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Volume 9 Issue 11

nta Monica Daily Press

THEY CALL HIM CHRISTMAS
SEE PAGE 13

We have you covered

THE MAKING A LIST ISSUE

New Garden Sharing Registry makes a match

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

NORTH OF MONTANA When a recipe calls for fruit or vegetables, Madeleine Grafton has her pick, not in the neighborhood grocery store, but in the backyard of her home where an orchard of orange, fig, apricot, avocado, lime and lemon trees thrive.

The once vibrant garden, however, had seen less tilling and weeding as old age caught up to the Santa Monica resident and her husband, that is until a stranger recently came in and volunteered to do the heavy lifting.

In exchange, the stranger — Santa Monica resident Ellu Green — would get a share of the crops.

The garden is now awaiting signs of life from six newly-planted beds of peas, beans, carrots, garlic, radishes, lettuce and herbs.

The partnership between Grafton and Green is the first match made on City Hall's new Garden Sharing Registry which pairs homeowners who have extra land with gardeners who don't.

Operated by the Community and Cultural Services Department, the registry has received applications from four homeowners and 12 gardeners since its launch in September, created to meet the growing demand for plots at the space-constrained community gardens throughout the city.

"People are excited about this opportunity," Kathy LePrevost, the community programs manager for City Hall, said. "We just need to get the word out more and let people know this is an option for them because there seems to be such an interest in gardening these days."

Interested applicants must fill out a form specific to whether they are a homeowner or gardener, the former answering questions about the square footage available on their property and the amount of sunlight exposure to the garden, the latter briefly describing their gardening experience and their time commitment.

City Hall only facilitates the registry and is not involved in arrangements made between the two parties.

Grafton received 10 names from City Hall and was most impressed with Green who

SEE GARDEN PAGE 11



Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

BUMPER CROP: **Madeleine Grafton working in her home garden on Tuesday afternoon. Grafton partnered with another Santa Monica resident to help her plant new crops as part of the city's Garden Sharing Registry, which pairs homeowners who have extra land with gardeners who don't.**

Hate crimes remain low

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

OLYMPIC BLVD A rude awakening awaited the diverse and progressive community at New Roads School where a threatening message had been scribbled on a bathroom stall inside the boy's restroom.

"On 4-20-09 a black kid will die at this school."

"P.S. Be ready."

The unfulfilled threat that was discovered at the local private school on April 15 was one of two hate crimes that have been reported in Santa Monica this year, an increase from 2008 when no such incidents were reported to police.

State law defines a hate crime as offenses that were motivated by the suspect's bias, hatred or prejudice against the victim's real or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

The numbers for such crimes in liberal Santa Monica have remained low over the past decade when an average of half a dozen incidents were reported each year with the exception of 2001 when there were 29, most of which were fueled by anti-Islamic sentiments following the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

"We're such a melting pot … and I think whenever you see something that is hate based it becomes such big news and it's not something promoted or accepted as a community," SMPD Sgt. Jay Trisler said.

The most recent hate crime took place on Sept. 3 on the 2900 block of the beach where a woman and her 3-year-old son were accosted by a homeless man, who remarked to the woman "Speaky English," followed by a racial epithet.

The suspect allegedly approached the woman and her son again, this time kicking the boy off of his scooter, referring to him as the racial epithet again.

Police have not made arrests in either incidents.

Countywide there were 729 hate crimes reported in 2008, according to a recent study by the L.A. County Commission on Human Rights, showing a drop from incidents the previous year in which there were 763.

SEE CRIMES PAGE 11


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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS

Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2009

Free Thanksgiving dinner
St. Monica's Catholic Church
725 California Ave., 3 p.m. — 6 p.m.
Come to St. Monica's for the church's 30th annual Traditional Thanksgiving Dinner. Help feed the homeless, struggling and elderly of the community at a sit-down dinner in a comfortable family atmosphere. Call (310) 566-1500, ext. 531 for more information

Story time
Main Library: Children's Activity Room
601 Santa Monica Blvd., 11:15 a.m. — 11:45 a.m.
Join this fun story series for children aged 3 to 5 years. Tickets are given out in the morning on a first-come, first-served basis. Pick yours up at the Youth Reference Desk. Call (310) 458-8600 for more information.

Thursday, Nov. 26, 2009

A time for thanks
Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
1855 Main St., 11 a.m. — 3 p.m.
Everyone is welcome at this free dinner provided by the Santa Monica Vineyard Christian Fellowship. Please call (310) 394-3135 if you have any questions.

Friday, Nov. 27, 2009

Movies and more
WISE and Healthy Aging
1527 Fourth St., 12:30 p.m. — 4 p.m.
Come for a twice-monthly showing of an entertaining and thought-provoking film. A movie and discussion will be held the second and fourth Friday of each month, followed by a lively discussion led by peer counselor Bert Dragin. Dragin has produced, written and directed three motion pictures. $3 per session covers film, popcorn and discussion. Call (310) 394-9871 ext. 373 for more information.

Rocking rotary
Riviera Country Club
1250 Capri Dr.
The rotary club has long enjoyed a reputation as being the hub of Westside men and women dedicated to improving their local and worldwide communities. It is a melting pot for cultural ideas from the diverse ethnic makeup of members. Those interested in attending the regular lunch should contact (310) 917-3313.

Saturday, Nov. 28, 2009

Mothers' circle
motheringminds
Marine St., 2:30 p.m. — 4 p.m.
Many women want a place where they may talk about both the positive and negative experiences of motherhood, and this group offers a forum where women can speak honestly and openly about the challenges and joys of being a parent. This group provides a relaxed and nurturing environment where all experiences are welcome, and where mothers may feel supported and understood. Call (310) 922-6969 for more information.

Yoga in the park
Palisades Park
Ocean Avenue and Palisades Avenue, 10 a.m. — 11:30 a.m.
Come every Saturday and start your weekend off right with an energizing and rejuvenating yoga class in Palisades Park, overlooking the ocean. Beginners and all levels are welcome. All you need is a yoga mat and an open heart. If you've always wanted to try yoga, this is the class for you. Suggested donation is $12. Call (310) 560-4317 or e-mail jonathan@alignmentforlife.com for more information.

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com and click the "Events" tab for the given day's calendar.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CITYWIDE

Toys for tots

In the holiday spirit, the American Red Cross of Santa Monica will hold its 17th annual "Spark of Love" toy drive this year, benefiting needy children and teens in the surrounding communities.

Youth volunteers with the Red Cross, KABC Channel 7 and Santa Monica Fire Department will be collecting new unwrapped toys or sports equipment at the Santa Monica Red Cross or any SMFD station now through Friday, Dec. 24.

Every contribution counts, but toys, games, books, school supplies and items appropriate for 14 to 18 year olds are sorely needed.

Last year, the drive collected over 600,000 toys in the five-county area. The goal this year is to double that number, making many children's holidays that much brighter.

Deserving families interested in signing up to receive toys for their children can stop by their local Red Cross chapter or use the online registration form at www.redcrossofsantamonica.org.

Items can be dropped off during business hours at the Santa Monica Red Cross chapter at 1450 11th St. or any of the following SMFD stations: Station 121 at 1444 Seventh St., Station 122 at 222 Hollister Ave. near Second Street, Station 123 at 1302 19th St. at Arizona Avenue, and Station 125 at 2450 Ashland Ave., south of Ocean Park Boulevard.

DAILY PRESS

CITYWIDE

Giving back this holiday season

With the season of giving upon us and presents on the way, Flair Cleaners invites all Southern Californians to make a little room in their closets and drawers by donating to their seventh annual Holiday Clothing Drive. The drive begins Nov. 27, the day after Thanksgiving, and will run through Dec. 31.

"Everyone is very enthusiastic about this program," cleaners owner Gary Futterman said. "Since we started the clothing drive seven years ago, our customers have really gotten into the spirit of giving, and each year more and more clothing is brought in."

Garments will be collected at the Flair Cleaners location in Santa Monica (720 Montana Ave.), as well as at the locations in Valencia, Burbank, Studio City and Redondo Beach. Large, brightly wrapped boxes will be on hand, ready to receive the garments for the National Council of Jewish Women Thrift Shop, St. Vincent de Paul's Thrift Store and Helping Hands for the Blind.

Flair staffers hope to top last year's donation of 6,000 garments, and want to remind people that there is no such thing as donating too many clothes.

"Anyone is welcome to drop off items to share – the more the merrier," Futterman said.

Flair staffers will have receipts on hand for anyone looking to receive a tax deduction for their donations.

For more information, visit www.FlairCleaners.com.

DP



CRAFTY KIDS

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Children create Thanksgiving wreaths during the monthly Kids Club at the Montana Avenue Library on Tuesday afternoon. The club offers parents and their kids a chance to listen to stories and make crafts once a month.

L.A. council debates medical marijuana ordinance

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES The Los Angeles City Council has hammered out some guidelines for a long-awaited medical marijuana ordinance.

Council members spent about five hours Tuesday reviewing amendments for the proposed ordinance. Among the provisions they suggested included capping the number of dispensaries between 70 and 200 and allowing reimbursement at those clinics for "actual expenses."

The council will take up the issue again Dec. 2.

City officials are trying to come up with an ordinance that addresses medicinal marijuana and figure out if the ordinance is permissible under state law.

Hundreds of pot dispensaries have opened their doors in Los Angeles over the past couple of years. Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley said recently he will target any pot clinics engaging in over-the-counter sales.

Joost assets bought by online ad company Adconion

BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK The struggling online video startup Joost, begun with much fanfare by the creators of Skype and Kazaa, has been sold to an online advertising company.

Adconion Media Group, which is based in Santa Monica, said Tuesday it bought Joost assets for an undisclosed sum. These include the technology behind Joost's video platform and the Joost trademark.

About 12 Joost employees — the majority — were given jobs at Adconion, which plans to continue operating Joost.com as an entertainment site.

Joost, which had been shopping for a buyer for several months, had earlier approached cable TV operators Comcast Corp. and Time Warner Cable Inc. about a sale.

The site was started with much fanfare by Janus Friis and Niklas Zennstrom, the people behind the Internet phone service Skype and the file-sharing service Kazaa.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

To the point about parking

Editor:

I have been reading for several months now, with disbelief, about the recommendations made by Walker Parking Consultants to city officials on the parking in and around Downtown. They found that the main problem was "due in large part to an inefficient pricing policy, charging less for spaces ... and therefore creating competition among drivers." Instead of increasing the number of spaces and encouraging people of all economic status to visit and utilize the downtown area, they recommend that "city officials should increase pricing and adjust parking management policies." They have also proposed some kind of parking "czar" whose salary will probably be covered by the increase in parking fees.

I am reminded of the Denver Water Board (where I lived until this last year). They had a huge campaign to get the public to save water by only watering on certain days so that there would be enough water to go around. I am all for this, including xeriscaping and other water saving practices. Apparently though, even though the saving practices succeeded in helping the water supply there was now a dearth of "money" supply and so they petitioned and obtained a price increase to cover the lost costs of revenue owing to water savings.

This kind of thinking is a viscous circle and is counter intuitive to my mind. If you have a problem with too much of something, you charge more for it so less people will want to use it, problem solved ... huh?

This year the coffers of the food banks will be pressed because of the economy and people will be fighting for the generous food donated by well intentioned people. Let's put a high paid food bank czar in charge of the distribution and then charge for the meals instead of giving them away, less people meeting the criteria to receive a meal ... problem solved!

Some of the more business minded of you out there probably won't get my point.

Scott Mossman
Santa Monica

Why so serious?

Editor:

It sounds like Bill Bauer wants to be the Grinch Who Stole Route 66 (My Write, "Route 66's bogus end," Nov. 16). So what if Route 66 didn't "officially" end at the Santa Monica Pier? Despite the famous "Golden Spike" photo, the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads didn't actually meet at Promontory Point, Utah. It also turns out that there's no Santa Claus and that despite what the song says, it's not really a "treat to beat your feet in the Mississippi mud." But why let reality rear its ugly head when we can create enjoyable cultural myths that provide more photo opps? Lighten up, Bill, but we love you anyway.

Paul Bergman
Santa Monica

Divorce is an ugly business

Editor:

I applaud the valuable work the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles does for the abused ("The reality of the situation," Nov. 17). Unfortunately they are not in the business of divorce law. If they took a minute and looked at the contested divorces filed in the last 12 months in Santa Monica, they will see that one of the first things done by the attorney is to file a restraining order against the man. One of the kindest friends I have was in shock and sent a copy of the petition to all their friends and family. Everyone was upset because we all know it was not true. His ex-wife's response was, "divorce is ugly." Not every husband is abusive.

David Alsabery
Santa Monica



Word in Edgewise

Kenny Mack — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Taking a stand against second-hand smoke

BY THE TIME I WAS 10, I HAD SEEN enough "60 Minutes" segments on the dangers of tobacco — and the lengths that R.J. Reynolds and Philip Morris would go to in order to hide that danger from the general public — to take a principled stand against cigarettes. I decided to never smoke them myself and to never buy them for anyone else, despite the fact that my job as the youngest boy in a big family was to go to the store whenever anyone needed anything and I usually got to keep the change when I went.

Eliminating the cigarette runs really cut into my Mike and Ike money, but I didn't care. I wasn't going to help someone I love pay a giant tobacco-dealing corporation for the privilege of using their product to slowly commit suicide. Even as a kid, I understood that cigarette smoke causes people to get sick and die — and I didn't want to have anything to do with it.

Readers of this column should know that I've had some differences of opinion with Rent Control Board Member (and good guy) Robert Kronovet. I'm progressive, so I believe we should use the power of the state to make progress toward a more perfect union; he's conservative, so he thinks the power of the state should only be used when absolutely necessary.

But there is one thing that we agree on and that's the idea that one person's rights end where another person's rights begin. And at next week's Rent Control Board meeting, Kronovet will be introducing a proposal to improve the lives of non-smoking tenants in Santa Monica that the board and the City Council should unanimously support.

The thing I like most about his plan is its simplicity. It would protect the health of tenants by banning smoking in apartments that share either a floor or ceiling with another apartment — and do so without infringing on property owners' or smokers' rights. Landlords would still be able to rent to smokers and would be able to designate smoking areas for them, provided that they are at least 20 feet away from doors and windows that people use. Smokers would still be able to smoke inside their apartments, provided that they take responsibility for their second-hand smoke. It's an almost perfect solution.

The only problem with Kronovet's proposal is the cost to smokers who want to smoke in their apartments. A city ordinance passed earlier this year expanded the ban on smoking in Santa Monica to include the common areas of apartment buildings and provided a means by which residents can seek damages in the amount of $100, $200, and $500 respectively for first, second, and third violations within a calendar year. The proposal would basically apply those same fines to violations of the shared ceiling or floor ban, meaning a smoker who lives between two non-smokers could be paying $1,000 per cigarette smoked indoors. I don't care how much pleasure you get from a pack of smokes, for $20,000 I recommend you seriously consider a concierge doctor and designer pharmaceuticals.

Some opponents of this ban will try to argue the science. They'll claim that second-hand smoke is no more dangerous than many of the toxic household products we use every day. They are wrong. For every chemical or substance sold or used in the U.S., standards are established based on a "safe" level of exposure as defined by medical/health professionals. No scientist anywhere in the world has been able to determine a "safe" level of exposure to second-hand smoke (and they've been trying for decades), which means inhaling any amount of second-hand smoke is a health hazard that should be avoided. That's a conclusion shared by every medical/health professional on the planet without exception. There is some doubt as to whether or not second-hand smoke can kill you, but there is no question that it's not good for you. The science is unequivocal.

Some have said that this ban is just another example of liberals using the power of big government to impose their world-view on freedom-loving "real Americans." That cracks me up because these are people who have clearly never met Robert Kronovet or had a conversation with him. Believe me when I tell you, that's not his motivation.

Those smokers who complain that they already can't smoke in bars, restaurants, or parks, at bus stops, on the Third Street Promenade, or on much of our iconic Santa Monica Pier can cry me a river — then build a bridge and get over it. They still have the right to smoke, of course, because this is a free country and it's not a crime to be self-destructive (thank God); but those of us who choose not to smoke also have a right to breathe smoke-free air. While that doesn't mean we have a right to never be exposed to second-hand smoke, it does mean that it's the smoker's responsibility to keep his or her smoke away from the rest of us. Kronovet's proposal simply makes that responsibility a legal obligation in a city known for its ocean breezes and jasmine-scented streets.

KENNY MACK is a multi-platform content provider with four-quadrant crossover appeal who doesn't judge the smokers in his life, but wishes they would quit. His past columns are archived at www.ifyoumissedit.com and he can be reached at kennymack@gmail.com.

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Santa Monica Daily Press — Visit us online at smdp.com

PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Kevin Herrera
editor@smdp.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Daniel Archuleta
daniela@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER
Melody Hanatani
melodyh@smdp.com

CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER
Brandon Wise
brandonw@smdp.com

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Morgan Genser
news@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Bill Bauer, David Pisarra, Meredith Carroll, Kenny Mack, Jack Neworth, Lloyd Garver, Dr. Reese Halter, Taylor Van Arsdale, Dane Robert Swanson, Ryan Hyatt, Steve Breen, Elizabeth Brown, Merv Hecht, Ron Scott Smith, Mike Heayn, Brian Hepp, Mariel Howsepian, Cynthia Citron, Amanda Cushman, Steve Parker and Phyllis Chavez

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER
Fabian Lewkowicz

NEWS INTERNS
Catherine Cain, Marissa Lyman, Carlee Jensen, Derrick Oliver
news@smdp.com

PHOTOGRAPHY INTERNS
Ray Solano
news@smdp.com

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER
Rob Schwenker
schwenker@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Grace Wang
gracew@smdp.com

ADVERTISING TRAFFIC FACILITATOR
Amber Kessee
amberk@smdp.com

OPERATIONS MANAGER
Connie Sommerville
connies@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Darren Ouellette
production@smdp.com

PRODUCTION DESIGNER
Alejandro Cantarero
production@smdp.com

CIRCULATION
Keith Wyatt
Osvaldo Paganini
circulation@smdp.com

Santa Monica Daily Press
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410 Broadway, Suite B
Santa Monica, CA 90401
OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
FAX (310) 576-9913

Visit us online at smdp.com

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Going Postal

Steve "the Mailman" Breen
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Gobble gobble, global warming

BY A STROKE OF LUCK, I HAVE THE delicious honor of writing the column that precedes Thanksgiving. So please allow me to introduce the first annual Golden Gobbler Award for 2009. This accolade is bountifully bestowed, by me, to any person, place, thing, organization or focus group that has, by its merit, demonstrated a complete and utterly inarguable talent for being as smart as the dumbest animal on the chopping block, the classic Thanksgiving turkey.

If "you are what you eat," as it is said, are you a vegetable, a fruit, a nut, a flake or a stuffed turkey? Put all those together and it sounds like the population base of Hollywood on Oscar night or Perez Hilton all the time.

After careful consideration of the many entrants worthy of my indelicate disdain, I award this year's 2009 Golden Gobbler Award to the environmental movement in all its diarrhetic manifestations and its head profiteering prophet and peripatetic penguin, Albert Gore Jr.!

As the world's largest living Golden Gobbler waddling in at 10,000 tons of greenhouse gas, Al Gore has conned the pubic into believing he is a science authority. Is it an inconvenient truth that while attending Harvard he scored a mere D in Natural Science 6 (Man's Place in Nature) and a C-minus in Natural Science 118 (How Doorknobs Work)?

While at St. Alban's, the future "Father Earth" scored a meager 488 out of 800 in physics and a 519 out of 800 in chemistry. Is it unreasonable to presume that a minimal competence in physics and chemistry would be incumbent in order to understand, at the very least, the laws of thermodynamics and meteorology?

If Al was any denser, he'd be a brick fence.

Let me get this straight, all of you eco-cultists from the High Church of Planetary Intemperance are trusting the mythology of your beliefs to a guy who says publicly that the molten core of the Earth is "several million degrees?" Folks, if that were an inconvenient truth then the Earth would be a star. And after the recent leaks of e-mails and documents from the UK Climatic Research Unit there is enough dispute that the global warming strumpets have been fluffing the data on this allegedly "settled science" since the 1990s. So take your hockey stick graph and recycle it through your tree ring data, Mr. and Ms. Enviro-dork.

Here's other great "scientific research" that is paid for with public money for the bovine scatology known as global warming:

It has been determined, through the "science" of global warming theory, that the carbon footprint of the 50 million turkeys cooked, pies baked and air miles traveled on Thanksgiving will produce over 370,000 tons of greenhouse gas. So while you're roasting Big Bird in your Fratelli Chiantishire oven, you have also allegedly cooked the goose of several endangered polar bears as well.

No cause for alarm though as two global warming experts who specialize in sustainable living, Brenda and Robert Vale of Victoria University, have come up with a novel solution to lessen the impact of your wanton Thanksgiving Day gluttony. They have determined that the eco-pawprint of the average "pet dog is twice that of a 4.6 litre Land Cruiser driven 10,000 km/year" by assessing the carbon emissions from the amount of land and resources required to create the food needed to feed little Sparky.

Their anarcho-primitive new book, "Time to Eat the Dog: The Real Guide to Sustainable Living" suggests that the family pooch has to make the ultimate sacrifice to save the planet. How this is going to square up with PETA is anyone's guess. After all, these are two green-thinking sustainable-living researchers talking about turning your Chinese shar-pei into a wonton snack tray. But PETA already has a history of needlessly euthanizing animals, so what the heck, there's an entire market share to be realized in the "alternative meat" industry.

Think "McDoggie's," "Jack Russell-in-the-Box" or try the new "Chihuahua Chalupa" at Taco Bell.

This ground breaking work in eco-political correctness will, in all likelihood, be a best seller here in Santa Monica. Probably as big as "Going Rogue." Folks, if you're jammed for time to get that 20-pound gobbler to the table before Aunt Martha comes over, park an apple in Sparky's mouth, pop him in the oven and, voila, you'll have a Thanksgiving Day novelty meal that the family will rave about for years to come!

But if you really want to understand the eco-politically correct fatwas of the fashionable idiots of cranio-rectal environmentalism then sit back from those tender, meaty niblets smothered in giblet gravy and ponder, that if the golden retriever before you is the cap-and-trade entree, will you be the carbon-offset dessert?

STEVE BREEN will be going out for sushi on Thanksgiving Day and is still "best looking mailman at the U.S. Post Office." He can be reached at dulcamarax@yahoo.com.

The Q Line

No smoking in apartments?

A Rent Control Board member is supporting a ban on smoking in all apartments in Santa Monica. He plans to send the idea on to the City Council.

So, this week's Q-Line question asks:

Would you support an apartment smoking ban or do you think it goes too far?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press.

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Dec 1	Var	Milikan	Milikan	3pm
Dec 3	Var	Lynwood	Lynwood	3pm
Dec 8	Var	Loyola	Loyola	3pm
BOYS BASKETBALL				
Dec 7	Var	Beverly Hills Tournament		
COED WRESTLING				
Dec 2	Var	Samo 4-way		3pm
Dec 4	Var	Cossack Challenge	Westminister	TBA
Dec 5	Var	Cossack Challenge	Westminister	9am
GIRLS SOCCER				
Dec 2	Var	Mira Costa	Mira Costa	3pm
Dec 5	Var	South Tournament		TBA
Dec 9	Var	San Pedro	JAMS	3:30pm

Saint Monica Catholic High School

Date	Team	Opponent	Location	Time
GIRLS SOCCER				
Dec 4	Var	IMHS	El Segundo	4:15pm
Dec 8	Var	Animo	Airport Park	3:15pm
Dec 10	Var	Buckley	Airport Park	3:15pm
BOYS SOCCER				
Dec 1	Var	Windward	Windward	TBA
Dec 3	Var	Animo	Animo	4:30pm
Dec 4	Var	St. Genevieve	Airport Park	4:30pm
BOYS BASKETBALL				
Nov 30	Var	SMCHS Tour	SMCHS	TBA
Dec 8	Var	St. Anthony Tour	St. Anthony	TBA
GIRLS BASKETBALL				
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STOCK MARKET

Optimistic Fed outlook helps market pare losses

SARA LEPRO & TIM PARADIS
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK A brighter economic forecast from the Federal Reserve helped the stock market pare steep losses that followed uninspiring reports on consumer sentiment and housing.

Stocks slipped from 13-month highs in light trading Tuesday as gains in health care companies helped offset drops in financial and industrial stocks. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 17 points a day after jumping by 133.

The market strengthened in afternoon trading as the Federal Reserve released minutes from its latest meeting, during which it pledged to keep rates low for the foreseeable future and said inflation remained at bay. The Fed raised its expectations for economic growth during the second half of this year, but said unemployment will remain high.

That followed the Conference Board's report that its Consumer Confidence Index rose to 49.5 in November from a revised reading of 48.7 in October. While better than expected, the report shows that consumers remain gloomy heading into the holiday season. A reading above 90 means the economy is on solid footing.

A report of the fourth straight month of improving house prices in September did little to shore up confidence. The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller home price index rose 0.3 percent in September from the previous month.

The government also revised its calculation of third-quarter economic growth down to 2.8 percent from its original estimate of 3.5 percent, the latest sign that the recovery is likely to be slow and bumpy.

"Today, as far as the economic data goes, I think we have a bit of a hung jury," said Howard Ward, chief investment officer of the GAMCO Growth Fund.

Ward said a warning from China's central bank that commercial banks there should control their lending also weighed on the market, particularly financial stocks. The comments raised concerns that the Chinese government could take steps to keep growth in check.

The market's modest moves came after a rally on Monday carried the Dow to its highest level in more than a year. A weakening dollar and an upbeat report on housing lured investors back into stocks after a three-day losing streak.

The Dow ended down 17.24, or 0.2 percent, to 10,433.71 after falling as much as 91 points. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 0.59, or 0.1 percent, to 1,105.65, while the Nasdaq composite index fell 6.83, or 0.3 percent, to 2,169.18.

The dollar's weakness has been a big driver of the stock market this year. Investors have been taking advantage of record-low interest rates to invest in assets other than cash that can earn them better returns.

As the end of the year approaches, however, safe-haven assets like the dollar and Treasurys have become more appealing as investors seek to safeguard some of their gains. At the same time, some investors who missed out on the rally that began in March are looking for opportunities to get in, creating a back-and-forth pattern that has become familiar in recent weeks.

"There are people that have done quite well and maybe they want to protect themselves, but fear and greed still drive the market and I think there are plenty of people out there that want in on the action," said William Rutherford, president of Rutherford Investment Management in Portland, Ore.

A stronger dollar put pressure on commodities. When the dollar rises, it makes commodities and related products more expensive for buyers overseas.

The ICE Futures US dollar index, a widely used measure of the dollar against other currencies, rose 0.1 percent. Oil prices fell $1.54 to settle at $76.02 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Gold prices rose.

Among health care stocks, Medtronic Inc. jumped more than 7 percent after the medical device maker reported a surprising 59 percent increase in its quarterly profit and raised its full-year forecast. It gained $2.94 to $43.25.

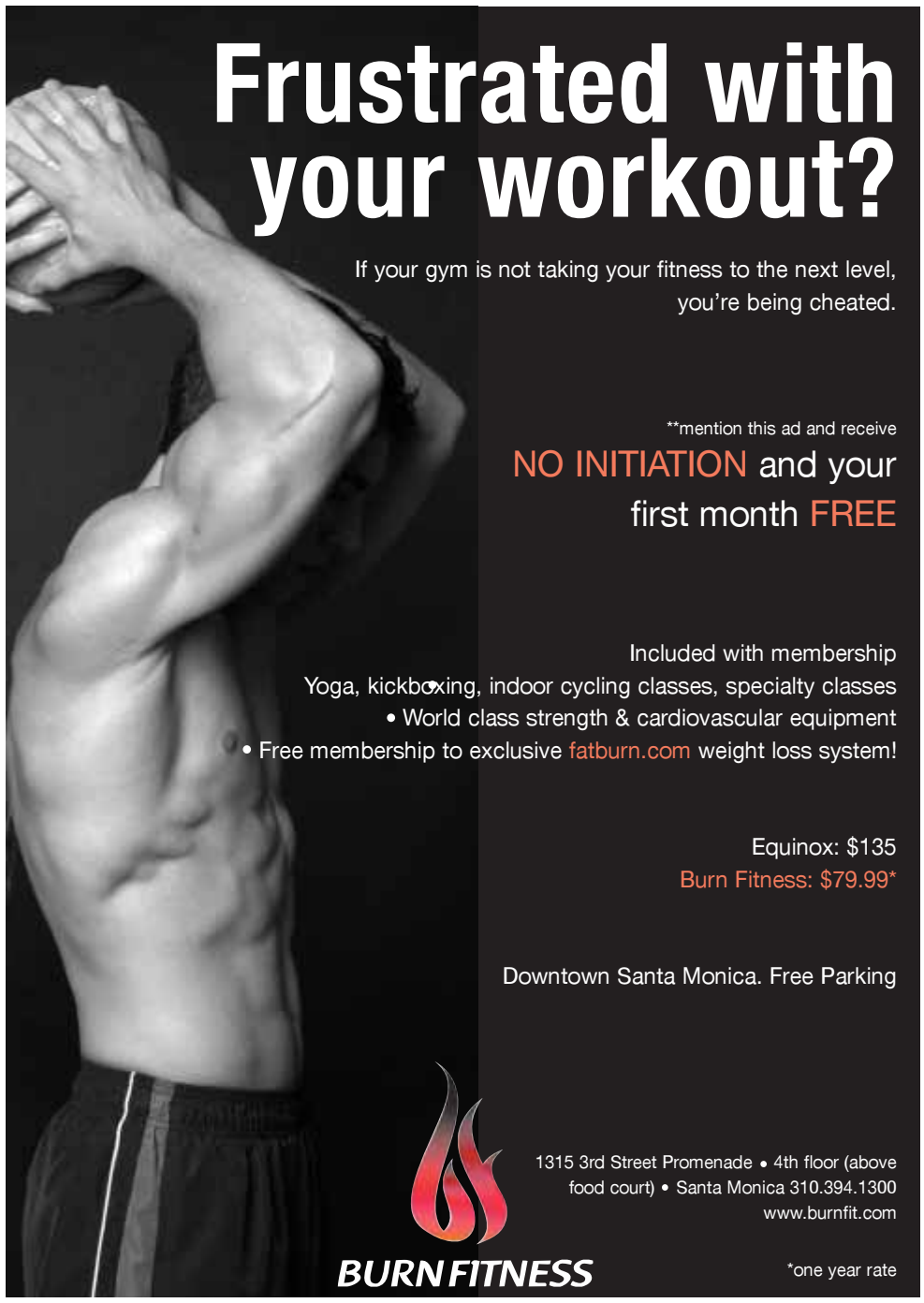
Bond prices rose after a strong auction of five-year notes. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, fell to 3.31 percent from 3.36 percent late Monday. The yield on the five-month note dropped to 2.10 percent from 2.18 percent.

Falling stocks narrowly outpaced those that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to a light 952 million shares, compared with 979.9 million Monday.

Analysts expect trading to be choppy this week amid light trading volume heading into the Thanksgiving holiday.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies fell 2.23, or 0.4 percent, to 592.58.

Overseas, China's Shanghai index fell 3.5 percent, its biggest decline in three months, after the warning from that country's central bank. Japan's Nikkei stock average fell 1 percent. In Europe, Britain's FTSE 100 fell 0.6 percent, while Germany's DAX index fell 0.6 percent and France's CAC-40 lost 0.8 percent.







Real Estate 101

Mike Heayn
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Devil is in the details of apartment renovation

LATELY AS I DRIVE AND LISTEN TO THE RADIO I hear more and more commercials about businesses reducing prices on items they are selling. One commercial that sticks out in my mind is regarding a local grocer, which has reduced prices as much as 20 percent on food items. This goes to show that in tough economic times businesses and people are looking for ways to save money. This frugality applies to apartment owners who are looking to save money on apartment renovations.

It is easy to forget that behind a paying tenant lies an apartment owner who is responsible for a mortgage, property taxes, property insurance and a litany of other expenses that must be paid on a monthly basis. Therefore, it is important for an owner to keep units occupied. One of the problems apartment owners face when a unit goes vacant is renovating or updating the unit so it shows well for new perspective tenants.

Even in tough economic times it is possible to do minor updates to a unit that can make the apartment more marketable. An owner should always paint a unit if it has been occupied for more than a couple years. Painting a unit does a tremendous amount to freshen up the appearance of the apartment at a minimal cost. If a unit has recently been painted it may be possible to simply patch any holes and paint over any marks on the walls and ceilings. An owner should keep in mind that the best color to use when painting is white. It is up to the owner to allow the tenant to paint walls, but at the time the tenant leaves all walls and ceilings should be returned to their original color.

After the painting is done, an owner should not place the old light and electrical outlet covers back on the walls, but instead replace them with new clean white covers. Electrical and outlet covers are inexpensive and a small detail that stand out on a clean, newly painted wall. One benefit is that these items are available in bulk, usually 10 packs, which normally run less than $15 a box.

Once the walls are painted and the outlet covers are replaced, the owner should look up at the light fixtures. As I have stated in multiple past articles, ceiling fans are a great way to cool an apartment along with adding light. Furthermore, a ceiling fan is an amenity that many tenants enjoy and look for in a unit once they have experienced the pleasure and low cost of a ceiling fan in comparison to using an air conditioner.

Again, the idea is to stay neutral and choose white ceiling fans. It is easy to get lost in ceiling fan options, but staying with a white ceiling fan will keep the room looking clean at an approximate cost of $70 a fan. Another item an owner should look at are the blinds. Older blinds should always be cleaned, but replaced if necessary after a tenant moves out. Painting, changing the outlet covers and installing ceiling fans will do a great deal to improve the look of a room, but there is still the floor that needs to be addressed.

When it comes to bedrooms, there are basically two options for flooring: carpet or hardwood. By hardwood flooring I am including laminate hardwood or any type of hardwood flooring-like product. Since the idea is to keep costs down, if carpet exists in the unit and is in good condition, have a professional come out and steam clean it. A quality professional can take many stains out of carpet, but an owner should not fool themselves if the carpet needs to be replaced. Remember tenants are looking at multiple units, so an owner should replace carpet if it needs to be replaced. Usually after five years of normal wear and tear it is time for new carpet.

If an owner is going to replace carpet, they should think about installing a hardwood floor product instead. Many hardwood laminate floors are extremely durable and have warranties that last 10 years or more. Some high quality laminate hardwood floors also come in at a price point near high-end carpet, making it an easy decision for apartment owners.

Once the walls have been painted, the light fixtures have been changed and the flooring has been dealt with an owner should change all old bathroom fixtures such as faucets, knobs, etc. These small details, once again, make a big difference.

They say the devil is in the details and that is true with the kitchen as much as it is with the bathroom. With $40 and a screwdriver, an owner can change out cabinet knobs and really add that extra something to an older kitchen. New knobs really add that "pop" to old cabinets that are still in good condition.

With the right perspective an owner can turnover an apartment within a couple of weeks at a relatively low cost. An apartment owner should remember that a quick apartment update is not going to yield the highest market rent, but it will help to get a tenant in the unit faster than no update at all. Sometimes a $40 set of new kitchen cabinet knobs can make the difference between renting a $1,500 apartment two weeks versus two months after it is vacant — the difference is significant in terms of a loss of income. An apartment owner should remember that they can be pennywise without being foolish when it comes to apartment unit updating.

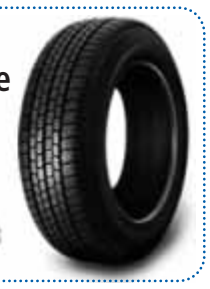
MIKE HEAYN is a real estate investor and commercial loan consultant, specializing in multi-family lending. He can be emailed at maheayn@yahoo.com.

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Antarctica iceberg flotilla heads for New Zealand

RAY LILLEY
Associated Press Writer

WELLINGTON, New Zealand A flotilla of hundreds of icebergs that split off Antarctic ice shelves is drifting toward New Zealand and could pose a risk to ships in the south Pacific Ocean, officials said Tuesday.

The nearest one, measuring about 30 yards (meters) tall, was 160 miles (260 kilometers) southeast of New Zealand's Stewart Island, Australian glaciologist Neal Young said. He couldn't say how many icebergs in total were roaming the Pacific, but he counted 130 in one satellite image alone and 100 in another.

Large numbers of icebergs last floated close to New Zealand in 2006, when some were visible from the coastline — the first such sighting since 1931.

Maritime officials have issued navigation warnings for the area south of the country.

"It's an alert to shipping to be aware these potential hazards are around and to be on the lookout for them," Maritime New Zealand spokeswoman Sophie Hazelhurst said.

No major shipping lanes or substantial fishing grounds are in the area, but most ships there have little hull protection if they collide with an iceberg — which typically has 90 percent of its mass under water. Very few adventure sailors would be in the waters in November, when it is still the southern hemisphere's spring.

Maritime New Zealand safety services general manager Nigel Clifford said as the icebergs drift closer "the more the potential risks grow of them posing a hazard to shipping" as they break up and float lower in — or just under — the ocean surface.

The agency was "keeping a close eye on the increasing risk ... it's tracking iceberg positions and has begun initial planning for any incident," he told The AP.

He noted the area is not a major shipping lane, with commercial fishing vessels and a limited number of passenger cruise ships passing through and reporting positions for the drifting ice.

Icebergs are routinely sloughed off as part of the natural development of ice shelves, but Young said the rate appeared to be increasing as a result of regional warming in Antarctica.

"Whole ice shelves have broken up," he said, as temperatures have risen in Antarctica, where they are up as much as 5 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees Celsius) in the past 60 years.

But he cautioned against linking the appearance of the bergs in New Zealand waters to global warming: The phenomenon depends as much on weather patterns and ocean currents as on the rate at which icebergs are calving off Antarctic ice shelves.

In the current case, a cold snap around southern New Zealand and favorable ocedan currents conspired to push the towering visitors, which have drifted around Antarctica for the past nine years, to the region intact.

"Icebergs this far north (near New Zealand) are not that unusual," said New Zealand glaciologist Dr. Wendy Lawson Lawson, noting that an iceberg's reach was determined by its size.

"If an iceberg starts off large, it will last longer in the sea. Its movement and where it ends up is determined by the weather, wind, ocean currents and the temperature," Lawson, head of the department of geography at Canterbury University, told The Associated Press.

On Monday, Rodney Russ, expedition leader on the tourist ship Spirit of Enderby, spotted a 500-foot-long (150-meter-long) iceberg about 60 miles (100 kilometers) northeast of Macquarie Island and heading north — about 500 miles (800 kilometers) south of New Zealand. Australian scientists reported another mass of 20 icebergs drifting north past Macquarie Island two weeks ago.

Young said satellite images showed the group of icebergs, spread over a sea area of 600 miles by 440 miles (1,000 kilometers by 700 kilometers), moving on ocean currents away from Antarctica.

Icebergs are formed as the ice shelf develops. Snow falls on the ice sheet and forms more ice, which flows to the edges of the floating ice shelves. Eventually, pieces around the edge break off.

Comatose for 23 years Belgian feels reborn

RAF CASERT
Associated Press Writer

BRUSSELS With a caretaker holding his hand, a Belgian man who was diagnosed as comatose for 23 years typed out a message Tuesday that he felt reborn after decades of loneliness and frustration.

A leading bioethicist, however, expressed skepticism that the man was truly communicating on his own.

Car-crash victim Rom Houben was diagnosed as being in a vegetative state but appears to have been conscious the whole time, doctors here said. An expert using a specialized type of brain scan that was not available in the 1980s says he finally realized Houben was conscious and provided him with the equipment to communicate.

Assisted by a speech therapist who rapidly moved his finger letter by letter along a touch-screen keyboard, Houben told AP Television News that years of being unable to move or communicate left him feeling "alone, lonely, frustrated, but also blessed with my family."

The therapist, Linda Wouters, told APTN that she can feel Houben guiding her hand with gentle pressure from his fingers, and that she feels him objecting when she moves his hand toward an incorrect letter.

"It was especially frustrating when my family needed me. I could not share in their sorrow. We could not give each other support," Houben wrote during the interview at the 't Weyerke institute in eastern Belgium.

"Just imagine. You hear, see, feel and think but no one can see that. You undergo things. You cannot participate in life."

Arthur Caplan, a bioethics professor at the University of Pennsylvania, said he is skeptical of Houben's ability to communicate after seeing video of his hand being moved along the keyboard.

"That's called 'facilitated communication,'" Caplan said. "That is ouija board stuff. It's been discredited time and time again. When people look at it, it's usually the person doing the pointing who's doing the messages, not the person they claim they are helping."

Caplan also said the statements Houben allegedly made with the computer seem unnatural for someone with such a profound injury and an inability to communicate for decades.

Asked how he felt when his consciousness was discovered, Houben responded through the aide that: "I especially felt relief. Finally be able to show that I was indeed there."

"Just like with a baby, it happens with a lot of stumbling," he wrote.

The doctor who discovered that Houben had been wrongly diagnosed said that he is re-examining dozens of other cases.

Dr. Steven Laureys said he has discovered some degree of consciousness using state-of-the-art equipment in other patients but won't say how many. He looks at about 50 cases from around the world a year but none are as extreme as that of Rom Houben, who was fully conscious inside a paralyzed body. Many center on the fine distinction between a vegetative state and minimal consciousness.

He said Tuesday that: "It is very difficult to tell the difference."

His studies showed that some 40 percent of patients with consciousness disorders are wrongly given a diagnosis of a vegetative state.

"It is clearly unacceptable. It is four times out of ten that they think the patient is in a vegetative state but in reality he is minimally conscious," Laureys said.

Patients from Europe and around the world brought to his center in Liege for a second opinion go through and PET scans, MRI's and a battery of other tests during a weeklong reassessment.

"Sometimes patients fly in and there is all this hope. But after the tests we have to confirm they are the opposite case from Rom and that there is no error," Laureys said. "But that too helps the family accept reality."

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NASA Predator surveys state's fire aftermath

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES An unmanned NASA Predator aircraft equipped with an infrared imaging sensor has flown over large areas burned by two California wildfires to help the Forest Service assess damage, the administration said Tuesday.

Operating from NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards Air Force Base, the Predator flew over the 250 square miles burned by this summer's Station Fire in Angeles National Forest and the 57-square-mile area scorched by the 2008 Piute Fire in Sequoia National Forest and other federal land in Kern County.

The aircraft carried a scanner with filters to detect light in visible, infrared and thermal wavelengths.

The images were then sent by satellite to NASA's Ames Research Center at Moffett Field, Calif., and were superimposed over Google Earth and Microsoft Virtual Earth maps before being sent to the Forest Service.

The images depict different levels of fire damage in varying hues of color.

The Predator, which NASA has given the Native American name Ikhana, is part of a fleet of unmanned aircraft types developed for military purposes that Dryden is using for earth science research.

NASA said that the two burn areas were scanned Thursday in a seven-hour flight to the Piute burn area northwest of Edwards and then southeast to the Station Fire area.

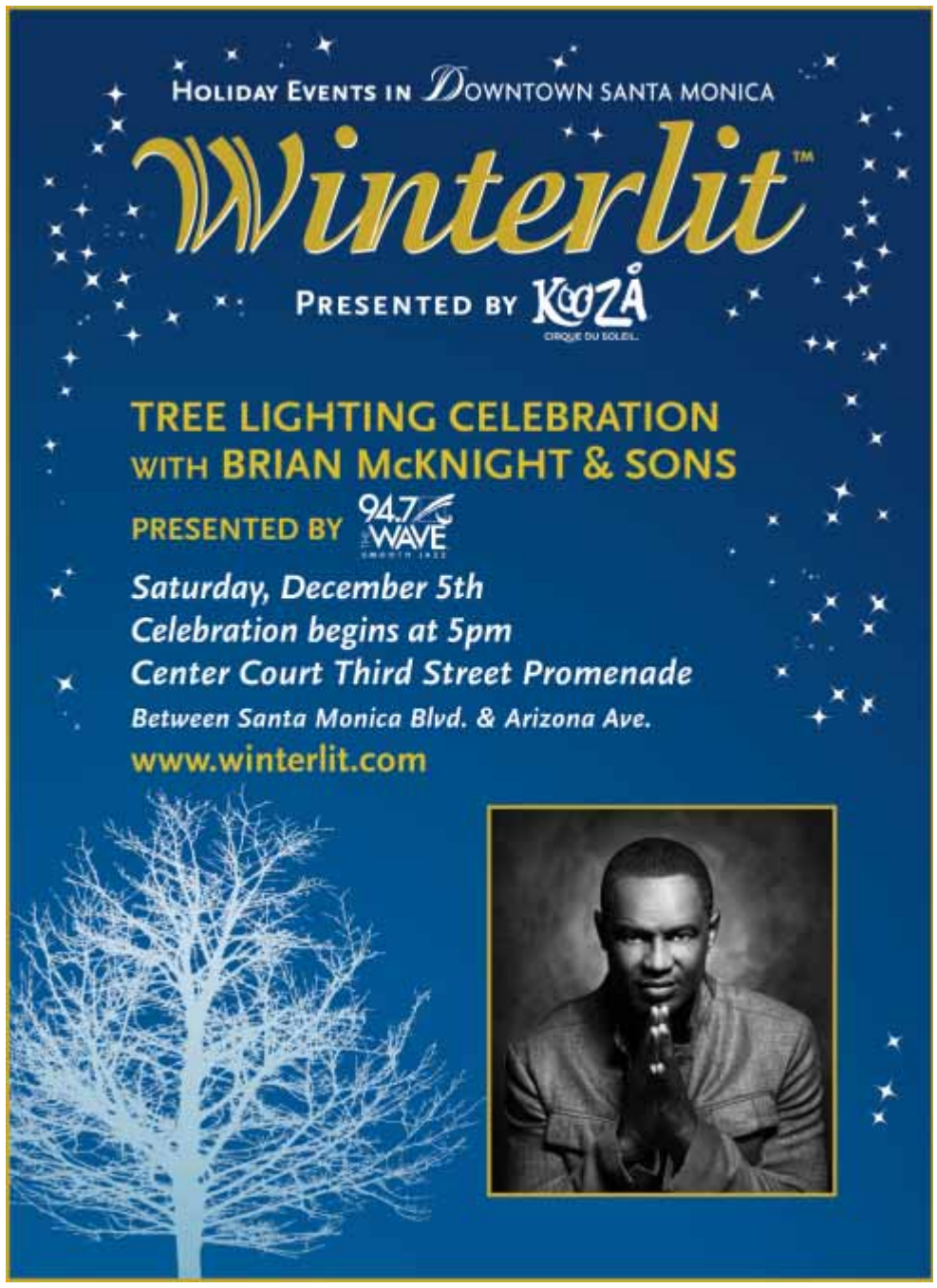
The latter portion of the flight by the remotely piloted aircraft occurred in the national airspace system and required close coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration, NASA said.

The Station Fire was ignited by arson on Aug. 26 in the San Gabriel Mountains and grew into the largest fire in Los Angeles County history. Thousands of homes in suburbs on the perimeter were threatened and 89 were destroyed. Two firefighters died when their vehicle plunged off a road when flames overran a fire camp.

Authorities have warned that there could be more damage. Winter rains on the vast areas of steep slopes left bare by the fire could unleash huge flows of debris-laden water into foothill communities.

The Piute Fire in June and July 2008 destroyed or damaged six homes and 45 outbuildings.

The NASA Predator was also used to send fire commanders information on blazes burning throughout the West in 2007-08. It was ready for similar missions this fall but was not needed, said Beth Hagenauer, a Dryden spokeswoman.





Winds stir up ash from burn areas

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES Ash and dust from areas burned by recent wildfires is being blown across Los Angeles County by gusty Santa Ana winds.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District says ash fell Tuesday in the San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys, north and east of downtown Los Angeles.

The AQMD says particles haven't reached unhealthy levels yet but urges people to minimize exposure.

The agency says that everyone, but especially those with heart or lung disease, older adults and children should limit outdoor activities in places where ash and dust is seen in the air.

A vast area of the Angeles National Forest north and east of Los Angeles was denuded this past summer by the Station Fire, the largest in Los Angeles County history. Other areas were burned by smaller fires.

Schwarzenegger: Parking a mistake

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger says photographs of his Porsche illegally parked in a Beverly Hills red zone are proof that even he makes mistakes.

The Republican governor said Tuesday his Saturday violation shows "no one is perfect — not even me."

The photos displayed Monday on celebrity Web site TMZ.com show Schwarzenegger getting into the silver convertible.

SM's garden program attracting interest

FROM GARDEN PAGE 1

noted in the application her experience working with AmeriCorps, which caught the homeowner's eye because her son also worked with the same organization.

"I did have qualms about having a total stranger coming into my property and getting to know my dog but you can't live life worrying about those kinds of things," Grafton said.

Green, who works in the environmental and occupational health department at UCLA, was on the waiting list for a community garden plot for four years, never receiving a call from City Hall about an opening.

"It's a little bit of a risk because you never know what someone's expectations are going to be but it has worked out beautifully," Green, who lives in a townhouse, said.

Growing up on a farm, Green said she found gardening to be a form of therapy.

She gardens about five hours a week, mostly on the weekends.

There are more than 175 residents on the waiting list for three community gardens — Main Street, Park Drive and Euclid Park — that have about 117 plots amongst them. Applicants must be a Santa Monica resident and pay $60 annually for their plot of land. It takes about five years on average to get a plot.

Residents have long called on city officials to expand the community gardens program by building more plots, including in the Pico Neighborhood where there are several vacant lots, including on the corner of 20th Street and Delaware Avenue.

"Shared gardening is a community-building benefit to both the homeowner and the gardener, and growing our own food locally can be an important part of Santa Monica's sustainability programs," Councilman Kevin McKeown, who advocated for the garden registry, said. "Our city-owned community garden plots remain oversubscribed, and turning unused lawn and yard space into productive shared gardens expands our capacity to build community and grow local food."

> "OUR CITY-OWNED COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOTS REMAIN OVERSUBSCRIBED, AND TURNING UNUSED LAWN AND YARD SPACE INTO PRODUCTIVE SHARED GARDENS EXPANDS OUR CAPACITY TO BUILD COMMUNITY AND GROW LOCAL FOOD."
>
> Kevin McKeown
> Councilman

melodyh@smdp.com

Two hate crimes reported in Santa Monica this year

FROM CRIMES PAGE 1

The highest rate of hate crimes was found in the Antelope Valley where there are reportedly several active white supremacist groups. The San Fernando Valley had the highest concentration of crimes, including those that were motivated by race, religion and sexual orientation, Marshall Wong, the main author of the report, said.

Approximately 61 percent of crimes reported in the county were driven by racial, ethnic or national origin basis, targeting mostly African-Americans and Latinos.

Hate crimes between the two ethnic groups also remained high — Black victims of racial hate crimes were targeted by Latinos 69 percent of the time and vice versa 61 percent of the time.

Following the controversial gay marriage debate last year with Proposition 8, sexual orientation motivated crimes remained the second largest group with 18 percent. Approximately 81 percent of homophobic crimes targeted gay men.

Religion came in third with the majority of crimes in that category being anti-Jewish.

Gang members accounted for 22 percent of racial hate crimes.

Hate crimes are more common in communities that were once overwhelmingly occupied by one race and are now seeing an influx of a new group.

"It's a consistent problem in parts of South L.A. that were one time overwhelming African-American but have now had large numbers of Latinos moving in," Wong said.

> "WE'RE SUCH A MELTING POT ... AND I THINK WHENEVER YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT IS HATE BASED IT BECOMES SUCH BIG NEWS AND IT'S NOT SOMETHING PROMOTED OR ACCEPTED AS A COMMUNITY."
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> Sgt. Jay Trisler
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LOEWS



Photo courtesy CinemaNX

PLAYING THE PART: **Christian McCay plays the title role in 'Me and Orson Welles.'**

Efron comes of age in 'Me and Orson Welles'

BY TAYLOR VAN ARSDALE
Special to the Daily Press

When I tell you the feel-good, comedic, coming of age flick for the holiday season takes place in New York during the 1930s you might incredulously think, "Yeah, right." So brace yourself for this next revelation — it also involves William Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" as envisioned by iconic American actor, Orson Welles.

It's 1937 and for aspiring actors the Mercury Theatre is the place to be. In "Me and Orson Welles," Zac Efron plays Richard Samuels, a plucky actor with chutzpah who ingratiates himself into the world surrounding legendary actor Orson Welles (brilliantly played by newcomer Christian McCay) as he prepares his version of "Julius Caesar," billed as "Caesar: Death of a Dictator."

Efron is spectacular and charming. His blue eyes sparkle with unbridled idealism as he delves deeper than we've seen in any "High School Musical." We've all been this character at one point or another in our lives so you can't help but root for him. When he wins the role of "Lucius" he inquires as to what became of the actor whom he's replacing. Another cast member gently warns, "He had a personality problem with Orson — meaning he had a personality." And so begins the protagonist's inherent struggle: will he simply "go along and get along" to get what he wants or will he stand up for the ideals in which he believes? The film's denouement answers this question — which I'm not going to give away.

Welles, however is quite the character; he grandstands, is both mercurial and brilliant while manipulating his cast and crew, has affairs with most of his leading ladies, and keeps an ambulance waiting outside so that he may travel uptown whilst avoiding the crunch of traffic. Samuels, like those around him, is clearly under the spell of the larger-than-life Welles.

A scene at a radio station demonstrates the breadth of Welles' talent, which far exceeds those of his fellow thespians. During a ride uptown, (in his ambulance, of course) he reads to Samuels text he has memorized from Booth Tarkington's "The Magnificent Ambersons." Once at the radio station, he invites Samuels to watch and see "how it's done." As the live show begins, Welles veers off script, seamlessly injecting his rehearsed "Ambersons" dialogue. The radio show's producer, who clearly has no idea what's going on, lauds Welles for his extemporaneous take. We know the "extemporaneous" improvisation is the result of Welles' calculating genius.

The film, which addresses many of the myths surrounding the iconic Welles, is largely fictionalized from Robert Kaplow's eponymous novel. For Linklater, "the biggest piece of the puzzle was finding the right guy to play Orson." A few months after optioning the project, Kaplow sent Linklater an e-mail, letting him know there was, "a guy performing a play in New York at this 50-seat theatre … called 'Rosebud: The Lives of Orson Welles.'" Linklater flew to New York and knew he had found the perfect actor to portray Welles on screen. Also of note are Claire Danes as the ambitious Girl Friday, Sonja Jones and James Tupper who captures perfectly the role of Joseph Cotton.

Linklater's "Me and Orson Welles" has an exuberance about it; an idealistic energy — enhanced by the pace of Manhattan, circa 1937. Writers Vince Palmo, Jr. (a former Santa Monica resident) and his wife, Holly Gent Palmo have constructed a real quality film. It's not simply a great film, but a great film with a heart.

news@smdp.com



Photo courtesy Hallmark Hall of Fame

BOY'S BEST FRIEND: **Todd McCray stars in 'A Dog Named Christmas.'**

A 'Dog' movie for the entire family

BY JACK NEWORTH
Special to the Daily Press

Brace yourself folks, Christmas is around the corner. I know because this Sunday, Hallmark Hall of Fame presents the first of the slew of the holiday TV movies we can expect this season. And Hallmark is not subtle about it. The title kinda gives it away. "A Dog Named Christmas."

This family-friendly movie (Hallmark's 237th going back to 1951!) involves a dog and Christmas. (How did you know?) It's about a developmentally challenged 20-year-old boy and his mother and father, and takes place on a picturesque farm in Kansas. (Actually filmed in Regina, Saskatchewan in July.) What it lacks in surprises, is made up for in fine acting and a heartwarming story.

The movie is based on the best-selling novel by Greg Kincaid who actually lives on a Kansas farm. Todd McCray (Noel Fisher) plays the boy, who despite his limitations, has a special gift with animals. He's always nursing sick birds and other little creatures back to health and setting them free.

When Todd hears over the radio about the local animal shelter seeking foster homes for their dogs over the Christmas holidays, the plot begins. What transpires changes lives and the entire town forever. (Holiday "Foster a Pet " programs exist in many parts of rural America.)

Todd's father, George McCray (Bruce Greenwood) is a Vietnam vet who still carries the physical (leg injury) and emotional scars from the war. He has adult children who have moved away, Todd, his youngest, and a farm to run. The last thing he wants is a dog, even temporarily. George worries that Todd won't be able to care for the animal and that it will be traumatic for him to return it to the shelter after Christmas.

Todd's mother, and George's insightful wife, Mary Ann (Linda Edmond) thinks a foster dog would be a learning experience for her challenged son. Obviously, George loses this battle or we have no movie.

A word (actually 93 words) about the fine acting in this movie. Canadian-born Bruce Greenwood is superb in everything he does. My favorite was his brilliant portrayal of JFK in "Thirteen Days." And Linda Edmond was outstanding in "Stop Loss," playing the mother of a troubled Iraq war hero. Noel Fisher as Todd has perhaps the most difficult role and rises to the occasion. But back to Kansas, or should I say Saskatchewan?

With the absolutely clear understanding that the dog will go back the day after Christmas, Todd and George go to the shelter. Todd falls in love with a yellow lab and decides to name him Christmas, at least for the short stay with the McCray family who are expecting their adult children and grandchildren for the holiday.

Interspersed in the farm locale are the occasional and somewhat violent flashbacks to Vietnam. In many ways, the movie is not about a dog, or a mentally challenged boy, but George McCray, who has shut down emotionally. There are some plot twists here that I won't spoil for you.

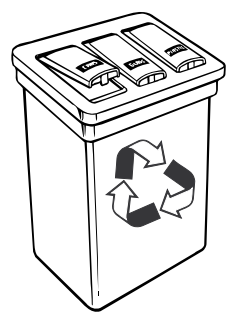
The movie is directed by Peter Werner from a teleplay by Jenny Wingfield. The executive producer is Brent Shields who did "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler," one of my favorite Hallmark Hall of Fame movies, while the producer is Andrew Gottlieb who also produced another of my Hallmark favorites, "The Russell Girl."

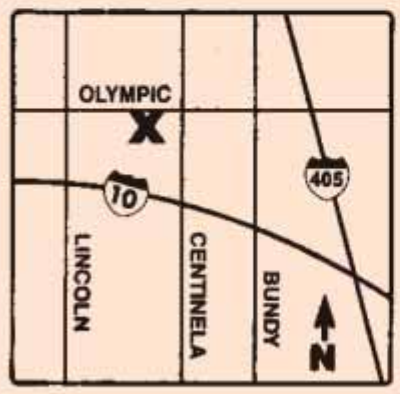
"A Dog Named Christmas" is perhaps too predictable in many places, but in some it's not, including the ending. Either way, it's one of those rare movies where parents will be able to sit down and enjoy it with their children. It airs Sunday, Nov. 29, on CBS, 9-11 p.m.

JACK also writes the "Laughing Matters" column, which appears every Friday. He can be reached at Jackneworth@yahoo.com.

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Clergy abuse victims criticize RI bishop

MICHELLE R. SMITH
Associated Press Writer

PROVIDENCE, R.I. Clergy sex abuse victims and their supporters said Tuesday that Rhode Island's Roman Catholic bishop is not doing enough to protect children from pedophile priests even as he's taken on Democratic Rep. Patrick Kennedy for his stance on abortion rights.

A small group of protesters gathered outside Bishop Thomas Tobin's office in Providence two days after news broke that the bishop had asked Kennedy in 2007 not to take Holy Communion because he supports abortion rights.

"He claims that it's important that we protect the unborn. But it's equally as important to protect those who have been born and those young children who have been raped and sodomized by clerics and priests. But yet he seems to protect those clerics," said Ruth Moore, of Hull, Mass.

The group called on Tobin to publish the names of priests from the diocese who have been convicted of or admitted molesting children, or if a thorough investigation has turned up credible evidence of child molestation, even if no conviction resulted.

The diocese has said in court papers that 125 of its priests have been accused of molesting children. While many of their names are known from lawsuits and news accounts, others have never been released.

Mike Guilfoyle, a spokesman for the diocese, said some of those allegations were recanted, found to be false, or made after a priest has died, so he cannot defend himself. He said the diocese has taken extensive efforts to protect children, including taking out ads and encouraging people to come forward, as well as responding immediately to accusations of abuse and cooperating with law enforcement.

The protesters said they would like the names to be posted on the diocesan Web site, a suggestion that Guilfoyle said the diocese is open to considering.

Such a list could help parents keep their children away from molesters and help employers screen potential hires, the protesters said. Skip Shea, from Uxbridge, Mass., who was abused by a priest as a child, told of seeing his abuser working next to the children's section in a bookstore as he awaited trial for abusing children.

"There has to be some sort of safeguard to protect kids. I don't think it ends with removing them from active ministry and I don't think it ends with defrocking," he said.

Shea, who has left the Catholic church, says he doesn't understand why Tobin is targeting Kennedy.

"Everybody, including these priests, deserve Communion. Because that's the whole point of it. That's part of the point of the church. I don't think anybody should be disqualified from it," he said. "It's politics. I think the bishop's playing politics."

The Catholic Action League of Massachusetts called Tobin's action an "act of courage, fidelity and charity, intended to prevent scandal and sacrilege."

"Bishop Tobin is being a good pastor by urging Congressman Kennedy not to commit the mortal sin of receiving Communion while in a state of grave sin," said the league's executive director, C.J. Doyle.

Bill Nash of the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests called on Tobin to use his authority as a spiritual figurehead to protect children.

"There are a lot of moral issues that he has to take leadership in, and the protection of children is a very important and critical area of moral leadership that he should be taking a more proactive stand with," Nash said.

Facebook creates dual-class structure, but no stock offering

BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK Facebook has created a dual-class stock structure designed to give founder Mark Zuckerberg and other existing shareholders control over the company.

The move could be seen as laying the groundwork for an initial public offering, though the social network said Tuesday it had no plans to go public "at this time."

The dual-class structure is what Google Inc.'s founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, created to keep voting control over that company before it went public in 2004. Google's Class B shares, owned by Page, Brin, CEO Eric Schmidt and some directors, hold 10 times the voting power as its regular, Class A stock.

In a statement, Facebook Inc. said the company introduced the stock structure because its existing shareholders wanted to keep control when voting on issues it faces.

The company didn't say which executives and employees would get the shares with the higher voting power. The Wall Street Journal, citing unnamed sources, said Facebook was converting the shares of all its current stockholders into Class B shares that, like Google's, hold 10 times the voting power of Class A stock.

That would be a departure from Google's decision to keep such shares in the hands of a few top executives — something for which the search company has been criticized.

Dual-class structures aren't limited to high-tech companies. The New York Times Co., among others, has one to give control to the Ochs-Sulzberger family even though its members own only one-fifth of the newspaper company.

Creating a class of shares with more voting power and keeping those shares in the hands of founders and employees can potentially allow a company to take more risks even at the expense of short-term investors, said Standard & Poor's equity analyst Scott Kessler, who has followed Google since its IPO.

Both Google and Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc., another company with a dual-class stock structure, take a long-term view of their business and isn't always seen as friendly to investors, he added.

For example, neither company has ever split its stock: Google's shares closed Tuesday at $583.09, while Berkshire's was at $102,700. A stock split makes a company's shares cheaper, opening them to more investors, even those who could simply looking to make a quick buck.

CDC warns: Holiday could bring more swine flu

MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

ATLANTA Let us give thanks — and pass the Purell.

Your family might be sharing more than turkey and pumpkin pie this Thanksgiving. Swine flu may also be on the table — and at crowded airports and shopping malls.

Just as the pandemic seems to be waning around the country, some health officials are worried that holiday gatherings could lead to more infections. So the government has launched a new travel-health campaign.

"It's important to remember the things that everybody can do to stay healthy," said Dr. Beth Bell of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Thanksgiving is typically followed by at least a modest bump in early seasonal flu cases, according to reports from the past few years. But this, of course, is not a typical year. Swine flu is a new virus that accounts for nearly all flu cases right now.

Despite weeks of declining infections, health officials are staying vigilant. The federal government is putting up posters in airports, seaports and border crossings in time for Thanksgiving. The campaign also includes advertisements with slogans such as "Stop, Wash & Go."

The CDC urges people to travel only if they are well, get vaccinated against swine and seasonal flu, wash their hands often, and cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve.

Some 33 million Americans are expected to hit the nation's highways over the Thanksgiving holiday, a slight increase from last year. About 2.3 million more will travel by airplane.

The elbow-to-elbow conditions expected on many flights may pose more of an infection threat than a runny-nosed tike at the other end of a Thanksgiving dinner table. One CDC official even suggested asking that a sick passenger be moved to another part of a plane.

But that's not likely to happen on a crowded airliner or bus, and it isn't much of a solution anyway, said a few people waiting at Atlanta's downtown Greyhound station on Tuesday morning.

"That's just putting it next to somebody else," said Judd Nelson, 39, waiting to start a two-day bus trip to Phoenix.

Nelson had not been vaccinated against swine flu, and he did not have any hand sanitizer. He was resigned to his fate if someone with swine flu happens to be aboard his bus.

"The way I look at it is, if I get it, I'm going to get it no matter what," he said.

Swine flu has sickened an estimated 22 million Americans, hospitalized about 98,000 and killed 4,000 since it was first identified last April. It is similar to seasonal flu but poses a much bigger threat to children and young adults.

Usually, seasonal flu is just getting going in late November, and holiday get-togethers allow illness to jump from small pockets to other parts of the country. Swine flu, in contrast, has been widespread for months.

"It's not like we expect to see a bunch of infected people going to uninfected cities and towns," said Andrew Pekosz, a flu expert at Johns Hopkins University.

The swine flu pandemic hit in two waves: first in the spring, then a larger wave that started in the late summer.

For the past three weeks, fewer states have been reporting widespread cases. School closings have dropped to the point that there were none on Monday — the first time that's happened since late August — though there were six on Tuesday, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

But there are still plenty of ill people — as many as during the peak of many regular flu seasons, CDC officials say.

Indeed, disease trackers are quick to say that flu is unpredictable. A variety of things could happen, including a third wave or a mutation that could make the virus more deadly or less susceptible to medicines.

"We really don't know what the trajectory is going to be," said Bell, a CDC epidemiologist who has been a leader in the agency's swine flu response.

Seasonal flu usually emerges at this time of year, but some experts think swine flu will muscle aside the seasonal viruses. That probably will not be known until next month, said Dr. Richard Whitley, an infectious diseases specialist at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

At New York's Pennsylvania Station, Katie Almroth was waiting to board a train Tuesday with her 11-month-old daughter Anna, who's been vaccinated for seasonal flu but not for swine flu. They were headed to Harrisburg, Pa., to visit relatives for Thanksgiving.

The 33-year-old nurse from Jersey City, N.J., said she was not worried about traveling during the swine flu pandemic, but felt more comfortable on a train than an airplane with her daughter.

"I must admit I did bring little wipes along," said Almroth, showing the antiseptic wipes she had tossed in her bag with small bottles of hand sanitizer.

USDA: States struggle to administer food stamps

HENRY C. JACKSON
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON With more Americans going hungry than ever before, the Agriculture Department is concerned that dozens of states aren't adequately administering food stamp programs designed to provide food to low-income Americans.

Several states have run the program in a way that is "problematic and resulted in a more complex and difficult enrollment process," the department said in a letter to state administrators dated Nov. 20 and obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press. The letter, signed by Kevin Concannon, the department's undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, says practices in those states "have not served our clients or our taxpayers well."

The letter comes as the department released an annual report on food stamp enrollment and eligibility showing that just 18 states enrolled 70 percent or more of those eligible for food stamps in 2007, the time period covered by the report. Dozens of states failed to reach some of the country's most needy citizens, the report stated.

Food stamp programs "are essential to good nutrition and well-being, especially in tough economic times," Concannon said in a statement commenting on the report.

Two states — Wyoming and California — had fewer than 50 percent of those eligible enrolled to receive food stamps. Many of the states that struggled were among the most populous, including New York, where 61 percent of eligible citizens participated; Florida, where 57 percent participated; and Texas, where 55 percent were enrolled.

The most successful state was Missouri, where nearly 100 percent of those eligible received government aid. Maine, Michigan, Tennessee and Oregon also had participation rates of 87 percent or higher.

Still, the department's letter was a sharp rejoinder to states with high numbers of eligible citizens and low participation rates. It specifically criticized states where private firms, rather than state workers, processed enrollment.

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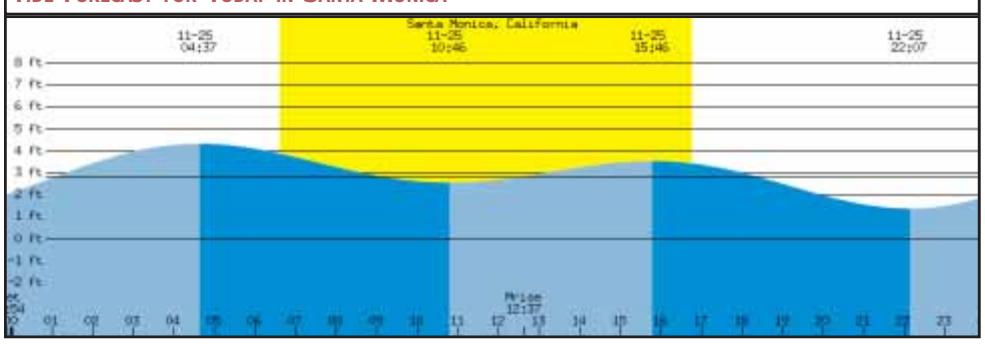
Swell Forecast

Should see a slight increase in NW swell. Anything though above waist high around west facing breaks would likely be rare.

Long Range Synopsis

Looks smaller with knee to waist high surf most everywhere.

Tide Forecast for Today in Santa Monica



BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous four weeks up to the ending date of **November 17, 2009**

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QUICK STATS (for the last 28 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 8
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 38 / ns
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 4 / ns

The Beach Report Card is made possible by: The Diller – von Furstenberg Family Foundation, simplehuman, SIMA

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for 3 days after a rainstorm. After a rain, indicator bacteria counts at beaches throughout California usually far exceed health criteria in the state's Beach Closure and Health Warning Protocol.

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Los Cerrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth.	A+	ns
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	ns
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechusa and Las Alisos creeks.	A+	ns
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach.	A+	ns
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth.	A+	ns
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth.	A+	ns
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private).	A+	ns
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth.	C	ns
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach.	A+	ns
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth.	A	ns
Solstice Canyon at Don Blacker County Beach.	B	ns
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth.	A+	ns
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd..	A	ns
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence.	A+	ns
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily.	B	ns
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east.	A+	ns
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon.	A+	ns
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero).	A+	ns
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs.	A	ns
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach.	A+	ns
Tuna Canyon.	ns	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth.	A	ns
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	A+	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	B	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain).	A+	ns

LOCATION	DRY	WET
Will Rogers State Beach at Bel Air Bay Club drain near fence.	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain.	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain.	A+	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua).	A	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain.	A	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain.	A+	ns
Santa Monica Municipal Pier.	F	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain.	B	ns
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms).	A+	ns
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain.	A	ns
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain.	A+	ns
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain.	A	ns
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain.	C	ns
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south.	A+	ns
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St.	A+	ns
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower.	F	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth.	B	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain.	A+	ns
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach.	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty).	A	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain.	A+	ns
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant.	A+	ns
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain.	A	ns

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A - F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone
WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days
ns -- no sample taken

Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card® is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles' Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A–F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.

Heal the Bay

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The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

NBA

Senator urges Adidas to keep uniforms in USA

SAM HANANEL
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON The official uniforms for NBA players could soon be made in Asia, a move drawing sharp criticism from a New York Democratic senator.

Sports apparel maker Adidas plans to end its contract with American suppliers and move production of NBA jerseys to a factory in Thailand. The move could cost about 100 jobs at a factory in upstate New York that makes more than half the uniforms worn by Kobe Bryant, LeBron James and other NBA players.

Sen. Chuck Schumer said the switch would blemish more than a century of history for the marquee American sport. He called on Adidas to reverse its decision and keep making the uniforms in the U.S.

"To do anything else is an insult to the American worker and sports fans everywhere in America," said the New York Democrat, who is a longtime New York Knicks fan.

American Classic Outfitters of Perry, N.Y., has been making NBA jerseys for 40 years.

Adidas is in the middle of an 11-year merchandising deal to be the official uniform and apparel provider for the NBA, WNBA and the NBA Development League.

In a statement, Adidas said it was consolidating its supply chain and moving production closer to the source of uniform materials.

"The Adidas Group continues to produce uniforms for professional, college and other amateur teams at more than 30 facilities in North America and will continue to do so moving forward," Adidas said.

A spokeswoman for the NBA did not immediately respond to requests for comments.

NBA players' jerseys have always been manufactured in the United States.

Rob Knoll, senior vice president at American Classic Outfitters, said his company had a multiyear contract to make professional basketball uniforms for Adidas. But last month, he said, Adidas officials told him they were moving operations overseas. The New York plant had invested more than $1 million in facility improvements and equipment to produce the jerseys.

"It's a blow because the work that was in house and scheduled for production is gone now," Knoll said. "If they want to change their mind, we'd love it."

Adidas also had contracts with two other U.S. companies to make the official NBA jerseys.

German-owned Adidas is the second largest athletic shoe and apparel company in the world. Its U.S. subsidiary, Adidas America, has its U.S. headquarters in Portland, Ore.

On the Net:
http://www.adidas.com

MLB

Pujols wins second straight NL MVP

RONALD BLUM
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK Albert Pujols was unanimously voted National League MVP on Tuesday, becoming the first player to repeat since Barry Bonds won four in a row from 2001-04.

Pujols received all 32 first-place votes and 448 points in balloting announced by the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

The Dodgers' Andre Either and Matt Kemp finished in the top 10. Either was sixth and Kemp 10th.

It was the third MVP award for the St. Louis Cardinals star, who also won in 2005. He became the first unanimous MVP since Bonds in 2002.

Pujols said he concentrates on World Series titles, not MVPs. He won his only championship in 2006.

"I always make a joke. I got 10 fingers. I want to get nine more rings," he said. "I want to get as many as Derek Jeter has so far (five). Obviously that's hard to do."

Pujols does have one individual goal — the Hall of Fame.

"Obviously, there is still a long way to go," he said.

Pujols led the majors in home runs (47), runs (124), slugging percentage (.658) and intentional walks (44), and topped the NL in on-base percentage (.443). He was second in the league in doubles (45) and third in batting average (.327) and RBIs (135).

He was especially dangerous with the bases loaded, going 10 for 17 with five grand slams, three doubles and 35 RBIs.

"I think it was the most consistent year," he said. "I was pretty much hot April until almost September."

Florida's Hanley Ramirez, the NL batting champion, was second with 233 points, followed by Philadelphia's Ryan Howard (217) and Milwaukee's Prince Fielder (203), who tied Howard for the big league lead in RBIs.

Pujols didn't homer in his final 89 regular and postseason at-bats after Sept. 9. He had minor surgery Oct. 21 to remove a bone spur from his right elbow. He had feared he might need ligament replacement, causing him to miss the first half of next season.

"My elbow was fine," Pujols said. "I don't put that as an excuse. I was still playing every day out there."

Pujols, who turns 30 in January, joined Hall of Famer Al Simmons (11) as the only players with 100 or more RBIs in each of their first nine seasons. He also set a big league record for assists by a first baseman with 185.

Pujols became just the fourth player to win the NL MVP three times. Bonds won seven in the 1990s and 2000s. Stan Musial (1940s), Roy Campanella (1950s) and Mike Schmidt (1980s) each won three.

Five players have won three AL MVPs: Jimmie Foxx, Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, Mickey Mantle and Alex Rodriguez.

In addition to Pujols and Bonds, the only unanimous NL winners were Orlando Cepeda (1967), Schmidt (1980), Jeff Bagwell (1994) and Ken Caminiti (1996). Unanimous AL winners have been Hank Greenberg (1935), Al Rosen (1953), Mantle (1956), Frank Robinson (1966), Denny McLain (1968), Reggie Jackson (1973), Jose Canseco (1988), Frank Thomas (1993) and Ken Griffey Jr. (1997).

MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(323) 466-FILM

Call theater for information.

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans (R) 2hr 1min
10:50 am, 1:30, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10

2012 (PG-13) 2hr 38min
11:00 am, 2:35, 6:15, 9:45

Pirate Radio (R) 1hr 55min
11:20 am, 2:05, 4:55, 7:40, 10:25

Michael Jackson's This Is It (PG) 2hrs 01min
11:10 am, 1:40, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 289-4262

2012 (PG-13) 2hr 38min
11:30am, 3:00, 7:00, 10:30

Disney's A Christmas Carol in Disney Digital 3D (PG) 1hr 36min
10:30am, 1:00, 3:30, 5:55, 8:25, 11:00

Men Who Stare at Goats (R) 1hr 30min
10:00am, 12:20, 2:45, 5:20, 7:50, 10:25

Fantastic Mr. Fox (PG) 1hr 27min
10:50 am, 1:15, 3:40, 6:00, 8:30, 10:50

Ninja Assassin (R) 1hr 39min
10:15 am, 12:00, 12:50, 3:20, 4:45, 5:50, 8:20, 9:55, 10:55

Old Dogs (PG) 1hr 28min
10:05 am, 12:30, 2:50, 5:15, 7:40, 10:05

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 394-9741

Coco Before Chanel (PG-13) 2hr 5min
1:10, 4:00, 7:00, 9:40

The Messenger (R) 2hr 7min
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 9:55

Precious (R) 1hr 49min
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:40, 10:15

End of Poverty? (NR) 1hr 46min
1:30, 4:10, 7:00, 10:15

Mann's Criterion Theatre
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

The Blind Side (PG-13) 2hr 6min
11:40 am, 1:00, 2:40, 4:05, 5:40, 7:00, 8:40, 10:00, 11:40

Planet 51 (PG) 1hr 31min
12:00, 2:20, 4:50, 7:00, 9:20

The Twilight Saga: New Moon (PG-13) 2hr 10min
11:30 am, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, 11:30

Where the Wild Things Are (PG) 1hr 34min
11:20 am

For more information, e-mail news@smdp.com

Friends and dinner, Capricorn

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Confusion marks your actions, especially involving distant elements. There are some things you cannot change. The unexpected occurs involving a key person. You might learn more about this person's boundaries. Tonight: Start talking turkey.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Zero in on what needs to be handled. Enlist friends in a project or last-minute holiday details. Explore your options with friends, especially if someone feels left out. Help someone work through his or her mood. Tonight: Remember a friend without any plans.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★ Tension builds. You might wonder which is the best path to head down. Clear out your responsibilities as quickly as possible, and join a partner and/or friends. Let go of an issue involving an authority figure. Tonight: Leader of the gang.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Many of you will take off for a lengthy weekend. Even if you don't, your mind wanders to everything except the here and now. Understand the limits of a difficult situation. Misunderstandings happen no matter which way you turn. Tonight: Make time for a loved one.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Deal with a partner and key people. You will be challenged to sort through misunderstandings. At the same time, you feel pressured about which direction to head in. Do you want to be playful or responsible? Can you be both? Tonight: Share with a close loved one, and open up the field of possibilities.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Approach a situation in a more positive vein. You also might not have control over various difficult situations. Center on your priorities. Working with a key person could be confusing. Add patience and detachment, and you will work through it. Tonight: Defer to someone else.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Recognize the possibilities. You might need to design a plan in order to reach a key goal. Proceed accordingly. You can draw someone in if you decide to charm him or her, but is this worth it? Go buy that item you have been coveting. Tonight: Make it early.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Your creativity shines over a lack of confidence or funds. You suddenly see a new path around a problem. Understand what is happening with a child or loved one. This person wants control. Check out a financial risk. Tonight: Dance the night away.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★ Your focus remains on your home and family. Establish limits more carefully than in the past. You will eliminate a long-term issue in that manner. Your instincts guide you in an encounter. Realize your limits. Refuse to add to the present confusion. Tonight: Where the action is.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Clarify rather than judge. How you deal with someone and the options that follow open up a new element within this bond. A meeting could be more fruitful than you originally thought. Listen to a new concept. Tonight: Friends and dinner.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ You might be overwhelmed when eyeing different financial requests. You wonder which way you need to go. Notice what is happening around you, and get advice from someone who seems to be in the know. Keep friendship out of a decision if you want to avoid trouble. Tonight: Efforts count.

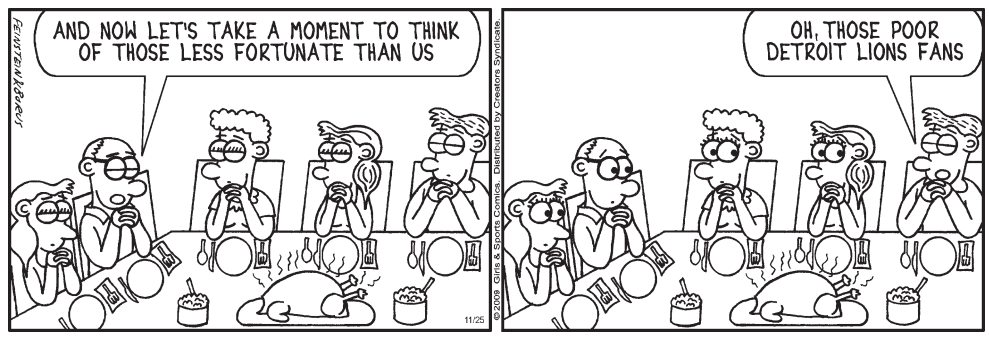
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ You could handle a lot more than it appears. If you want to renew an interest or get to the bottom of a problem, find an expert or someone who can detach and view the situation. You don't want allies, but those people who can play devil's advocate. Tonight: Read between the lines.

Happy birthday

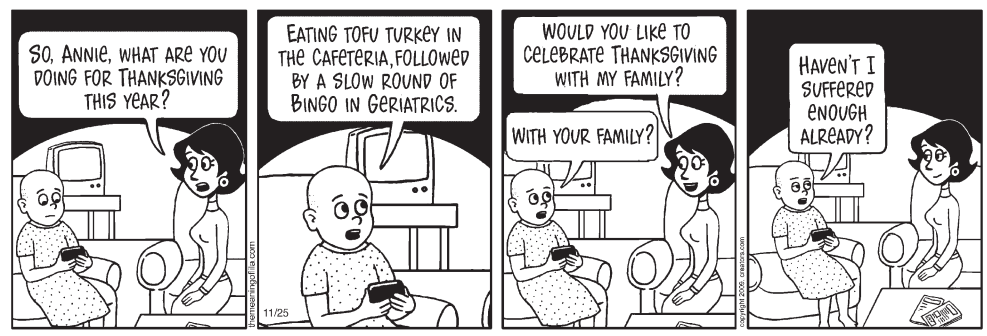
This year, frequently stop and look at the big picture. Many of you might want to reprioritize your domestic life and concerns. Often, people get caught up in the whirlwind of daily life and forget their goals. Use care with feelings. If you are single, you could meet someone who will knock your socks off. Make sure this person is all he or she says. If you are attached, you enjoy more couple time together. You renew the connection with frequent timeouts. PISCES can be an anchor.

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

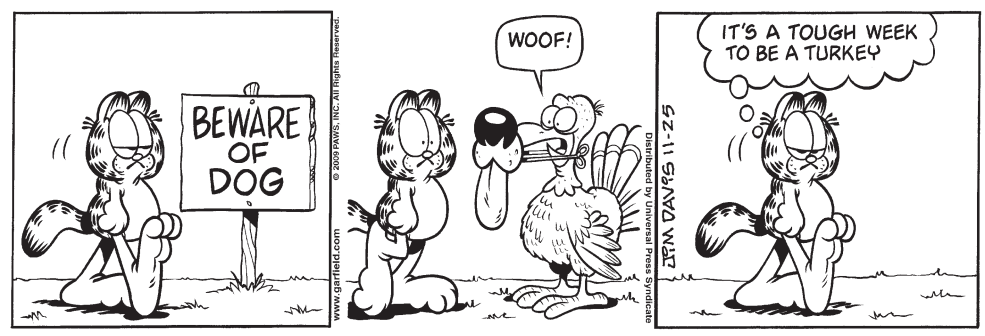
Girls and Sports
By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



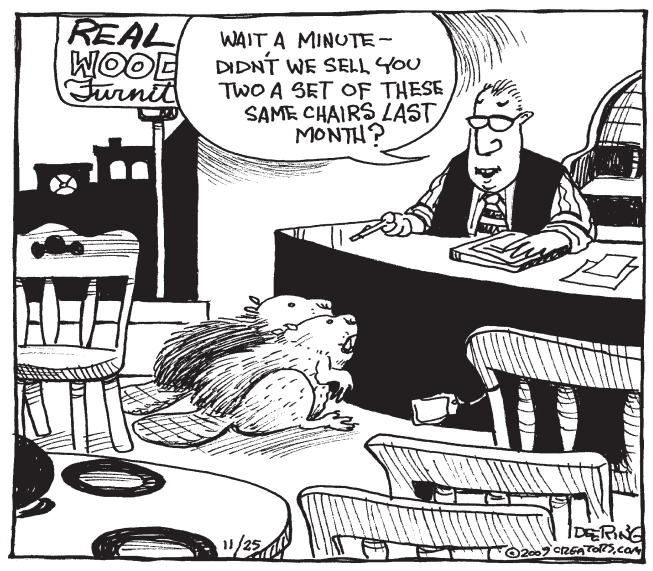
The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



Garfield
By Jim Davis



Strange Brew
By John Deering



Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



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Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from ★ (easiest) to ★★★★★ (hardest).

Difficulty Level ★★★

		7	6					
		2		3				
		3			9			
		9				7		
		1	2	5	7	9	4	
7				8				
6		4	8	9	1	3	5	2
	2							4
		5	3	2	4	6	8	

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

8	7	5	3	9	2	6	4	1
3	4	1	8	7	6	9	2	5
6	9	2	5	1	4	3	8	7
9	8	7	1	6	3	4	5	2
2	6	4	7	5	8	1	3	9
5	1	3	2	4	9	8	7	6
1	5	8	9	3	7	2	6	4
7	2	6	4	8	1	5	9	3
4	3	9	6	2	5	7	1	8

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MYSTERY PHOTO

Leslie Thomas *news@smdp.com*

The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to *editor@smdp.com*.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Rappelling need
5 Breakfast choice
11 Fan's favorite
12 "Twelfth Night" heroine
13 Music category
14 Diluted
15 Attempt
16 Cartoon skunk — Le Pew
17 Strata
19 Spot to jot
22 "Rob Roy" writer
24 Wed in secret
26 Less than any
27 Different
28 Second president
30 Check writer
31 Salon stuff
32 Cake coating
34 Scheme
35 Rower's need
38 Bank worker
41 Formerly
42 Set straight
43 Stardom
44 Rover's rewards
45 Ran off

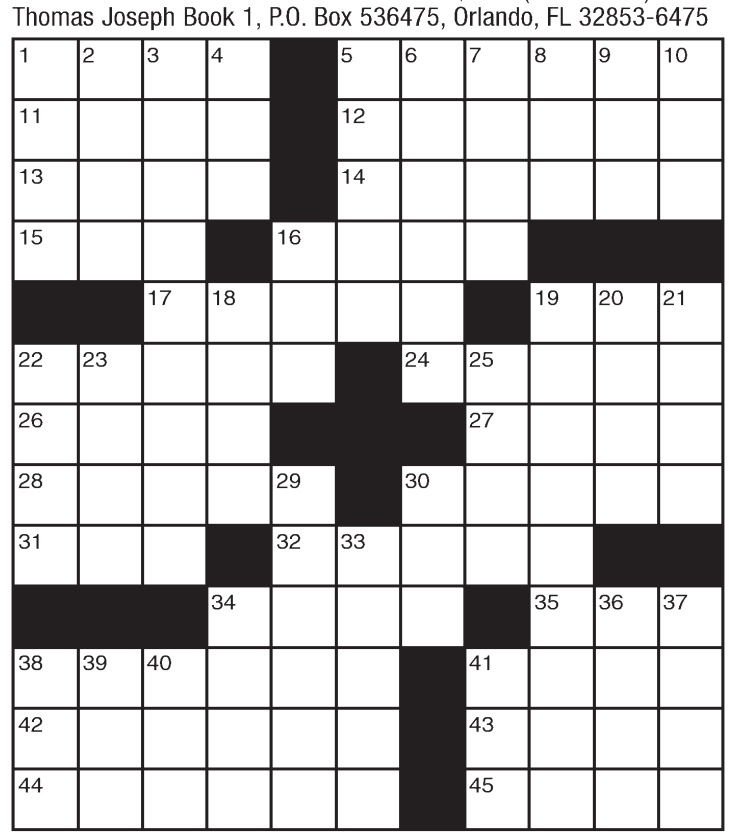
DOWN

1 Fissure
2 Skunk's defense
3 Using more than one key
4 Canadian grazer
5 Shrink in fear
6 Go by
7 Solemn act
8 Cain raiser
9 Ventilate
10 Put down
16 Parrot or puppy
18 Gossip bit
19 Many-sided
20 Basilica part
21 Some bucks
22 Unexpected problem
23 Body of law
25 Not too fatty
29 Mum
30 Sewing aid
33 Shoppers' aids
34 "Not guilty," for one
36 High point
37 Marsh grass
38 Young one
39 Blunder
40 Tall tale
41 Not working

L	O	D	E	■	■	P	E	R	C	H
E	X	E	R	T	■	A	L	O	H	A
A	L	A	N	R	I	C	K	M	A	N
K	I	D	■	A	N	T	■	E	N	D
S	P	L	I	N	T	■	T	R	E	E
■	S	Y	N	C	H	■	H	O	L	D
■	■	■	P	E	E	V	E	■	■	■
T	H	O	U	■	H	I	R	A	M	■
R	A	F	T	■	O	P	E	N	U	P
E	L	L	■	A	L	E	■	E	T	A
A	L	A	N	B	E	R	G	M	A	N
T	O	T	I	E	■	S	P	I	N	E
S	W	E	P	T	■	■	A	C	T	S

Yesterday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475



11-25

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 3 4 7 16 56 Meganumber: 39 Jackpot: $37M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 28 30 34 35 43 Meganumber: 2 Jackpot: $27M

Fantasy 5: 20 22 23 32 39

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 6 0 2 EVENING: 9 7 9

DAILY DERBY: 1st: 10 Solid Gold 2nd: 04 Big Ben 3rd: 03 Hot Shot RACE TIME: 1.43.05

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ "Bonnet books" are a "booming new subcategory of the romance genre," reported The Wall Street Journal in September, describing "G-rated" Amish love stories that sell well among outside readers but have found an even more avid audience among Amish women themselves. The typical best-seller is by a non-Amish writer, perhaps involving a woman inside the community who falls in love with an outsider. In one book described by the Journal, the lovers "actually kiss a couple of times in 326 pages."

■ More Sharia Weirdness: (1) The radical Islamist group Al Shabaab in Somalia recently began accosting and beating robed women whose bras made their breasts (even though covered) look too provocative. One mother told Reuters in October that police told her that any "firm(ness)" must be natural and not bra-enhanced. (2) In September, prominent Egyptian scholar Abdul Mouti Bayoumi of al-Azhar University urged the death penalty for people selling virginity-faking devices that make women appear to bleed on their wedding nights. One such gadget, made in China, was openly for sale in Syria for the equivalent of about $15, according to a September BBC News report.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1864 American Civil War: A group of Confederate operatives calling themselves the Confederate Army of Manhattan starts fires in more than 20 locations in an unsuccessful attempt to burn down New York City.

1867 Alfred Nobel patents dynamite.

1874 The United States Greenback Party is established as a political party consisting primarily of farmers affected by the Panic of 1873.

1876 Indian Wars: In retaliation for the American defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, United States Army troops sack Chief Dull Knife's sleeping Cheyenne village at the headwaters of the Powder River.

1905 The Danish Prins Carl arrives in Norway to become King Haakon VII of Norway.

WORD UP!

martinet \mar-t'n-ET\ , noun;
1. A strict disciplinarian. 2. One who lays stress on a rigid adherence to the details of forms and methods.

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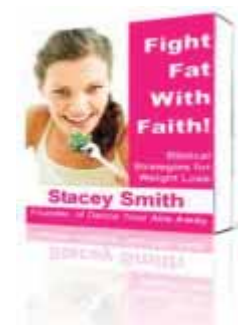
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South of Wilshire	$850,000	$607,500
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Ocean Park	$1,365,000	$1,049,000

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