

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

12 19 26 30 45
Meganumber: 6
Jackpot: \$24 Million

FANTASY 5

14 15 31 33 35

DAILY 3

Daytime: 9 8 0
Evening: 0 3 4

DAILY DERBY

1st: 09 Winning Spirit
2nd: 03 Hot Shot
3rd: 11 Money Bags

RACE TIME: 1:45.95

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

According to more than 50 alleged witnesses in 30 pending lawsuits, former Seattle-area gynecologist Charles Momah, 48, not only sexually abused patients but also permitted his twin brother, Dennis (a doctor but not a gynecologist), to stand in for him during some patient appointments, during which he, too, sexually abused the women. Examples of suspicion-provoking behavior, according to witness statements: Sometimes their doctor was talkative, sometimes confused and nearly silent; sometimes he spoke English clearly, sometimes broken; sometimes he walked with a limp, sometimes not; sometimes there were scars on his face, sometimes not. The Momahs deny everything, but Charles was convicted in November of sexually abusing four of the patients.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 341st day of 2005.
There are 24 days left in the year.

On Dec. 7, 1941, Japanese forces attacked American and British territories and possessions in the Pacific, including the home base of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"What man strives to preserve, in preserving himself, is something which he has never been at any particular moment."

GEORGE SANTAYANA

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Homeless liaison tapped by City Hall

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — A Los Angeles politician known for his commitment to human causes will likely be appointed as Santa Monica's first homeless czar next week.

Representatives from City Hall announced on Tuesday that Edmund D. Edelman has been selected to work on contract for a year to help bring regional cohesiveness to addressing the growing homeless population.



Edmund D. Edelman

Edelman's appointment is expected to become official at the Dec. 13 Santa Monica City Council meeting, and he will likely start work after the holidays.

Edelman will answer to Lamont

See HOMELESS CZAR, page 6

LOCAL

Library branches to fill with bookworms

BY JASMIN PERSCH

Special to the Daily Press

FIFTH STREET — Another chapter has ended in the storied tale of Santa Monica's book scene now that the temporary library has permanently shut down.

City officials on Monday closed the book on the temporary library, which has been open since the Main Library was knocked down in 2003 to make way for a larger one.

So bookworms will be without a main hub until Jan. 7, when the new 104,000-square-foot library opens at 601 Santa

See LIBRARY, page 6



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Erin Grayson, a four-year tenant of Lincoln Place, was evicted Tuesday, along with dozens of neighbors. Her cat was left behind briefly before sheriff's deputies allowed Grayson back into the apartment to retrieve her pet.

Households evicted from Lincoln Place

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

LINCOLN PLACE — One of the largest real estate management companies in the country evicted 52 households here on Tuesday, and some politicians insist business in Los Angeles won't be better for the landlord because of it.

Dozens of tenants took to the streets on Tuesday after deputies from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department forced their removal from Lincoln Place, a 54-year-old post-World War II apartment complex located on the 1000 block of Elkgrove Avenue.

The sheriff's department was



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Los Angeles City Councilman Bill Rosendahl tries to calm protesters Noel Weiss (right) and Sharon Snow during Tuesday's evictions.

acting on court-ordered evictions requested by Apartment Investment Management Co. (AIMCO), the Denver-based landlord that plans to redevelop Lincoln Place into condominiums.

Meanwhile, local politicians said AIMCO's move may make it difficult for the company to expedite development projects in the Los Angeles area in the future.

Los Angeles City Councilman Bill Rosendahl — whose constituency includes Lincoln Place — arrived at the scene and scorned AIMCO's move.

"These evictions represent an assault on affordable housing, a slap in the face to renters every-

where, and insult the community of Venice and its elected representatives," Rosendahl said. "AIMCO, do the right thing. Unlock those doors."

"Return to the bargaining table and negotiate in good faith with these tenants."

Rosendahl — known to be on good terms with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa — said AIMCO's willingness to evict tenants won't help the company's LA business plan.

"These tactics won't work if AIMCO expects to get support for moving projects forward," Rosendahl said. "For a long time,

See EVICTIONS, page 7

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HOROSCOPE

Early to bed, Aries

Santa Monica Daily Press



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



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ Some downtime will help you focus on what you need to do. Some of you might be concerned about finances, while others will worry about completing their to-do lists. Curb communication and/or ask a key support for help. A surprising insight heads in your direction. Tonight: Early to bed.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Sometimes being a leader can be exhausting. Emphasize the richer parts of your life — your relationships and friendships. Your efforts will ultimately make a big difference. Tonight: Happy with your friends. Someone could be full of surprises.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ Touch base with others before making a decision. You might have a good sense of what is necessary to make a situation work. Emphasize others when making choices. Let others think that they are part of your directive. Tonight: Take the lead.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ If you don't like what you hear, find other solutions. Your creativity and ingenuity come out quickly. Your intuitive sense comes forward. You're unusually tuned in right now. Your follow-through counts. Tonight: Follow the music.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Work with others independently and individually. You might find that your imagination, as well as your associates' imaginations, could be an incredible resource. You are coming from a secure position. You build security through relating. Tonight: Togetherness could bring surprising results.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ You find that others take action. In fact, the wise move would be to say little and try not to be overly assertive. How you visualize a work/home project can come to fruition, but not right away. A smile relays much more than words. Tonight: Let others run the show.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ You might be unusually playful right now, but those who are more serious-minded might not appreciate this attitude. Sensitivity could increase your earning capacity. Willingly incorporate a novel idea. Giving 100 percent comes back in multiples. Tonight: Put in that extra effort if need be.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ You have what it takes, if you just work from instinct. The end results could be very successful. Your intellect, personality and imagination merge to make you an unbeatable force. Now, what would you like to focus on? Tonight: Smile away.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Take the lead when handling an emotional situation that permeates your day. In fact, if you tap into your intuitive side, you will naturally do and say the right thing. Your intuition rules. Tonight: Anchored.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ You get what you want just by asking. How easy is that? Tap into your imagination with friends or co-workers. What seems like a silly idea actually might become quite viable. Keep your goals in mind. Tonight: As you wish. (Yes, just ask.)



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Your ideas stimulate those who count, as well as many of your pals. Get-togethers are nothing but fun right now. Just let it hang out. Be sensitive to a financial offer. Actually, you could be looking at a boom. Tonight: Leader of the gang.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ You could feel like a rock 'n' roll star, if your thinking went in that direction. In whatever situation, you are the decisive force leading those around you. Use your dynamic energy positively. Tonight: As you wish.



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LOCAL



Holiday hound



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Santa Claus on Monday greets Fletcher, a 6-year-old rottweiler, as he waits patiently with his owner, Patty Loggins-Tazi, to have their photo taken with Santa at Santa Monica Place.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Collage exhibit a feast for the eyes

By Daily Press staff

In the mood for some pop art this December?

The Design Center, located at 1119 Colorado Ave., is featuring a collage art exhibit by artist Tom Brennan on Friday, Dec. 9, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

“Collage art gives me personal enjoyment, but also a sense of control over the endless corporate imagery we’re all assaulted by,” Brennan said. “In the process of creating a collage, you are free to cut and re-assemble images and make your own emotional sense out of the visual icons that crowds our lives. The collages have everything to do with joyous social survival. That’s why this exhibit is called ‘Winter Feast for the Eyes.’”

When the collages are mounted on four walls, they produce an energetic visual field within the gallery room that causes an interesting atmosphere, Brennan said. The low background music feeds your ears, and you realize the art you’re looking at is not a series of sterile, squiggly lines, but a formidable serving of color and texture.

For more information about the exhibit call (310) 394-5256.

Walk the labyrinth

By Daily Press staff

Got plans this New Year’s Eve?

The First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica is hosting an ancient labyrinth for visitors to say some New Year’s prayers.

The labyrinth is an ancient meditation tool used for centering and prayer. The church will feature a 30 feet by 30 feet canvas with the labyrinth design painted on it. It is a replica of the one laid in the floor of the Chartres cathedral in the Middle Ages.

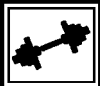
The labyrinth ceremony will take place on Saturday, Dec. 31, from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m., and the last entry is at 8:15 p.m. First United Methodist Church is located at 1008 11th St.

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SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS

DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	CONDITIONS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	Thin Cover	0	0

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	CONDITIONS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	24"-36"	Packed Powder Machine Groomed Obstacles	45	16

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	CONDITIONS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-18"	Machine Made Hard Packed	6	3

MT. BALDY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	CONDITIONS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	0"-1"	N/A	0	0

SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	CONDITIONS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	Powder Packed Machine Made Machine Groomed	4	4

JUNE MOUNTAIN

CLOSED

SNOW VALLEY

CLOSED

CONDITIONS

WATER TEMP: 59°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (1-4FT)

Wednesday the 7th is looking to start out small, but by the afternoon, we should see size boost up to waist high + as some of the swell due on Thursday starts to filter in.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

NW swell hits NCal, Central Coast Wednesday, SoCal Thursday...

Significant NW swell hits during the weekend...

Rain chances in the forecast...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

MONDAY
LOW TIDE: N/A 1.6FT 1:29PM 0.3FT
HIGH TIDE: 6:33AM 5.7FT 7:35PM 3.8FT

TUESDAY
LOW TIDE: 12:34AM 1.8FT 2:05 0.3
HIGH TIDE: 6:59AM 6.1FT 8:21 3.8

WEDNESDAY
LOW TIDE: 1:02AM 1.4FT 2:31 0.0
HIGH TIDE: 7:28AM 5.4FT 9:15 3.2

THURSDAY
LOW TIDE: 1:37AM 1.2FT 3:04 0.1
HIGH TIDE: 8:07AM 4.9FT 9:40 3.0

FRIDAY
LOW TIDE: 2:06AM 1.1FT 3:41 0.3
HIGH TIDE: 8:41AM 4.3FT 10:09 2.9

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The QLine

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The City Council has named Lamont Ewell as Santa Monica's new city manager. Since the appointment was announced, some people have expressed concern over an ongoing controversy over finances that surrounded Ewell during his time as city manager of San Diego. Council members say they are confident in their choice and that Ewell, who is not accused of any wrong doing, is not linked to the problems in San Diego.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know, **“Do you support the City Council's choice for city manager? Why or why not?”**

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

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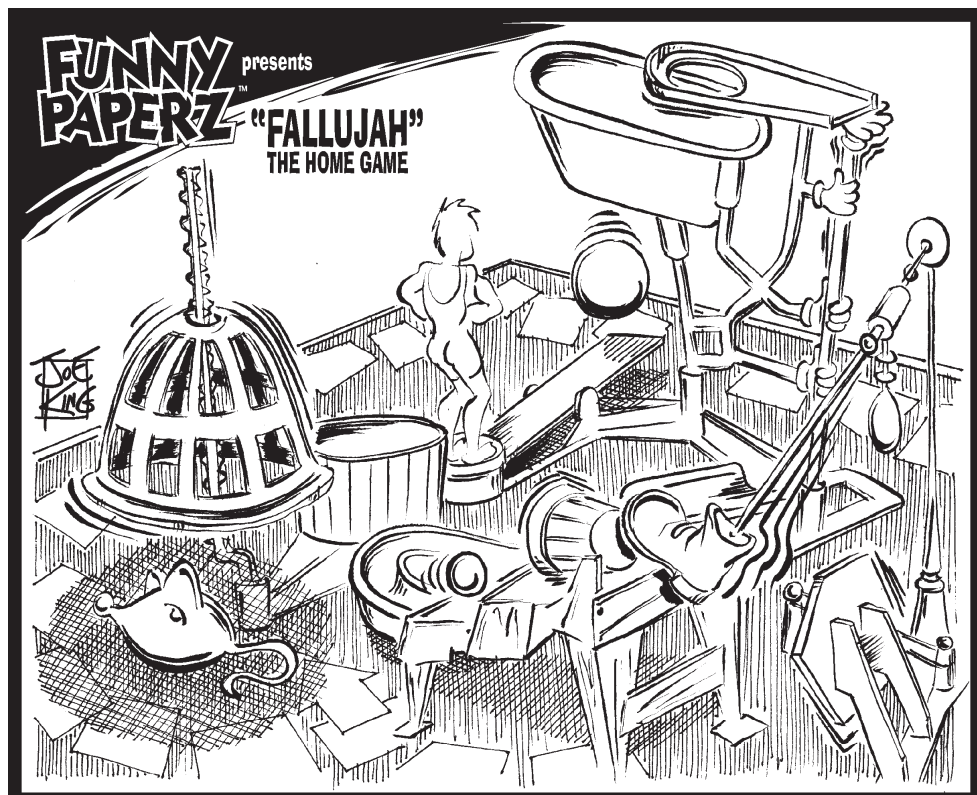
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OPINION



This holiday -- let the military play it with your children...

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Homeless vs. transient: Two very different things

Editor:

There was a letter (SMDP, Nov. 30, page 4) chastising those who are angry about the "homeless" situation in Santa Monica and stated that these Santa Monicans have no compassion for the poor.

First, a "homeless" person and a "transient" are two different kettle of fish. Anyone, man, woman or child, who finds themselves homeless due to financial/employment difficulties; or due to escaping an abusive situation; or due to recovering from a debilitating addiction; or due to mental illness should be helped to get a home and get on their feet by all means. No one with any compassion would think or say otherwise.

"Transients," on the other hand, are the addicted individuals who do not want to kick their habits and who overrun our parks and alleys and Promenade and streets. These are the individuals who are the featured majority in every "Crime Watch" and make up a good percentage of police time. Like the individual who asked for money from a woman at Fourth Street and Wilshire Boulevard in the afternoon, and being told she had no change, the man proceeded to punch her in the face. Or the individual who jumped or was pushed off the bluffs they use as camping grounds (SMDP, Nov. 30, page 1). This individual was reported to have had a \$200 to \$300 a day crack habit. Really? I work, and yet I could never support a \$200 a day habit of any kind. Not without breaking the law. So does he qualify for the letter writer's label of the "poor?" Most of the "transients" arrested are found to have prior outstanding warrants, etc. So these are not the "poor" whose jobs have been outsourced, but rather, the ones that live on the streets because they'd rather spend rent money on alcohol and drugs. One cannot help being addicted, but they can get off the drugs and alcohol. There is no shame in being addicted, the shames lies in not doing anything about it.

I have a granddaughter who is very fearful of walking the Promenade on a Saturday afternoon in broad daylight, or by the parks where the transients camp out and are illegally fed. This is a shameful situation that a child has to be intimidated by the smelly, aggressive behavior of those who choose addiction over sobriety. I guess we'll be taking our shopping money to the Grove or malls in Los Angeles. It's a pity we can't shop where we can walk to the stores.

But we can't expect the addicted to be thinking clearly. But what excuse do our city leaders have? If our city would truly crack down for two weeks and enforce the laws already on the books that forbid public intoxication, sleeping in business/residential doorways, public urination and defecation, aggressive panhandling and public feedings, these individuals might be induced to (a) kick their habits and become useful again, or (b) leave the area. Or do we have to actually wait until a woman is punched in the face before arresting them? That Los Angeles County has 11 percent of the entire United States' homeless might tell us that we are the Mecca of tolerance for outrageous public behavior.

In summation — save the chastisement for those who choose to stay addicted and earn their alcohol and drug money by means that are dangerous and hurtful to them as well as the rest of us. AA and similar 12-step programs are free. Get help or get off of our streets and parks.

And for the umpteenth time, and city-funded program that does not require sobriety as criteria for help is enabling these individuals to other detriment, and these programs should not be funded with the millions now allocated. Money should be spent to help save lives not exacerbate their addictions.

Marilyn Brennan
Santa Monica

Society is missing the reason for the season

THE
WITNESS
STAND
BY CLIFF NICHOLS

Since the season for joy is rapidly approaching, riddle me this: What is the proper name of something 65 feet tall (often referred to initially as a spruce) that first falls to the ground in New Mexico in response to a saw blade, is then wrapped and shipped to Washington, D.C., and ultimately finds itself erected on the grounds of our nation's capitol, adorned with 10,000 lights and 5,000 ornaments just several weeks prior to Dec. 25?

A pathetic few of you out there are probably thinking it should be called a "Christmas tree." Come on you countercultural small-minded extremist right-wing evangelical hate-mongering bigots out there, you know who you are. Well ... you're wrong. That's what it used to be called, but not today. Try again.

OK ... time is up. The answer? According to our enlightened U.S. Congress, its politically correct name today is ... (insert drum role) ... "holiday tree." And, we are told rightfully so by those among us who like to think of themselves as self-professed members of the "rational, scientific, modern, post-Enlightenment world."

Evidently, these paragons of enlightenment have currently intimidated the rest of us into at least accepting, if not actually believing, that any word in our culture's lexicon that includes a reference to Christ is somehow a "bad thing." Why? Because we are informed that Christians are a countercultural minority of ... well ... small-minded extremist right-wing evangelical hate-mongering bigots who secretly, and we are told, gleefully, look forward to an eventual joyous genocide of all those with whom they happen to disagree.

If you think even somebody claiming to be "rationale, scientific and modern" surely could not possibly believe such a thing about Christians, consider the following excerpts from a Vanity Fair article published this month entitled "American Rapture."

In the course of disparaging the extremely popular "Left Behind" series, the author says: "As befits the manifesto of a counterculture, the 'Left Behind' series is a revenge fantasy, in which right-wing Christians win out over the rational, scientific, modern, post-Enlightenment world. The books represent the apotheosis of a culture (of Christians) that is waging war against liberals, gays, Muslims, Arabs, the U.N., and 'militant secularists' of all stripes ..." — Vanity Fair, page 208.

"Far from being a Prince of Peace, the Christ depicted in the 'Left Behind' series is a vengeful Messiah — so vengeful that the death and destruction he causes to unconverted Jews, to secularists, to anyone who is not born again, is far, far greater than the crimes committed by the most brutal dictators in human history ...

"According to LaHaye and Jenkins (the 'Left Behind' series authors), it is God's intent 'that the millennium start with a clean slate.' Committing mass murder hundreds of times greater than the Holocaust, the Lord — not the Antichrist, mind you — makes sure that 'all unbe-

lievers would soon die.'" — Vanity Fair, page 222.

I agree, were all of that true, it would be horrendous. There's only one problem. In my humble opinion, it's simply not an accurate depiction of either the "Left Behind" series or the Biblical account of the last days ... and thus ... it's simply not true.

In my even more humble opinion, what is true is the following. In chapter four of Luke's Gospel we are told that Christ described the purpose of his first junket to earth, which I will leave for you to read. It is interesting for our purposes, however, that in doing so Jesus opened the Book of Isaiah to what is now chapter 61 and read only the first half of the first sentence before closing the book. In turn, that has led some to suggest that the remainder of that sentence pertains to what will be Christ's purpose should He fulfill His promise to return to earth a second time. Yes, the word "vengeance" does appear, but in the context of effecting His greater goal of closing up shop on the world as we know it, in order to establish His Kingdom that He said had been ordained by His Father from the beginning. To do so, however, requires attending to just one small detail: Satan and those allied with him must be defeated and removed. So, the Bible first prophesies that a battle will be initiated by Satan to prevent Christ's purpose and then goes on to predict that, in all probability, Christ will emerge as the victor.

First I would ask, were this scenario actually to come to pass, are there any among us who would prefer a different outcome, and if so, why? Next, I would ask, in the context of a war instigated by Satan, are there any among us who think it is even remotely fair to characterize Christ's defeat of Satan and those allied with him as "murder," and if so, why? Then I need to ask, can anyone show me in the Bible where Christians, as the Vanity Fair article implies, should derive joy from the death of those who sadly choose such a tragic alliance?

On the contrary, just the opposite is true. Both Christ and Christians would have it that nobody would choose such an alliance should these events come to pass, and in fact, are grieved at even the thought that some may. That is why, especially at this time of year, Christians believe it is so important to demonstrate to all people everywhere how much Christ's Father loves each and every one of them. So much so, in fact, that He came in person to tell all of mankind that very thing.

Christmas is nothing more or less than Christians celebrating the arrival of both that messenger and the message He brought. So, with your permission, allow me to close by asking, is that a "bad thing?" Because if it's not, can we who are Christian please feel free now to once again call it a "Christmas tree" without being made, somehow, to feel either guilty or culturally marginalized? Thank you. Oh, and by the way, before I forget ... merry Christmas to one and all.

(Cliff Nichols is an attorney practicing criminal defense/entertainment law in Santa Monica. He may be contacted at either 310-917-1083, cliff@cliffnicholslaw.com or www.cliffnicholslaw.com. You may join his blog at www.thedaily-stand.com.)



It's a wonderful life, especially when free

ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL



I get a little annoyed at stores decorating for Christmas in October. But as I watched "It's a Wonderful Life" at the Pasadena Playhouse, I realized that Christmastime really is here.

I could pretend that I'm an active playgoer, but the whole reason I went was to watch Kramer play the main role of George Bailey.

I couldn't even get through the movie version as a kid. There was way too much talking going on. And why wasn't the thing in color? Even "The Wizard of Oz" switched to color part way through.

Yet the radio theater version they put on at the playhouse was extremely enjoyable. The actors were phenomenal, and the sound effects, lifelike. And did I mention I like Michael Richards?

I religiously watch "Seinfeld" every night after work on TBS. My roommate and I can't get enough of Kramer running into walls, setting his hair on fire with cigars and making funny zippy noises at holiday get togethers.

That is why we jumped at the chance for free tickets from our friend who's in charge of PR at the playhouse. Sure Pasadena is a bit of a hike, but "free" is a word rarely uttered in California, and one that should not be taken lightly.

Saturday night's performance held an exceptional cast. Sara Rue, the star of "Less Than Perfect" and memorable for her role in "Can't Hardly Wait" ("Sheep, you're all sheep ...") did an impressive

job playing Bailey's wife. Orson Bean, the many-time substitute host for Johnny Carson on "The Tonight Show," was an adorable Clarence, the angel hopeful to get his wings. And Susan Sullivan, known for her role as Greg's well-to-do mother on "Dharma and Greg," gave a commanding performance as the story's announcer.

The radio version was good fun, with inventive noises for trodding through snow, creaking houses, and slamming car doors. My favorite part was when Rue asked Richards what he wished for when he threw an imaginary rock at a window and no noise followed. "For the window to break," Richards replied. The audience laughed and the sound man looked up, embarrassed.

Now that I'm older, I can see how "It's a Wonderful Life" really is a wonderful story. There are plenty of things I take for granted in my own life, which I shouldn't need a celebrity gray-haired angel to remind me of. Like good health, inexpensive chocolate snacks, and the chance to watch Michael Richards outside of my television set.

I have to admit, it was quite a change seeing Richards play depressed and downtrodden George Bailey from his wacky character Kramer. He walked without a jitter, and his hair was combed and not his signature curly bouffant. He basically acted like a normal person, except for the occasional "yippee" he let out, which got him a good cheer from the crowd.

And no, it shouldn't take a star-studded version of "It's a Wonderful Life" to remind me how good mine is, but I will never bat down the opportunity to watch one if complimentary tickets are provided.

(Heidi can be reached at anydayin-la@gmail.com.)



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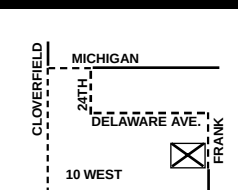
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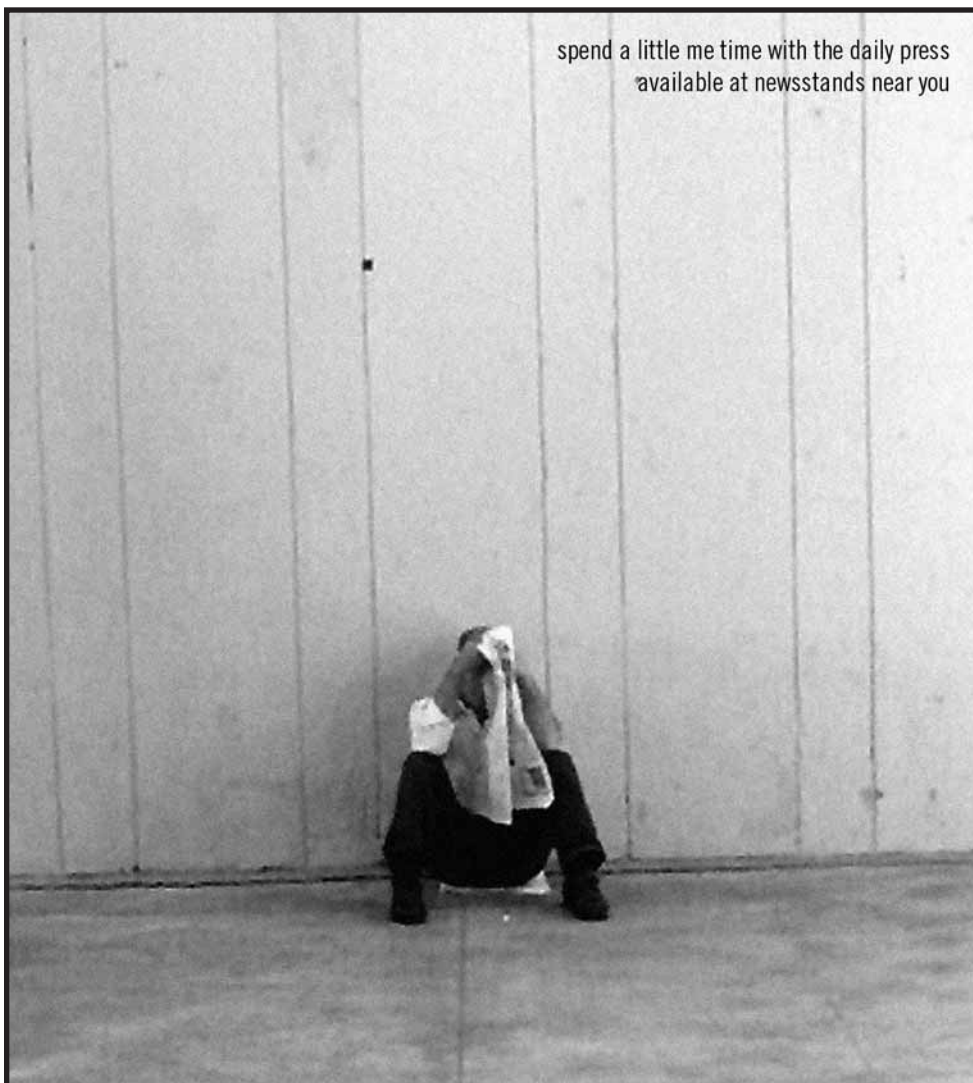
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One-year contract for homeless czar pays \$200K

HOMELESS CZAR, from page 1

Ewell, the new city manager. He will earn \$200,000 for his one-year appointment, according to Judy Franz, City Hall's spokeswoman.

City Manager Susan McCarthy, whose last day is scheduled for Thursday, was heavily involved in the selection process and strongly recommended Edelman's appointment.

"The key things Mr. Edelman will bring to this engagement are credibility and contacts in the mental health field, with the county sheriff, with elected and appointed officials region-wide and with members of the judiciary," McCarthy said.

Edelman's advocacy efforts are expected to center on the establishment of a mental health court, where by certain homeless individuals may be removed from the criminal justice system in exchange for their willingness to undergo treatment. He also will be charged with delivering more regional governance and high level leadership on the homeless issue, McCarthy said.

Edelman said he is encouraged by recent developments in the fight against homelessness and believes the position may prove fruitful in helping solve the problem.

"I look forward to building a coalition of elected officials, community and business leaders, faith-based representatives, and nonprofit providers," Edelman said in a press release. "We have a unique oppor-

tunity at this time to make a real impact on the problems of the homeless in Santa Monica and countywide."

Edelman served as a Los Angeles county supervisor from 1974 to 1994, during which he was responsible for creating the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. That agency, charged with providing homeless services for the county, is expected to release the most up-to-date demographic information on the down and out within coming weeks.

That demographic information is expected to be used to better address homelessness in the region, officials said.

Edelman also is known for establishing the Skid Row Mental Health Center in downtown Los Angeles, as well as creating the detox program at the Weingart Center and the first drug court in LA County.

He has also assisted U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Harry Pregerson in expanding services to homeless veterans at the West LA Veterans Administration facility.

In addition to his service as county supervisor, Edelman served on the LA City Council from 1965 to 1974 and held many intergovernmental posts, including chairing the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board in 1994 and the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee, which he founded.

Edelman has a political science degree from UCLA and is a graduate of UCLA Law School. He resides in LA.

New library focused on housing people over books

LIBRARY, from page 1

Monica Blvd.

The temporary library closed more than a month before the new one is scheduled to open because the collection that was housed there must be transferred to the new facility and re-integrated on the shelves, said city librarian Greg Mullen. Those materials include books, CDs, DVDs and tapes, which were in high demand and were kept available to the public as a result.

The rest of the collection — about 80 percent of it — has been in storage since 2003, Mullen said.

Mullen said he expects more people to flock to the city's three branch libraries — Fairview, Montana Avenue and Ocean Park — over the holidays, increasing circulation and clogging library counters. Some staff members from the temporary library have been reassigned to branch libraries to help handle the influx of people, he added.

The branch libraries don't have collections with the same depth as the Main Library, but they offer some of the same materials, Mullen said.

Other than having a smaller volume of materials available, the branch libraries offer people the same services the temporary library did, he said.

People can drop off items at the temporary library, 1324 Fifth St., until the end of December. Materials also can be taken to the return slots on the ground level of the new Main Library, as well as to any of the three branches.

The telephone reference line will still be in service, but it may be temporarily interrupted during the move, Mullen said.

When the new Main Library opens, it will offer space for reading, research and studying with meeting rooms, wireless access, a large computer room and a 10,000-square-foot central courtyard.

Mullen said the old library had dim lighting and focused on housing books, not people.

"This library takes a different approach to libraries," he said. "It houses people and accommodates collections."

The new library might open earlier than anticipated.

Mullen said city staff are planning to have a "soft opening" after New Year's and before the grand opening.

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Santa Monica Daily Press





Tenants protest loss of affordable housing

EVICCTIONS, from page 1

we will be looking at Dec. 6 as a tragic day for affordable housing."

More than 100 tenants, many disabled, remain at Lincoln Place. Those that are disabled have until March to find housing, due to their infirmities.

Lincoln Place, a garden-style campus of 52 buildings built in 1951, was originally backed by the Federal Housing Authority to support World War II veterans and their families. However, it always has been privately owned. Once offering 795 affordable apartments, the 38-acre site has been largely abandoned in the face of an ongoing legal debacle that began shortly after 1992, when the property owner proposed a redevelopment plan that called for 850 units, most of which would be market-rate condominiums.

Elizabeth Colores, who's been residing at Lincoln Place for 14 years, said she, her husband and two children — boys ages 12 and 6 — don't know where they will sleep from now on.

"I'm very sad, but I feel even worse for the kids, and the seniors," Colores said. "We don't have a place to live."

"We don't know where to go."

Colores said she and her husband have remained at Lincoln Place because they're too poor to move.

One single mother, who earns \$8 per hour and has three children, is reported to have moved into a motel. A 92-year-old World War II veteran — believed to have been locked out, accidentally or otherwise — is reported to have wandered into the street, where he disappeared.

Some tenants, anticipating the lock-out, moved their personal belongings into storage before the sheriff's department showed up on Tuesday. Others still have televisions, coffee tables and pets locked in their vacated units, they said.

Meanwhile, many tenants, receiving frantic phone calls at work, said they returned home during the lunch hour on Tuesday and discovered the locks on their doors had been changed.

Authorities told them they'd have two minutes to enter their units and collect whatever valuables they could, residents said.

For years, the two sides have been embroiled in litigation, with settlements offered by AIMCO but declined by the tenants.

In October, Rosendahl and Villaraigosa organized a meeting with AIMCO and



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

(Top) Lucy Siam, 77, a tenant at Lincoln Place since 1974, and her neighbor Hector Jimenez protest on Tuesday. (Right) Many tenants came home to notices of eviction on their doors.

Lincoln Place tenants to resolve the dispute. However, the meeting failed because tenants didn't trust AIMCO's offer.

Patti Shwayder, AIMCO's senior vice president of communications, said her company took steps above and beyond what is required by law in order to assuage tenant concerns.

Shwayder said AIMCO was prepared to provide as many as 180 Lincoln Place households with apartments at the new site, in which they would pay below market rent for life. In addition, 50 more units also were to be designated as historical and would not be redeveloped, under the terms of the settlement.

Shwayder said AIMCO's offer would have prevented the company from redeveloping at market value nearly 13 acres, or one third of the property.

As a condition of the settlement, tenants would have had to agree to let

AIMCO build more than 1,000 units and stop suing AIMCO over disputes.

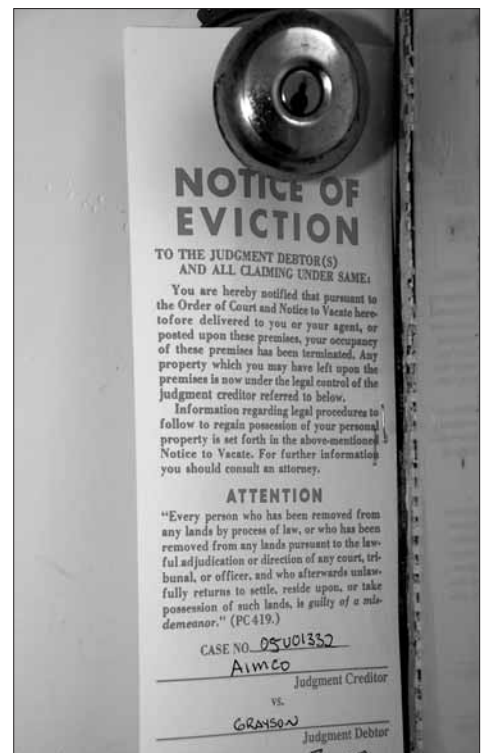
Due to years of distrust, tenants said they were unable to make that promise. They refused the offer.

Tenants also have received individual settlement offers, which hundreds have accepted. Alex Tejeda, a single mother, said AIMCO offered her \$3,200 to move, but she said it wasn't enough for her to find an apartment she could afford.

Tejeda, who works at the Venice Family Clinic, said she sent her daughter to live with relatives in Florida as she stuck it out at Lincoln Place.

Tejeda said she believed that by staying she would help the fight for affordable housing in Los Angeles.

"It's a good fight," Tejeda said. "It's getting too expensive to live here unless you're a millionaire. Obviously, we're not."



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Mars rovers find evidence of past hostile environment

BY ALICIA CHANG

AP Science Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Nearly two years after NASA's twin rovers parachuted to Mars, a Jekyll-and-Hyde picture is emerging about the planet's past and whether it could have supported life.

Both Spirit and Opportunity uncovered geologic evidence of a wet past, a sign that ancient Mars may have been hospitable to life. But new findings reveal the Red Planet was also once such a hostile place that the environment may have prevented life from developing.

"For much of its history, it was a very forbidding place," said mission principal investigator Steven

Squires of Cornell University.

Scientists stressed that the rovers were investigating a snapshot in geologic time and that it's possible that other regions of Mars that have yet to be explored could have had a different environment.

The new analyses were presented Monday at an American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco.

Since landing on opposite sides of Mars in January 2004, the six-wheel rovers found conclusive evidence that the planet once had water based on examination of water-altered bedrock at their respective sites.

But the sedimentary rocks in the Martian plains where Opportunity landed also painted a picture of a past environment some 3 billion to 4 billion years ago that fluctu-

ated between being very acidic and arid — conditions that were probably unfavorable to life.

The Gusev Crater region where Spirit touched down revealed an even more violent history. Three outcrops examined by the rover displayed deposits of water-altered debris from explosive events. Hot ash rained from the sky and space objects bombarded the surface about 4 billion years ago. During that time, water was present, but not a large amount.

Scientists acknowledged that such harsh environments probably would have posed challenges for life to start, but they did not rule out the possibility that limited life forms could have thrived under these extreme conditions.

They pointed to similar environments found on Earth in which primitive creatures adapt and live in radical habitats including ocean hot springs, volcanic craters and polar glaciers.

At the very least, scientists said, the sites where the rovers landed may have been suitable for life when water was present. These areas deserve further scrutiny, including a possible sample return of Martian rock or soil to Earth to determine whether fossilized life exists, they said.

Also Monday, the European Space Agency said its Mars Express spacecraft found evidence that Mars underwent a major global climate change. Data collected by the spacecraft showed that Mars once was moist and had surface water that disappeared about 3 1/2 billion years ago, leaving the planet dry and cold.

Present-day Mars is dusty, dry and cold with no apparent sign of life on its barren, rust-colored surface. Since 2004, the twin rovers have dazzled scientists with discoveries that point to a more lively ancient environment.

The solar-powered, golf cart-sized robotic explorers outlasted their primary, three-month mission long ago and are operating on overtime. They are managed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena.

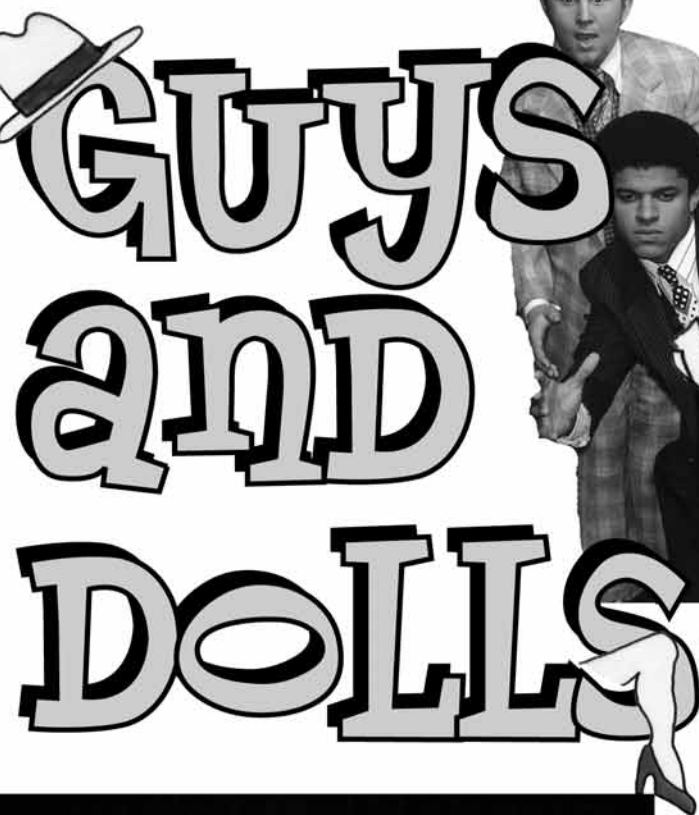
In August, Spirit climbed to the top of a Martian hill as tall as the Statue of Liberty. After a month at the summit, the rover is making its way down to explore a basin that holds geologic promise. Spirit recently did some nighttime viewing of the sky and photographed a lunar eclipse of Mars' moon Phobos.

Meanwhile, Opportunity's robotic arm became stalled while trying to examine a layered outcrop and engineers are working to fix it. The rover is facing rough driving on its way across plains to Victoria Crater, about eight times bigger than Endurance Crater, a 430-foot-diameter crater previously studied by Opportunity.

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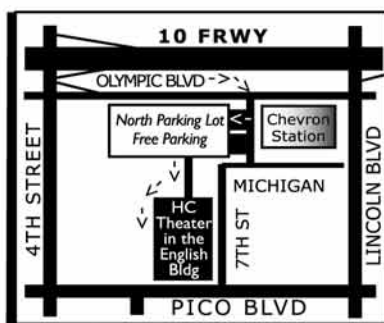


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This annual event brought to you by downtown SM and the Third St. Promenade features the following activities:

TUES., DEC. 6, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. - SANTA MONICA'S TOP MODEL CONTEST - audition to be featured in the Winterlit Fashion Show, 20 models chosen. Santa Monica Place, Level 1, Macy's Court.

SAT., DEC. 10, NOON - 4:00 p.m. - CHILDREN'S FAIR - Enjoy snow, interactive games, arts & crafts, pony rides, a petting zoo and more. FREE! Throughout Third St. Promenade.

SUN., DEC. 11, 2:00 & 3:30 p.m. - FASHION SHOW - Watch Santa Monica's Top Models walk the catwalk in hot winter fashions. FREE! Third St. Promenade near Santa Monica Blvd.

THURSDAY, DEC. 8

MOMS CLUB of SANTA MONICA NORTH/PALISADES - OPEN HOUSE and HOLIDAY PARTY. This party is open to prospective members who reside in SM north of Wilshire, Pacific Palisades and Brentwood. There will be a raffle, gift exchange, refreshments and a visit from Santa. Must RSVP to smmomsclub@yahoo.com or call 753-2319 for event details. At the Santa Monica Pier Carousel.

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STATE



Illegal immigration spotlighted in House race to replace Cox

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD
AP Political Writer

LOS ANGELES — The most interesting thing about the race to fill a vacant U.S. House seat in Orange County — one of the most secure Republican districts in the nation — is not who is likely to win. The party's endorsed candidate, former car dealer John Campbell, is so confident he already has an airline ticket to Washington.

Despite the probability of the outcome, the campaign has spotlighted an issue that could play out in congressional races across the country next year: illegal immigration.

In a district that is less than a two-hour drive to Mexico, the minor-party candidacy of Jim Gilchrist, a founder of the Minuteman Project civilian border patrols, is being driven by outrage over spongy border security and the tide of illegal immigration.

An upset or closer-than-expected finish in Tuesday's election could push immigration policy to the forefront as candidates gear up for midterm congressional races next year and, further on, the 2008 presidential contest.

"This is one of the biggest cultural divides in the Republican Party," said Democratic consultant Bill Carrick. Gilchrist, a former Republican running as a candidate for the American Independent Party, "is openly challenging the president on this issue."

The House seat in the conservative, coastal district was held for 17 years by Rep. Christopher Cox, who left earlier this year to become President Bush's choice to

head the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Campbell is reliably conservative on issues like abortion, spending and taxes, but he breaks from the president when it comes to the administration's guest-worker plan. Bush wants to catch more foreigners crossing the border while increasing the number of temporary work visas for those who will take jobs that Americans are unwilling to fill.

"We've got to control these borders first, then we can talk about a guest-worker program," said Campbell spokesman Jim Terry.

Gilchrist has made immigration the centerpiece of his campaign. He describes Campbell as too accommodating on the issue, and advocates sending thousands more personnel to patrol borders and ports.

His supporters are hoping a better-than-expected showing will help enlist congressional candidates in border states where immigration could be a dominant issue.

Gilchrist says that win or lose, he's made a point by tapping into frustration over illegal immigration that will have a snowballing political effect nationwide.

"I will not be arrogant and say, 'Look I'm going to win.' ... The real priceless commodity is grassroots support" that will carry on, Gilchrist said.

"Maybe in 2008 you'll have nothing but Minutemen holding offices," he added.

Three other candidates are on the ballot — Democrat Steve Young, an attorney; Libertarian Bruce Cohen, a real estate broker; and high school teacher Bea Tiritilli, 42, the Green Party candidate.

Study: Special election voters skeptical of elected leaders

BY BETH FOUHY
AP Political Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Last month's special election attracted a disgruntled group of voters who are pessimistic about the state's future and take a dim view of its elected leaders, a new survey found.

The poll, released Monday by the non-partisan Public Policy Institute of California, surveyed voters who participated in the Nov. 8 special election called by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. The election drew about 7.9 million voters statewide, for a turnout of 50 percent.

Voters rejected all eight initiatives that appeared on the ballot, including four championed directly by Schwarzenegger: Proposition 74, which would have lengthened the probationary period for teachers; Proposition 75, which would have required government unions to get permission from members to use their dues for politics; Proposition 76, a state spending cap; and Proposition 77, which would have stripped lawmakers of their power to draw political boundaries.

Two competing prescription drug initiatives, a measure to re-regulate the state's electric utilities and a proposal requiring doctors to notify the parents of

minor seeking an abortion also went down to defeat.

The survey found that most voters trudged to the polls unwillingly, believing the special election should not have taken place. Just 36 percent thought the contest was a good idea, while 60 percent did not.

Special election voters also expressed concern about the direction the state is heading and gave low marks to Schwarzenegger and the state Legislature.

The poll found that by a margin of 68 percent to 23 percent, voters believe the state is heading in the wrong direction. Also, 56 percent disapprove of the job Schwarzenegger is doing as governor, and 60 percent said they disapprove of his use of the initiative process in making public policy.

The news was just as bad for state Legislators. Fully 66 percent of special election voters said they disapprove of the way the Legislature handles its job, with just 20 percent saying they approve. And 76 percent said they disapproved of the way the governor and state lawmakers worked together to craft public policy.

The survey of 2,002 special election was taken over 12 days starting Nov. 9 and had a sampling error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.



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**DAYS ON
THE MARKET**
BY JODI SUMMERS

Check out real estate property purchase studies. It doesn't matter which one you read; they're all saying that approximately 35 percent of residential real estate sold recently is second homes. The National Association of Realtors recorded an impressive 2.82 million second-home purchases in 2004, up from 2.42 million in 2003. The investment-home component rose to 1.8 million sales in 2004 from 1.57 million in 2003, while vacation-home sales rose to 1.02 million in 2004 from 850,000 in 2003.

"The majority of the real gain in single-family home sales can be attributed to the vacation and investment property markets," says John Tuccillo, a real estate analyst and former NAR chief economist. "Not only are baby boomers looking for weekend getaways, but we are also beginning to see young retirees auditioning for their retirement location. As the boomer group ages and the demographics change, a larger and larger number of consumers will be targeting that potential retirement home."

Investors are delighted by the ways second home purchases expand their portfolios, but investors seldom consider the impact the second home market has on the local economy. Back in the '70s, parts of Santa Monica and Venice were inhabited by a bunch of old hippies, writing stories and painting paintings, living on \$200 a month. Ten years ago you could easily buy an entry-level home in Venice for less than \$200,000. Today, the artists have been replaced by dot-comers, and we're talking closer to \$800,000 for that same home.

The same holds true for the island town of Nantucket, off of the Massachusetts coast. Once upon a time it was hippies living cheap, out of the mainstream, huddling around pot-bellied stoves during the harsh winter months. Nantucket, an island of wide sandy beaches, fishing and boating, offers one of the finest docking facilities in the world. Nearly 40 percent of Nantucket is protected conservation land; limited land drives up real estate prices. But in the summer, Nantucket is one of the places to be. Notables like Senator Ted Kennedy and retired TV journalist Walter Cronkite call Nantucket home.

Second-home investments have escalated island prices, not only of real estate, but of everything else in Nantucket. Ten years ago, you could buy into Nantucket for around \$200,000. Now, the median price of a home is \$1.5 million. Gas is \$4 a gallon. A quart of milk costs 40 percent more than the next town over. The artists have moved to Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

"It has made the housing inventory here totally beyond the grasp of the ordinary person," says Roy Flanders, a Nantucket realtor. "We're in a league with Aspen, maybe the high end of the Hamptons."

In September 2005, the median price of a home in Aspen was \$3.6 million. Obviously, people who work in Aspen can no longer afford to buy into this cosmopolitan ski resort. Basalt, 15 miles away, is Aspen's bedroom community with a median home price of \$575,000. As prices in Aspen continue to rise, second-home buyers move further and further down the corridor, heading west toward Glenwood Springs, again driving up housing for the locals. Glenwood Springs is 45 miles or so from Aspen. On the other side of Glenwood Springs are Silt and Rifle. It's said that Aspen's blue-collar work force lives as far as Silt.

That same scenario is happening in the California resorts, such as the Lake Tahoe area. "In the past five years, the prices have gone way up, driven by the second-home market," says Tim Hauserman, a realtor in Tahoe City. "The locals haven't been able to buy a home because the prices are so high. Many of them are moving out of town."

The average price of a home in Tahoe City, which is close to Lake Tahoe, is \$700,000; five years ago, it was half that.

"This has affected our schools. My daughter's high school has lost about 10 percent of its students because people have moved away," Hauserman says. "The biggest effect on the locals is that it's hard to find employees for businesses. Teachers — unless they have lived here a long time — they can't afford to buy a house. They move to communities that are less expensive nearby."

Californians purchasing second homes are also driving up prices throughout Hawaii, accounting for 40 percent of the purchases in 2004. Ricky Cassiday, owner of Honolulu-based Data@Work, did a study of 2004 sales activity in the 14 resort residential communities that span the four Hawaii county islands of Oahu, Maui, the Big Island and Kauai.

Whereas Californians account for 40 percent of purchases, Hawaii residents accounted for 29 percent of the market. Buyers from Washington accounted for 6 percent of the purchases, while Colorado, Alberta and Nevada residents each claimed 2 percent. Buyers paid an average of \$960,480 for homes, condominiums and vacant home lots in Hawaii in 2004, generating sales of \$2 billion on 2,116 closings.

The question is, when the island locals can no longer live in Hawaii, where will they go?

What exactly do people do with a second home? Survey says:

■ 30 percent of buyers who purchase second homes wanted to diversify investments.

■ 28 percent sought rental income.

■ 14 percent wanted a personal or family retreat.

■ 6 percent planned to use the property for vacations.

■ 5 percent had extra money to spend.

(Jodi Summers is director of the investment division at Boardwalk Realty Santa Monica. Contact her at jodis@boardwalkrealty.com or 310-309-4219. Visit her community history Web site at www.santamonicalandmarks.com.)

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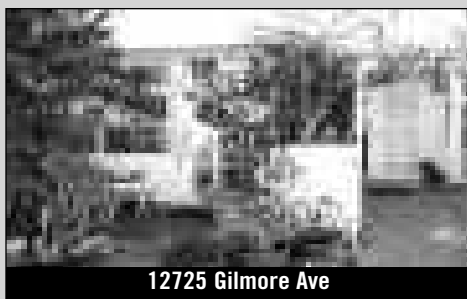
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Real Estate

Commission approves 1,800 new gas wells

BY STEVEN K. PAULSON

Associated Press Writer

DENVER — A state panel approved a plan Monday that will allow energy companies to drill about 1,800 new natural gas wells on Colorado's eastern plains over the next 20 years, despite concerns it will cause big headaches for homeowners in one of the fastest-growing regions in the country.

The Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission approved a plan that will allow three gas companies to drill additional wells in 27 townships in the heavily populated Front Range north of Denver.

It excluded drilling in Longmont, Broomfield, Berthoud, Loveland, Hudson and Windsor, but said there was nothing that could be done to help Greeley, which is located in the center of the state's natural gas boom and was recently listed as the fastest-growing metropolitan area in the United States by the Census Bureau.

Commissioner Brian Cree warned his colleagues that decisions about drilling should not be based on the economics of the day.

"We don't want to change our rules based on the price of oil. In three years, two years, it could be very different from what we're seeing today," he said. "It could be better or worse. I just think we need to be careful doing too much."

The region sits atop a highly productive gas field known as the Greater Wattenberg Area, which covers

about 1.5 million acres in all. Kerr-McGee Rocky Mountain Corp., EnCana Oil and Gas USA and Noble Energy Production Inc. received permission to drill a total of eight wells per quarter-section, or 160 acres, an increase from five wells.

The state previously limited well-drilling in the Greater Wattenberg Area, trying to promote shared drilling projects. The plan had limited success.

Michael Wozniak, an attorney speaking on behalf of the gas companies, said it makes economic sense for gas companies to cooperate.

Randy Feuerstein, spokesman for developers and other opponents of the expanded drilling, said the new rules will drive up costs for developers, who will have to set aside land for new wells and drilling equipment. He said some of the new sites may never be drilled, but developers still cannot use the land.

Carolyn Lamb, an attorney for the Oil and Gas Accountability Project, an industry watchdog, said her group realizes the state needs new natural gas reserves, but she's also worried about the impact on communities and the environment.

She said there are no requirements that drillers test the soil for contaminants after drilling is completed, and the commission approved limited requirements for water testing.

Lamb said her group is trying to prevent people on the Front Range from making some of the mistakes made on the Western Slope, where state and federal

Changes approved for new gas wells

By The Associated Press

A plan approved Monday by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission will allow gas companies to drill about 1,800 new wells on the Eastern Plains over the next 20 years.

■ It was trimmed from 81 townships to 27 townships, extending from Greeley to the outskirts of Keenesburg.

■ The commission agreed to exclude drilling in Longmont, Broomfield, Berthoud, Loveland, Hudson and Windsor.

■ Opponents say the plan does little to protect developers, who will have to set aside land for the new wells, and little to protect the environment around well sites.

officials are trying to control growth and damage from the oil and natural gas industries. She said the Wattenberg natural gas region is encroaching on nearby communities.

"This area is intensely developed, not only with oil and gas, but aggregates and real estate development. That justifies even closer scrutiny of health, safety and welfare issues because of the proximity of development to the resident populations," she said.

High court approves state taxes on fuel on Indian reservations

BY TONI LOCY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court ruled Tuesday that states have the power to tax fuel sold on Indian reservations.

In a 7-2 vote, the high court said Kansas can tax distributors who sell fuel at an Indian-owned and operated gas station near the Prairie Band Potawatomi tribe's casino. Most of the Nation Station's fuel customers are patrons of the casino, which is 15 miles north of Topeka, Kan.

Writing for the majority, Justice Clarence Thomas said the Denver-based 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was wrong in ruling that the tax violated tribal sovereignty.

"Kansas law makes clear that it is the distributor, rather than the retailer, that is liable to pay the motor fuel tax," Thomas wrote. "While the distributors are 'entitled' to pass along the cost of the tax to downstream purchasers ... they are not required to do so."

The tribe had argued that it already collects taxes on fuel to pay for maintaining the reservation's roads, which are among the worst in the nation.

Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Anthony M. Kennedy dissented, arguing that the fuel is "effectively double-taxed" and may force the tribe's gas station to operate at a deficit or go out of business.

Ginsburg also said Kansas is not gaining much through the tax — about \$300,000 annually. But, in doing so, she wrote, the state is preventing the tribe from imposing its own tax.

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FEMA admitted broken Katrina response

BY LARA JAKES JORDAN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Facing a growing body count and shortages of food, water and ice, federal emergency officials braced for riots in Mississippi in the days following Hurricane Katrina, new documents reveal.

Federal Emergency Management Agency officials knew their response system had been shattered by the Aug. 29 storm and were unable to provide fast help — even when the needs were obvious.

"This is unlike what we have seen before," William Carwile, FEMA's former top responder in Mississippi, said in a Sept. 1 e-mail to officials at the agency's headquarters. He was describing difficulties in getting body bags and refrigerated trucks to Hancock County, Miss., which was badly damaged by the storm.

Carwile wrote that he personally authorized Hancock County to buy refrigeration trucks because "the coroner was going to have to start putting bodies out in the parking lot."

The next day, in another e-mail to headquarters about substandard levels of food, water and ice being distributed in Mississippi, Carwile reported, "System

appears broken."

In a Sept. 1 exchange, FEMA regional response official Robert Fenton warned headquarters that the expected levels of water and ice being sent were far below what was needed.

"If we get the quantities in your report tomorrow we will have serious riots," Fenton wrote.

Responding, Carwile wrote: "Turns out this report is true. ... There seems to be no way we will get commodities in amounts beyond those indicated below. And it turns out these shortfalls were known much earlier in the day and we were not informed."

"Will need big time law enforcement reinforcements tomorrow," Carwile's e-mail continued. "All our good will here in MS will be very seriously impacted by noon tomorrow. Have been holding it together as it is."

The eight pages of correspondence among FEMA officials, provided Monday by a special House committee investigating the government response to the storm, followed the release last week by Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco of more than 100,000 documents. Taken together, the details from both states provide evidence of a system in disarray.

The House Government Reform Committee, chaired by Rep. Tom Davis, R-Va., is reviewing hundreds of thousands of documents from local, state and federal officials who were involved in the disaster relief effort.

The committee is holding a hearing Tuesday to examine whether race and class issues affected the government's sluggish response. The hearing was requested by Rep. Cynthia McKinney, D-Ga., one of the few Democrats to participate in the investigation after their party leaders decided to boycott the inquiry, which they believe should be done by an independent commission.

The Louisiana documents released Friday revealed delays and state claims that requests for federal help weren't received, and reflected partisan battling between the Republican Bush administration and Blanco, a Democrat.

The Mississippi documents, though only a handful were released, showed no political tensions between local officials and Washington. But FEMA officials in the state were among the first to admit that needs weren't being met.

"Gulfport Ms only has enough commodities for roughly 3 hours distribution tomorrow," Scott Morris, working in

Florida's long-term recovery office and a former FEMA deputy chief of staff, wrote in an e-mail sent Aug. 31. "Apparently, the local law enforcement officials have allowed evacuees back into city."

Replying to Carwile's e-mail about body bag shortages, Scott wrote: "Let me know how I can help. 24/7 whatever you need."

The House committee will hold another hearing Wednesday focusing on the response in Mississippi. Carwile and Republican Gov. Haley Barbour are scheduled to testify.

"These exchanges point once again to problems of coordination and communication — unfortunately, a recurring theme throughout our investigation," said committee spokesman Robert White.

FEMA spokeswoman Nicol Andrews said the agency is undergoing an internal review for changes as ordered by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff.

"One of the things we have learned is that our logistic resources weren't up to the task, and the technology that we were using wasn't up to the task," Andrews said. Chertoff "has said that one of his priorities is retooling FEMA and, as part of that, making it a 21st century agency."

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Washington wine grape growers reap a record harvest

BY SHANNON DININNY
Associated Press Writer

YAKIMA, Wash. — Wine grape growers in Washington state had a record harvest this year, proving that some crops fare well even in drought conditions.

The Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers estimated the 2005 harvest at 116,760 tons, surpassing the previous record of 115,000 tons in 2002. The harvest was 100,500 tons last year, when a harsh winter left many vineyards with freeze damage.

Washington is the nation's No. 2 premium wine producer behind California with an industry valued at \$2.4 billion. It is home to more than 360 wineries and 350 wine grape growers.

Many farmers entered the 2005 growing season concerned about drought after far-below-average winter snowpack resulted in reduced streamflows and increasingly dry conditions. Wine grape growers worried a little less because they often reduce irrigation to their vineyards to stress the grapes anyway.

"It really is one of the few crops that can survive the drought," said Vicky Scharlau, executive director of the wine grape growers' group. "We've had growers say this is just going to be the harvest of the decades."

Scharlau laughed, noting that vintners have said that many times already in the past decade.

"I'm sure that one of these years we're not going to be able to say that, but this year seems to be another great vintage. We're thrilled with that," she said.

The warm summer, followed by steady, cool fall temperatures and a frost-free harvest, allowed the fruit to hang on the vine longer, said Jeff Gordon, chairman of the Washington Wine Commission, a promotional state agency financed by fees on member wineries and growers.

Growers across the state once again reported smaller grapes as well, which concentrates the flavor.

"Mother Nature was definitely on our side this year," Gordon said. Gordon also owns Gordon Brothers Family Vineyards in Pasco.

A heavy freeze dampened the 2004 harvest for some parts of the state, but new bearing acres in what has become a booming industry balanced out the losses. This year there were only a couple of hundred new bearing acres in the state, Scharlau said.

Winter's big waves draw world's best surfers to Oahu North Shore

BY ALEXANDRE DA SILVA
Associated Press Writer

NORTH SHORE, Oahu — Since opening a pizzeria on Oahu's North Shore four years ago, Jerry Coffman has relied on the big waves to keep his business afloat.

They never fail.

After losing money half the year, the owner of Sunset Pizza gets busy every winter when the first ocean swells of the season roll in along the island's north coast, attracting thousands of local residents, tourists and surfers from around the globe.

"It's pretty radical," said Coffman, 39, whose business balloons sixfold with the thousands who pack the beaches to watch professional and amateur surfers brave the monster waves. "They park their cars all along the sides of the street, so they have to see us."

Sunny Hawaii, rarely hit by bad weather itself, benefits from storms in the northern hemisphere that push massive swells toward this seven-mile stretch of coastline, considered to be the world's best for the sport. The perfectly shaped, giant waves attract professional and thrill-seekers to compete and surf to cheering throngs along the shore.

"The waves are amazing, and they break in such a short stretch of coast," said pro surfer Russell Winter, who's from Newquay, England, and is here trying to qualify for next year's World Championship Tour. "There are not that many places that have that."

When the first surf contest was held on the North Shore more than three decades ago, about 50 people sat on the beach as surfers tamed dangerous waves exploding a few feet above sharp coral reef. Now, on any given day, an estimated 2,500 people line the beach during a series of three contests known as the Triple Crown of Surfing, whose participants represent 21 countries.

This year's season turned tragic, underscoring the danger that lurks in the giant waves. Surfing on a day between contests, Malik Joyeux, 25, a well-known professional surfer from Tahiti, was killed by a 16-foot wave that crashed on him, snapping his surfboard in half and pushing him under. Dozens of fellow surfers tried to rescue Joyeux from the churning waters, and later formed a somber prayer ring on the beach to mourn his death.

For surfers, the danger is part of the challenge. It's tra-

dition, said CJ Hobgood, a top-ranked surfer from Satellite Beach, Fla.

"The place breeds good surfing," said Hobgood, who won his only world surfing title here in 2001. "It almost feels weird if you are not here."

Last year's final day of competition at the Banzai Pipeline in December drew 11,000 people, said Randy Rarick, who directs the prestigious series and has been managing contests here for 30 years.

Among those who came to watch on a recent Sunday was Bob Hugney, 55, of Kansas City.

A self-described golfing fanatic, Hugney said he rented a car just to make the two-hour round trip from Waikiki after learning in a TV newscast that the famous waves were approaching.

"Pictures don't do justice. Videos don't do justice," said Hugney, his eyes sizing up a large set of waves. "You have to see it for yourself."

Separated from the rest of the island by acres of pineapple fields, this rural coastline some 45 miles north of Honolulu remains relatively quiet for most of the year.

But the population doubles during the five months of high surf from November to March. On a good day, the coast's two-lane highway and the quaint surfing village of Haleiwa are clogged with surfers cruising in cars jammed with surfboards and tourists driving convertibles and taking photos.

The contests brought in an estimated \$7.8 million in 2003. Sponsor investment in the three events has grown from less than \$100,000 in 1986 to more than \$1.2 million.

The events and the traffic annoy some local residents by closing popular surf breaks and increasing trash on beaches. Fights between local and visiting surfers are common, and in 2003, a resident prevented contest officials from setting up a tower with scaffolding by threatening a lawsuit.

But Kathleen Pahinui, chairwoman of the North Shore neighborhood board, said residents have grown used to the temporary chaos in their community and many welcome the crowds.

"It happens every year, so everyone anticipates it," she said. "We love it. We don't love the traffic that comes with it, but everyone goes with the flow."

Robbie Williams wins libel case over allegations of homosexuality

By The Associated Press

LONDON — British pop star Robbie Williams accepted undisclosed libel damages Tuesday from publishers of a newspaper and magazines that had claimed he was a homosexual.

The defendants, British publishing groups MGN Limited, publisher of The People, a Sunday tabloid, and Northern & Shell PLC, publisher of Star and Hot Stars magazines, agreed to publish prominent apologies to the

31-year-old singer and to pay damages and legal costs.

Zoe Norden, a lawyer representing MGN and Northern & Shell, said: "I accept that the allegations ... were untrue. The defendant apologizes to the claimant and expresses its regret for the injury and distress caused."

The cover story of an August 2004 issue of The People suggested that Williams had numerous homosexual encounters with strangers. Similar stories were published in the two magazines.

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Rice, Merkel discuss German's claim that he was wrongly held

BY ANNE GEARAN

AP Diplomatic Writer

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Tuesday that the United States has admitted making a mistake in the case of a German national who claimed he was wrongfully imprisoned by the CIA.

Merkel spoke during a press conference with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who refused to discuss specifics with reporters. The two women leaders' first meeting was dominated by questions about U.S. terrorism policies, including the five-month detention of Lebanese-born Khaled al-Masri and reports of secret CIA prisons and potentially illegal use of European airports and airspace to transport terror suspects.

"The American administration is not denying" it erred in the case of al-Masri, Merkel said through a translator.

Merkel welcomed that admission and added that she is grateful for Rice's assurances that the United States conducts anti-terror operations legally and without the use of torture.

"I'm happy to say we have discussed the one case, which the government of the United States has of course accepted as a mistake," Merkel said. "I'm very happy that the foreign minister has repeated here that when such mistakes happen, they must be corrected immediately. Everything else must happen in accordance with the law."

"We haven't discussed other cases," Merkel added, "so I cannot recognize any pattern."

Al-Masri filed a lawsuit in Washington on Tuesday, claiming he was held captive and tortured by U.S. government agents after being mistakenly identified as an associate of the Sept. 11 hijackers.

Al-Masri, who is being represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, said he was arrested while attempting to enter Macedonia for a holiday trip and flown to Afghanistan. During five months in captivity he was subjected to "torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment," says a lawsuit he filed in U.S. District Court in suburban Alexandria, Va. The suit names as the main defendant former CIA Director George Tenet.

In addition to torture, he claims his due process rights were violated and that he was subjected to "prolonged, arbitrary detention." He is seeking damages of at least \$75,000.

The German parliament will soon take up the matter, Merkel said, adding, "That is appropriate."

"We recognize the chancellor will be reviewing this" in parliament, Rice said. "We also recognize that any policy will sometimes result in error and when it happens we do everything we can to correct it."

The American diplomat also offered a broad defense of intelligence gathering in the pursuit of terrorists.

"This is essentially a war in which intelligence is absolutely key to success," Rice said. "If you are going to

uncover plots, if you are going to get to people before they commit their crimes, that is largely an intelligence function."

Ticking off a list of recent terror attacks, Rice said the consequence of failing to find out about terror plots ahead of time can be seen not only in New York and Washington, sites of the Sept. 11 jetliner attacks, but also in Amman, Jordan; Beslan, Russia; London; Madrid and elsewhere.

Later Tuesday, Rice was flying to Romania, a country identified as a likely site of a secret detention facility run by the CIA. Romania denies it. She will sign a defense cooperation pact related to an air base the advocacy group Human Rights Watch has identified as a probable site for a clandestine prison.

ABC News reported Monday night that two secret CIA prisons in Eastern Europe were closed last month and 11 al Qaida suspects were transferred to a facility in North Africa. The report, which ABC attributed to current and former CIA officers who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the prisons were shut down after Human Rights Watch said that such facilities existed in Romania and Poland.

In Berlin, Rice met with Merkel, the country's first leader from the formerly communist East, for about an hour. Merkel pledged last week to put aside past differences between Germany and the United States even as she pressed for the Bush administration to take the CIA prison concerns seriously.

"Let the battles of the past lie — those battles have been fought," Merkel said in her first speech to parliament as chancellor.

The United States is eager to get off on the right foot with Merkel after turbulent relations with the government of blunt Bush opponent Gerhard Schroeder.

Rice met in Washington last week with new German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and promised him an answer on the prison issue. Merkel comes to Washington to see President Bush in January.

European governments have expressed outrage over reports of a network of secret Soviet-era prisons in Eastern Europe where detainees may have been harshly treated and reports of CIA flights carrying al-Qaida prisoners through European airports.

Several countries have denied they hosted such sites. If the United States did operate such prisons, or is still doing so, the information would be classified. The Bush administration has refused to answer questions about it in public.

"Were I to confirm or deny, say yes or say no, then I would be compromising intelligence information, and I'm not going to do that," Rice told reporters on her plane to Germany. Before leaving Washington, Rice told reporters that fighting terrorism is "a two-way street" and that Europeans are safer for tough but legal U.S. tactics.

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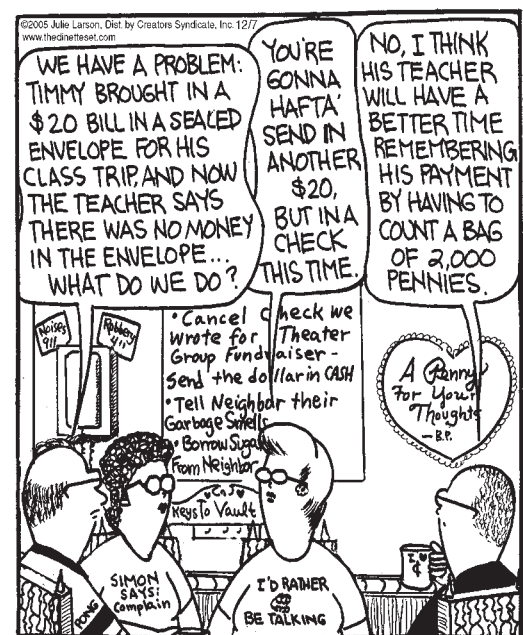
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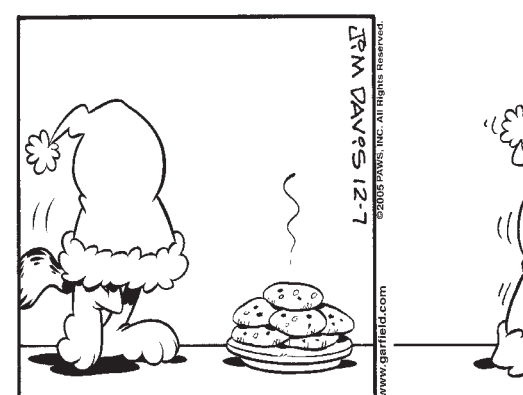
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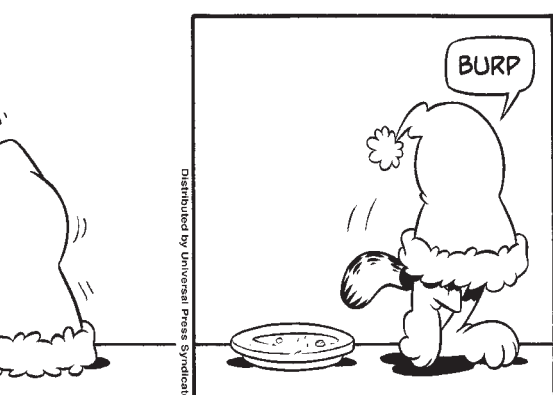
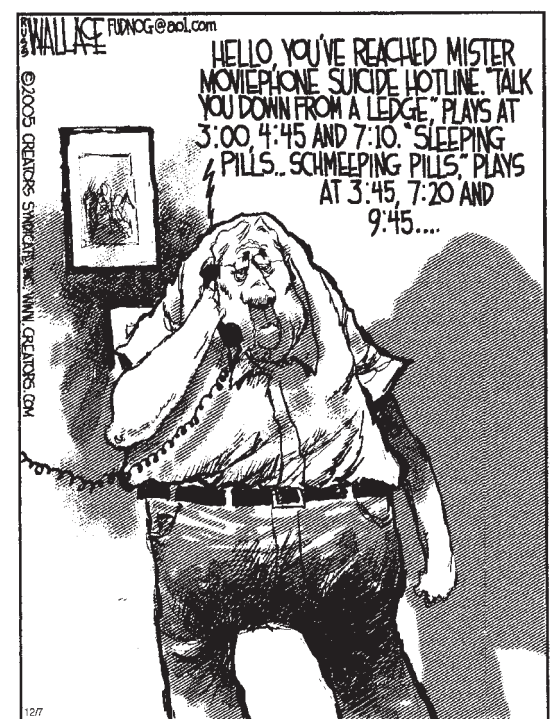
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PLASTER, Richard, Father of Richard Hilary, daughter-in-law, Wendy; and grandchildren Brian, Morgan and Jillian, died naturally in his sleep November 15, 2005. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends and those many people who loved him.

Our thanks to all our loving friends for their kind condolences.

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