flop.

The research device combs the Internet to pick up buzz about TV programs being developed. They hope to sell its findings to networks, advertisers and ad agencies.

"Does this mean we can predict all success? No," said Alec Gerster, Initiative chief executive. "But it does seem to pick up a growing word-of-mouth about a particular show. Historically, that's always been there."

Trying to pick a hit show in advance is like trying to predict the scores of this week's football games. It's good sport for fans, but for television executives who must make million-dollar decisions based on gut instincts, their jobs depend on it.

Getting early tips on which shows people are eager to see can help networks decide where to spend promotional money, and advertisers decide where to buy commercials.

The device, called PropheSEE, measures which shows are being talked about most on the Internet. Unlike other systems that do the same thing, it also gauges whether the talk is positive or negative.

Both "Lost" and "Desperate Housewives" ranked in the top five new shows for advance word-of-mouth, Initiative said.

"Joey" was the show with the most pre-air buzz. Unfortunately for NBC, some of that chatter was negative, said Stacey Lynn Koerner, Initiative's top researcher.

The show's performance has reflected that ambivalence: it's the most successful new sitcom on the air, yet last week didn't even make Nielsen Media Research's top 20 shows for the week.

Two of the shows in Initiative's bottom five haven't made the air yet. It has to be an ominous sign for NBC that one of them is "The Contender," the midseason boxing series developed by Mark Burnett and Sylvester Stallone, which the network captured in a bidding war.

"This isn't the be-all and end-all of predictions," Koerner said. "It's the early warning system."

One of the top network researchers, CBS's David Poltrack, questions the value of PropheSEE. CBS, which has a research facility in Las Vegas, already surveys viewers in the summer about which new shows they've heard about and are looking forward to watching.

The Initiative device also doesn't take into account people who are not active on the Internet, he said.

Report finds vast maintenance backlog for West's national parks

By The Associated Press

DENVER — A new report concludes the Bush administration will not be able to eliminate millions of dollars in overdue maintenance at national parks by the time President Bush leaves office in 2009.

"The administration will have addressed about 25 percent of the backlog," said F. Patrick Holmes, project manager for Colorado College's State of the Rockies Project. "Whatever they have done, it's insufficient."

During his 2000 campaign, Bush accused the Clinton administration of leaving the parks in poor condition and promised to push for \$5 billion in maintenance over five years.

Since then, the National Park Service has tried to figure out how much maintenance actually needs to be done. Interior Secretary Gale Norton says the administration has spent more than \$2.9 billion to help reduce an estimated \$4.9 billion maintenance and repair backlog, though she admitted eliminating it is impossible.

The Rockies Project — conducted by the school's business and economics departments using Park Service records — found that an eight-state region including Colorado has a \$71 million backlog, Holmes said.

At current funding levels, only 16 percent of the work will be completed by 2009.

Karen Breslin, spokeswoman for the Park Service regional office in Lakewood, said funding sources may have been overlooked by the researchers. The report, for example, doesn't include special highway appropriations for parks or money from entry fees.

"There are significant numbers that, if included, would make the picture look different," Breslin said Tuesday.

Holmes said Rocky Mountain National Park, with a \$35.7 million backlog, will have completed only 7.5 percent of the work by 2009 at proposed funding levels. Park spokeswoman Kyle Patterson said several major projects have been completed, but the park's maintenance list remains at \$35.7 million.

"We try to be proactive, but each year, things come up that need to be fixed immediately," she said. The backlog includes 26 water systems and 23 wastewater-treatment systems at campgrounds.

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NATIONAL



Ariz. measure aimed at illegal migrants

BY ANANDA SHOREY
Associated Press Writer

PHOENIX — A newly approved measure in Arizona aimed at keeping illegal immigrants from voting and obtaining some government services is encouraging groups nationwide to prepare similar proposals for their states.

Proposition 200 has motivated groups in Georgia, Idaho and Utah to consider drafting similar proposals. California and Colorado are already working to get immigration measures on the ballot in 2006.

“Since Proposition 200 passed, there has just been a tidal wave of interest in doing the same thing,” said Jimmy Herchek, a member of Georgians for Immigration Reduction.

Supporters argue a measure like the one Arizona voters approved Nov. 2 is needed because the government isn’t keeping illegal immigrants from obtaining food stamps, welfare and other social services.

Proposition 200 requires people to produce proof of immigration status when obtaining certain government services and will punish government workers for failing to report illegal immigrants who try to get aid. It also requires proof of citizenship when registering to vote.

“People are fed up with illegal immigrants breaking the law and not being penalized,” said Rosemary Jenks of NumbersUSA Action, a group that advocates reducing immigration. “If the federal government won’t deal with it, this is the only avenue.”

Georgians for Immigration Reduction is drafting a resolution that is a hybrid of

Arizona’s initiative and California’s Proposition 187. Voters passed Proposition 187 in 1994, but it was challenged in court and never took effect.

The group plans to approach legislators in January about sponsoring the resolution that could lead to a constitutional amendment, Herchek said.

“There is no end in sight unless we start enforcing our immigration laws,” Herchek said.

In California, a group began collecting signatures in September to put a measure before voters in 2006. They need 600,000 signatures by Feb. 22, said Mike Spence, president of the California Republican Assembly, the group sponsoring the initiative.

The measure would deny illegal immigrants government IDs, contracts, driver’s licenses, loans, college fees or tuition exemptions and public benefits not mandated by the federal government.

Another group trying to get a measure on the 2006 ballot is Defend Colorado Now. Their measure would prevent illegal immigrants from receiving some public services.

“Things look really positive,” said Carlos Espinosa, spokesman for Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo., who supports the measure.

Tancredo’s staff is working with groups in New Mexico, Texas and Illinois on similar legislation, Espinosa said.

Arizona is the busiest illegal entry point on the U.S.-Mexico border, but with recently beefed up enforcement, some traffic is expected to shift to bordering states like New Mexico.

Ken Thomson, the executive director of Utahans for Immigration Reform, said he is concerned illegal immigrants who can no longer get services in Arizona will head elsewhere.

“Every state is going to be affected and that is going to drive voter interest,” he said. “We’re just getting beat up with these illegals, and it is time to do something.”

Citizens are trying to send a message to the government that immigration reform is a must, said Dan Stein, president of Federation for American Immigration Reform, one of the top financial backers of Proposition 200.

“If politicians don’t pay more attention, it is going to wash over them like a tsunami,” said Stein.

Robert Vasquez, a county commissioner in Idaho, is taking a resolution to state legislators in February that would require proof of citizenship or legal alien status to apply for certain medical assistance. Anyone who has been in the Idaho for 30 days can apply now.

“I am encouraged and gratified by the passage of Proposition 200,” Vasquez said.

Arizona’s initiative is expected to face numerous court challenges, which opponents say other states should consider before drafting their own initiatives.

“We believe because of the conflict with federal law that these initiatives will be struck down,” said Hector Villagra, regional counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, a nonprofit organization that promotes the rights of Hispanics. The group plans to challenge Arizona’s measure.



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NATIONAL

Feds push interest rates up for the fourth time

BY MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — The Federal Reserve nudged interest rates up another quarter-point on Wednesday, the fourth moderate rate increase in the past five months, as Fed officials pointed to encouraging signs that the economy is finally rebounding from its summer slowdown.

The generally more upbeat tone to the Fed's official announcement was seen by many private economists as a signal that rates will keep moving higher in coming months.

"The Fed is saying that we have tightened and we are going to keep on tightening," said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York.

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and his colleagues took note of a strengthening economy by speaking more positively than they had at their last meeting in September about overall economic growth and the health of the labor market.

"Output appears to be growing at a moderate pace despite the rise in energy prices and labor market conditions have improved," the Fed said. "Inflation and longer-term inflation expectations remain well contained."

The latest move pushed the federal funds rate, the interest that banks charge each other, to 2 percent, double the 46-year low of 1 percent where the funds rate had been before the central bank began pushing rates higher in late June.

Commercial banks quickly followed the Fed's action Wednesday with announcements that they were raising their prime lending rate, the benchmark for millions of consumer and business loans, to 5 percent, up from 4.75 percent.

The Fed's action had been widely expected and had little impact on Wall Street. The Dow Jones industrial average finished the day down 0.89 point to close at 10,385.48.

While just a week ago many investors had thought the Fed might take a pause in their credit tightening campaign, that view changed last Friday after the government released a much stronger-than-expected employment report showing businesses added 377,000 workers to their payrolls, the biggest increase in seven months and more than double what had been expected.

The surge in payroll growth was seen as the strongest evidence yet that the economy is finally emerging from a "soft patch" this summer when companies' growth and hiring slowed dramatically as the economy was buffeted

by a spike in energy prices.

The Fed's only changes to its September announcement occurred in the more upbeat assessment of current economic conditions. It retained the promise it has been making that as long as inflation remains tame, future rate increases can be made "at a pace that is likely to be measured."

Many analysts said they fully expected another quarter point move at the Fed's last meeting of the year, Dec. 14, and then further quarter-point increases for most of 2005.

But they said this view could change rapidly if the recent spurt in oil prices proves to be a bigger drag on growth than currently believed or the economy is hit by an unexpected shock such as another terrorist attack.

"Sentiment could turn on a dime depending on external shocks," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo in Minneapolis. "I think the Fed wants to err on the side of ease and not on the side of tightening because of all these uncertainties."

Sohn and other analysts noted that even with the four quarter-point moves, interest rates on mortgages, auto loans and other types of consumer loans remain at historically low levels that are continuing to provide momentum to the economy as it rebounds from the 2001 recession and this year's oil shock.

Gradual rate increases are expected to continue until the Fed has reached a "neutral" level where the funds rate is neither promoting faster growth nor holding the economy back. The Fed has never said what that rate is, but many analysts believe it is around 4 percent. At a pace of quarter point moves, and with the Fed meeting eight times a year, it could take until next fall to reach 4 percent.

Generally, analysts said the Fed statement's tone expressed satisfaction with the economy,

"The Fed is happy with where the economy is right now with inflation low and with employment conditions improving," said David Jones, head of DMJ Advisors.

Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry had argued that the summer slowdown and weak employment growth showed Bush was mismanaging the economy. But the administration contended the slowdown would be only temporary.

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by Arthur Miller



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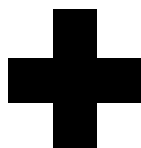
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NATIONAL



White House counsel Gonzales to succeed Ashcroft

BY SCOTT LINDLAW

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush named White House counsel Alberto Gonzales as attorney general on Wednesday, picking the administration's most prominent Hispanic for a highly visible post in the war on terror.

"His sharp intellect and sound judgment have helped shape our policies in the war on terror," Bush said of the man who has served as the White House's top lawyer over the past four years.

In an announcement in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Bush outlined Gonzales' personal story — a boy who grew up in a family of eight children in a two-bedroom house in Texas — and now is in line for a Cabinet post.

If confirmed by the Senate, the 49-year-old Texan would become the first Hispanic to hold the job as the nation's top law enforcement officer.

Even before the formal announcement, one Senate Democratic liberal welcomed the appointment of "someone less polarizing" to the position. "We will have to review his record very carefully, but I can tell you already he's a better candidate than John Ashcroft," said Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ashcroft announced plans on Tuesday to step down.

Gonzales' career has been linked with Bush for at least a decade, serving as gen-

eral counsel when Bush was governor of Texas, and then as secretary of state and as a justice on the Texas Supreme Court.

Gonzales has been at the center of developing Bush's positions on balancing civil liberties with waging the war on terrorism — opening the White House counsel to the same line of criticism that has dogged Ashcroft.

For instance, Gonzales publicly defended the administration's policy — essentially repudiated by the Supreme Court and now being fought out in the lower courts — of detaining certain terrorism suspects for extended periods without access to lawyers or courts.

He also wrote a controversial February 2002 memo in which Bush claimed the right to waive anti-torture law and international treaties providing protections to prisoners of war. That position drew fire from human rights groups, which said it helped led to the type of abuses uncovered in the Abu Ghraib prison scandal.

The American Civil Liberties Union said it expected the Senate to closely examine those issues during confirmation hearings. The ACLU said it had no position on Gonzales, but added: "Particular attention should be devoted to exploring Mr. Gonzales' proposed policies on the constitutionality of the Patriot Act, the Guantanamo Bay detentions, the designation of United States citizens as enemy combatants and reproductive rights."

Some conservatives also have quietly questioned Gonzales' credentials on core

social issues. And he once was a partner in a Houston law firm which represented the scandal-ridden energy giant Enron.

Gonzales would be the first Hispanic attorney general.

But shifting him to Justice would create a vacancy in the White House counsel's office. Bush advisers said two people would be naturals for the job. One is White House staff secretary Brett Kavanaugh, a lawyer who has been waiting nearly 16 months for confirmation on the influential U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. He was also a top lawyer in two cases that dogged the Clinton White House. As associate independent counsel under Kenneth Starr, he worked on both the long-running Whitewater case and the 1998 Clinton impeachment case.

Harriet Miers, a deputy chief of staff who was once Bush's personal lawyer, would be another candidate, one Bush adviser said.

Ashcroft announced his resignation on Tuesday, along with Commerce Secretary Don Evans, a Texas friend of the president's.

After a National Security Council meeting, Bush was sat down Wednesday with Secretary of State Colin Powell, another figure being closely watched. Powell has been largely noncommittal when asked about his plans.

The gospel-singing son of a minister, Ashcroft is a fierce conservative who doesn't drink, smoke or dance. His detrac-

tors said he gave religion too prominent a role at the Justice Department — including optional prayer meetings with staff before each work day. He has also been a willing lightning rod for critics who said his policies for thwarting terrorists infringed on the rights of innocent people.

Ashcroft championed many of the most controversial government actions following the Sept. 11 attacks, most notably the USA Patriot Act. It bolstered FBI surveillance powers, increased use of material witness warrants to hold suspects incommunicado for months. When there was a break in a terror case, he was the man at the lectern soberly informing the American people.

"The objective of securing the safety of Americans from crime and terror has been achieved," he said in resignation letter to Bush, dated Nov. 2 — Election Day.

McClellan said Bush got the letter that same day, before the results of the election were known.

Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., voiced pleasure Wednesday with Ashcroft's departure and exhorting Bush "to make good on his promise of renewed bipartisan cooperation" with Democrats.

Evans, Bush's 2000 campaign chairman and close friend of more than three decades, said he longed to return to Texas.

Bush was considering this year's campaign money man, Mercer Reynolds, for Evans' job. As national finance chairman for the Bush campaign, Reynolds raised more than \$260 million to get him re-elected.

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NATIONAL

Pundits watching Blair visit for clues to 2nd term

BY BARRY SCHWEID

AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON — Tony Blair proved himself an invaluable ally to President Bush in Iraq, and now Bush needs the British prime minister again to help him fix his damaged relations with Europe.

Not that Blair agrees with Bush on everything. Blair is pushing for a high-profile U.S. peace effort in the Middle East, while Bush wants to take time to sort things out.

Still, Bush had no closer friend and ally in the war to overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, and the improbable alliance of the deeply conservative American president and the moderate British Laborite has carried through to Iraq's troubled postwar period.

So Blair's visit to the White House on Friday offers Bush a chance to sound out a prominent European leader on how to improve trans-Atlantic relations and to send a message of his own to the continent on a range of issues.

For example, Blair's push for deeper, quicker U.S. engagement in the Middle East reflects a growing European desire for the United States to do more to help the Palestinians and thereby assuage Arab wariness of U.S. intentions in Iraq.

Any Blair success toward influencing Bush on this point automatically would edge

the president closer to the European position.

"He wants to work with Europe," Secretary of State Colin Powell said in an interview this week with the London newspaper Financial Times. "My European friends will see a president who respects partnerships, respects alliances."

Powell intends to follow up Blair's visit with an ambitious travel schedule in Europe in coming weeks. He told reporters traveling with him in Mexico this week that he wants to help heal deep U.S. divisions with Europe that stem from the Iraq war.

"The president wants to have a strong relationship with all of our European friends and allies, notwithstanding any disagreements we have had in the past," Powell said.

The secretary will have a chance to relay that message in a meeting with the NATO allies, the European Union and the 57-nation Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Bush himself was sitting down Wednesday with the secretary-general of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, and the White House said strengthening ties with Europe was at the top of the agenda.

Strobe Talbott, president of the Washington-based Brookings Institution think tank, said in an interview that Bush had already sent signals to Europe not to expect any major course correction in his

foreign policy.

And yet, Talbott said, Bush will take very seriously Blair's plea for "a new investment of American diplomatic energy in the Middle East peace process."

While Blair and several other allies backed Bush on Iraq, France, Germany and others did not. The disagreement, Powell told the Financial Times, was very significant but should not overwhelm the U.S.-European relationship.

It has been a scratchy relationship. France, most of all, is dubious about U.S. leadership and power and not only in Iraq. Last week, French President Jacques Chirac urged Europe to "strengthen its unity and dynamism" in the face of U.S. might.

Germany is more inclined to seek accommodation than France, but German officials immediately made clear after Bush won re-election that no German troops will go to Iraq.

And in trying to curb Iran's nuclear programs, Britain, France and Germany have offered inducements in the form of power and trade. The United States stands apart, insisting simply that Iran must stop enriching fissionable material to weapons grade and submit its nuclear program to international inspection.

Bush and Blair last met in Istanbul, Turkey, in June, but they talk almost weekly on the telephone. After their conversation last Wednesday, Blair said

working on peace between Israel and the Palestinians was "the single most pressing political challenge in our world today."

Brookings Institution analyst Philip H. Gordon said Bush's re-election "makes overcoming the trans-Atlantic divide more difficult because he is so unpopular in Europe."

"And it's hard for Blair because Bush is unpopular in Britain, and Blair pays a political penalty when it looks like he is Bush's poodle," Gordon added.

And so Blair has to be able to claim convincingly that he made it clear to the president how important it is for Bush to get involved in Israel-Palestine and that the two of them had "engaged" on Iraq and on the Iranian nuclear problem, Gordon said.

Former Polish deputy foreign minister Radek Sikorski suggested that Bush adopt John Kerry's idea to allay European fears and support European unity by convening a summit of European Union and NATO countries.

"As the leader of the most powerful country not just in the world but in history, Bush can afford to be magnanimous and encourage the allies to get over the business of Iraq," said Sikorski, who now directs the New Atlantic Initiative at the American Enterprise Institute.

Besides, Sikorski said, "Most Europeans do not want to take a French cavalry charge on the United States."

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INTERNATIONAL



Palestinian leaders make funeral and burial plans

BY LARA SUKHTIAN

Associated Press Writer

CLAMART, France — A top Islamic cleric read passages from the Quran at Yasser Arafat's hospital bedside Wednesday, with the comatose Palestinian leader in what an aide called the "final phase" of his life.

As Arafat's condition deteriorated, aides made plans to eventually fly his body to Cairo for a funeral, then to the West Bank for burial at his Ramallah headquarters. Palestinians also selected his immediate successor, saying the parliament speaker Rauhi Fattouh — a relative unknown — will become temporary president of the Palestinian Authority at Arafat's death.

The cleric, Taisser Bayod Tamimi, rushed to Paris from the West Bank to be with the 75-year-old Palestinian leader, who is in critical condition at the Percy Military Training Hospital, connected to a respirator and a feeding tube.

"I prayed to God for his recovery," said Tamimi, who said he was with Arafat for more than an hour, reciting from the Muslim holy book. Tamimi said his close friend was very sick, "but he is still alive."

Tamimi said earlier that life support machines would not be turned off "as long as there are signs of life in the body of the president."

"It is prohibited in Islam," he said.

Gen. Christian Estripeau, a hospital spokesman, told the newspaper Le Monde that Arafat's death "could be a question of hours or, perhaps, days."

The Palestinian envoy to France, Leila Shahid, told France-Info that Arafat was still "in a deep coma" Wednesday morning, but added there was a "complication in the state of all of his vital organs."

He was therefore "in a critical state," she said. "The reality is that he is in the hands of God."

Shahid said Tamimi had come simply to pray with Arafat.

"It is clear, as for a Christian, as for a Jew, that a religious man needs to be with his patient when he is in the final phase of his life," Shahid said. "That is why he is here."

At a news conference in Ramallah late Tuesday, Palestinian Cabinet minister Saeb Erekat said doctors were trying to relieve bleeding from a severe brain hemorrhage, which can cause brain damage.

Shahid said doctors were fighting to keep Arafat alive. The physicians "are doing everything, in the intensive care unit, to try to give him his chances," she said.

But she also said that France, which sent a plane to bring Arafat to France on Oct. 29, would also organize his repatriation.

Palestinian leaders, meanwhile, decided that when the time comes, they would bury Arafat at his sandbagged West Bank headquarters, known as the Muqata, in Ramallah, and turn it into a shrine, defusing a potential conflict with Israel by dropping a demand for a Jerusalem burial.

The Israeli Cabinet approved that plan Wednesday.

Israel had been pushing for a Gaza burial, but the Palestinians wanted Jerusalem. Palestinians see Arafat's Ramallah headquarters — his virtual prison for the last three years — as a symbol of his resistance. Burial there is less politically sensitive for Israel.

In Ramallah, bulldozers pushed aside rubble and hauled away piles of wrecked cars to prepare the compound for Arafat's burial.

Palestinian leaders accepted an offer from Egypt to host the main funeral service in Cairo — a site less problematic for foreign dignitaries — before Arafat is buried in Ramallah.

The service could be held at Cairo's international airport, security officials in Egypt said. That would allow Arab leaders to attend without dealing with Israel, which controls access to the Palestinian territories. It also would allow foreign leaders to pay their respects without having to visit the West Bank, where Palestinian security forces might not be able to guarantee their safety.

"It was decided that the body will be brought to Cairo and there will lie in state," Erekat told The Associated Press. "After that, the body will be flown from Cairo to Ramallah."

While the exact nature of Arafat's illness remained undisclosed, his condition has steadily worsened since he was flown to the military hospital outside Paris.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath gave the first detailed description of Arafat's treatment at a news conference Tuesday, after days of confusing and often conflicting reports.

The French medical team treating Arafat publicly acknowledged his comatose condition for the first time Tuesday and said it had worsened. Estripeau declined to offer a prognosis but said the deterioration in Arafat's condition marked "a significant stage."

Shaath was part of a delegation led by Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia and Mahmoud Abbas, the No. 2 man behind Arafat in the Palestine Liberation Organization. The group returned to the West Bank early Wednesday after a 24-hour visit.

Shaath's news conference underlined that the Palestinian leadership was now in control of information about Arafat.

Palestinian officials had been denied access by Arafat's wife, Suha, who used France's strict privacy laws that give authority to the family.

Shaath said a dramatic disagreement with Suha Arafat, who had accused the visiting Palestinians of trying to topple their longtime leader, had been smoothed over and that she embraced delegation members at the hospital.

"She is the wife of a great man, our leader, and is the mother of his only daughter," Shaath said. "She will always be respected and protected by the Palestinian people."

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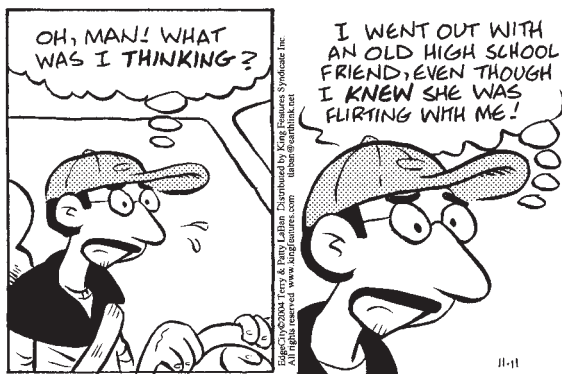


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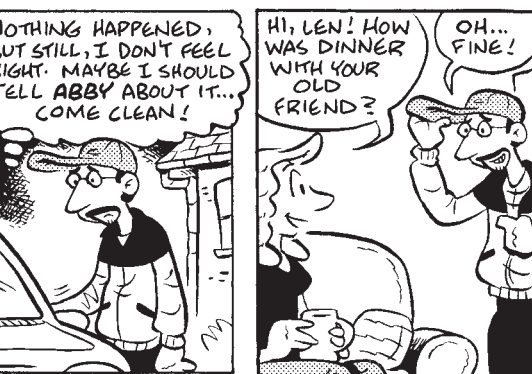
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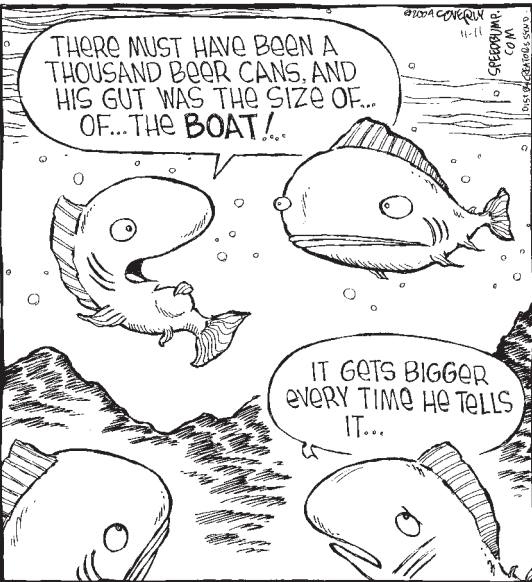
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- 23 Teachers' org.
- 24 Talons
- 25 Chops into cubes
- 27 With 4-Down, "Love Story" star
- 28 Pinball palace
- 29 Sound right
- 32 Carnival game
- 36 Hun leader
- 39 Ready for eating
- 40 Glazed fabric
- 41 China setting
- 42 Looks after
- 43 Urges

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Courtney Love pleads not guilty in assault case

LOS ANGELES — Courtney Love pleaded not guilty Wednesday to a felony charge of assault with a deadly weapon stemming from a confrontation with a woman at her ex-boyfriend's house.

Love, 40, entered her plea before Superior Court Judge Terry Green. She is scheduled to return to court for a Dec. 15 pretrial hearing, said Jane Robison, a spokeswoman for the district attorney's office. A trial likely would not start until next year, Robison said.

The felony charge is related to an April 25 incident at the home of Love's former boyfriend. Love allegedly found a 32-year-old woman sleeping on a sofa and threw a liquor bottle at her and chased her with a flashlight.

Love has remained free on \$150,000 bail.

The assault case is one of several legal problems involving Love, the former lead singer for the group Hole and the widow of Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain.

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — Rapper 50 Cent pleaded innocent to assault charges stemming from an alleged incident at a concert.

Steve Leary, the lawyer for the rapper, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, entered the plea Monday in Springfield District Court, said James Orenstein, first assistant district attorney for Hampden County.

Jackson, 26, didn't appear in court.

At a concert in Springfield in May, Jackson allegedly jumped into the crowd after someone threw or squirted water at him. Three women were injured. After an investigation and a hearing last month, a clerk magistrate decided there was probable cause for assault and battery charges.

Jackson, who lives in Farmington, Conn., is scheduled to appear for a pretrial conference Feb. 8.

COEUR D'ALENE, Idaho — Oscar-winning actress Patty Duke was released from the Kootenai Medical Center after undergoing single heart bypass surgery ear-

lier this month.

Hospital spokeswoman Lisa Johnson said Duke, 57, was released from the North Idaho Heart Center on Tuesday, six days after the Nov. 3 surgery.

"She's looking forward to recuperating at home for a few weeks," said a message posted on Duke's Web site. She also thanks "everyone who sent their get well wishes."

Duke has lived in the Coeur d'Alene area since the early 1990s with her husband, Mike Pearce.

Duke, star of the '60s TV comedy "The Patty Duke Show," won a best-supporting actress Oscar in 1963 for her portrayal of Helen Keller in "The Miracle Worker."

NEW YORK — A tour of the Playboy Mansion, tickets to a Jimmy Buffett concert and a signed first edition of Hunter S. Thompson's "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" — complete with your own personal bullet hole — are among the prizes being auctioned on behalf of The Paris Review, the celebrated literary magazine.

The charity auction, which began Tuesday and ends Nov. 18, is titled, "The World of the Paris Review: The Greatest International Literary Magazine, Complete with Sports, Stars, Literary Supernovas, and of course the Irrepressible Spirit of Founder and Late Editor George Plimpton."

Plimpton, the famed author-adventurer who ran the magazine for 50 years, died in 2003.

The Paris Review hopes to raise at least \$75,000. Among other things, proceeds would be used to help publish the magazine and stage public readings.

Seventy-two items are available for bidding, including a voucher to have Alec Baldwin record your voice-mail message; passes to the premiere of Martin Scorsese's new film, "The Aviator"; drinks with Charlie Rose; and artwork by Christo, Keith Haring, Larry Rivers and James Rosenquist.

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. — Kevin Spacey, Laura Linney and Bryce Dallas Howard will be among the award winners at the 16th annual Palm Springs International Film Festival.

The festival, founded in 1990 by then-Mayor Sonny Bono, will be held Jan. 6-17. It will include more than 200 movies from some 60 countries.

Award winners also include Samuel L. Jackson, Liam Neeson and Kirk Douglas.

"We are truly delighted to honor Kevin Spacey, Samuel L. Jackson, Liam Neeson and Laura Linney at this year's event. Their unparalleled talents have made an impressive and everlasting mark on the face of cinema," said Chairman Earl Greenburg in a recent statement.

The awards gala will be held Jan. 8 at the Palm Springs Convention Center.

Spacey is the winner of the Sonny Bono Visionary Award for Acting, Directing and Producing, and Jackson is the winner of the Career Achievement Award for Acting.

Neeson and Linney won the Desert Palm Achievement Award for actor and actress respectively; Douglas will be honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award; and Howard will receive the Rising Star Award.

LOS ANGELES — Emmy Award-winning film composer James Newton Howard has filed for divorce from his wife of 12 years.

Howard, whose work has been featured in the movies "Hidalgo," "Collateral" and M. Night Shyamalan's "The Village," has been married to Sofie Lena Howard since April 25, 1992, according to divorce papers filed Thursday in Superior Court. The couple separated Oct. 31.

They are seeking joint custody of their two sons, ages 10 and 7, court papers showed.

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