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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2011
Volume 11 Issue 28



Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

MURRAY ASKS FOR HELP
SEE PAGE 7

THE TAKING NAMES ISSUE

Online petition launched to save nativity scenes

Traditional display pitted against First Amendment rights

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

PALISADES PARK A coalition of Christian churches has launched an online petition to try and win back the right to display 14 scenes from the nativity story at Palisades Park after losing a lottery for the spaces to a group of atheists from outside Santa Monica.

The petition, which was published Sunday, urges city officials, including City Council members, to "take all needed

SEE SCENES PAGE 12



Daniel Archuleta *daniela@smdp.com*

LIMITED EXPOSURE: **Just three of the annual 14 nativity scenes have been set up in Palisades Park this year.**



Daniel Archuleta *daniela@smdp.com*

ACTION: **John Powers and Serena Dolinsky discuss the play 'Pentagon Papers' Tuesday at the Santa Monica Playhouse.**

SM Playhouse hurting for cash

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

DOWNTOWN Desperate for cash and facing possible eviction, officials with the Santa Monica Playhouse, a performing arts venue that has called the city by the sea its home for more than 50 years, are asking for help to the tune of $15,000.

Chris DeCarlo, co-artistic director of the playhouse on Fourth Street and an employee since 1964, said the threat of eviction is "serious" as the playhouse is behind on its rent, a symptom of the sputtering economy that has made donors more reluctant to give and patrons harder to come by.

SEE PLAYHOUSE PAGE 10

'Creative' office buildings sell for reported $90 million

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

DOWNTOWN Santa Monica's reputation for being a hot spot for technology and entertainment businesses received a boost with the reported $90 million purchase of five "creative" office buildings by a Houston-based real estate investment firm.

Lionstone Group, one of the largest owners of creative offices on the Westside with more than 800,000 square feet in its portfolio, bought the buildings from a limited partnership made up of investors from the entertainment industry, according to a press release issued Tuesday by the company.

Lionstone did not disclose terms of the deal, however, the L.A. Times reported the properties were sold for $90 million.

The deal comes at a time when Santa Monica properties are commanding high rents because of an increase in demand. It seems creative types like being by the beach and are drawn to the city's old industrial spaces that provide high ceilings, flexible work spaces and a funky aesthetic. CEOs can't fit pool tables into stuffy, boxy high-rises.

"Lionstone … saw this as an opportunity to purchase five trophy assets in a market with significant barriers to entry and capitalize on the supply/demand imbalance that exists in Santa Monica, especially for creative office space," said Scott Rigsby, of Industry Partners, a Santa Monica-based firm that represented the seller on the transaction.

"The demand for creative office space from tech, new media and post-production companies is driving leasing activity on the Westside," he added. "Santa Monica is one of the tightest markets in Southern California, as both traditional and creative office users are drawn by the lifestyle, local amenities, and one of the fastest fiber-optic networks in the country."

As a result, some are commanding rents for office space

SEE SALE PAGE 13


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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2011

Sweatin' to the Nutcracker
Main Library
601 Santa Monica Blvd., 3:45 p.m. — 4:45 p.m.
This creative dance workshop for kids is designed around music from the ballet "The Nutcracker." Dance away to a holiday classic. Cost: free. For more information, call (310) 458-8600.

Take a picture
Roberts Art Gallery
601 Pico Blvd.,
8:15 p.m. — 3:15 p.m.
Now open, take a shot at Santa Monica High School's first annual ROP Photography Exhibit, featuring work by students from the Samohi art program. Prints are available for sale. Exhibit open weekdays, through Dec. 30, or through Jan. 7 by appointment. Cost: free. For more information, call (310) 395-3204, ext. 71446 or e-mail abarnes@smmusd.org.

Art for art's sake
Pete and Susan Barrett Gallery
11th St. and Santa Monica Blvd., 10 a.m. — 8 p.m.
The 34th Holiday Student Art Sale, sponsored by Santa Monica College, offers up blown glass, jewelry, ceramics, printing and more, all crafted by the students of the SMC Art Department. Free parking available. Today is the final day of the sale. Proceeds go toward the Art Department. For more information, call (310) 434-3434.

Ready, set, broomball
ICE at Santa Monica
1324 Fifth St., 10 p.m.
The Downtown ice skating rink hosts weekly after-hours broomball games until midnight, for those who are 18 and older. Broomball, a game that originates from Canada, is similar to ice or roller hockey. Attendees who wish to participate must wear rubber-soled sneakers; registration is required and subject to availability. For more information, call (310) 496-9880 or visit www.iceatsantamonica.com.

Thursday, Dec. 15, 2011

Las Posadas Celebration
Virginia Avenue Park
2200 Virginia Ave.,
5 p.m. — 6 p.m.
The annual Las Posadas Celebration features live music, performances and a heavy dose of what the Pico Neighborhood has to offer. This year's event will begin at 2112 Delaware Ave., where a procession led by a mariachi band will lead eventgoers to the park for the rest of the festivities.

Samohi Choir at work
Barnum Hall
601 Pico Blvd., 7 p.m.
Join the Samohi Choir for a night of winter choral music. Dubbed "Motus Perpetuus," the performance is set to a theme of perpetual motion. All choirs in the program will perform. Cost: $10 donation for adults; $5 for students and seniors. For more information, visit www.samohichoir.org.

To create your own listing, log on to smdp.com/submitevent

For help, contact Daniel Archuleta at 310-458-7737 or submit to editor@smdp.com

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to smdp.com/communitylistings



Landmark process underway for Village Trailer Park

Commission asks for report on park's history; process may continue on until spring

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL Landmarks commissioners voted unanimously Monday night to investigate whether one of two remaining trailer parks in Santa Monica should be considered an historic landmark worthy of preservation, a designation that could disrupt a condominium development planned at the property for the last five years.

The commission will have 65 days from the filing of the application to consider reports compiled by staff and outside consultants analyzing the history of the park, and determine what on the site, if anything, qualifies as a landmark.

Landmarked sites receive protections from City Hall, and a special city process is required to alter the landmarked elements of a site.

That could spell trouble for co-owner and developer Marc Luzzatto, who announced in 2006 his intention to close the park and pursue a development agreement with City Hall to build a condominium and affordable housing project on the site.

But an application for consideration does not a landmark make.

Commissioners needed only to acknowledge that there was credible evidence that the park had some historic value to move forward with the fact-finding phase of the process, which would inform their later

SEE **PARK** PAGE 11

LOCAL SPORTS ROUNDUP

Samohi hosts rare hoops doubleheader

BY DANIEL ARCHULETA
Managing Editor

SAMOHI For the first time in recent memory, Santa Monica High School's boys' and girls' basketball teams will play a home doubleheader.

Scheduled for Thursday, the girls open the action against Valencia at 5:30 p.m. The boys will take the court, also against Valencia, at the conclusion of the opener.

"This is great way for us to build unity," girls' coach Marty Verdugo said. "We thought it would be a perfect chance for us to create some excitement for both programs."

The girls enter the game at 4-4 this season and hold a No. 14 ranking in the CIF-Southern Section Division 1AA poll. The boys are coming off a fifth place finish in "The Tournament," which concluded on Saturday at Samohi.

The boys are currently ranked No. 5 in CIF-SS Division 1AA.

SMC'S CEACHIR CHOOSES UTAH

Santa Monica College sophomore offensive lineman Alexandru Ceachir has given a verbal commitment to new Pac-12 member Utah, the Desert News is reporting.

The lineman from the Republic of Moldova has played just two years of American football, but was able to draw the interest of recruiters from a number schools including Arkansas, Colorado and Fresno State.

Ceachir was part of a renaissance of sorts for SMC football this past season.

The team finished the season as American Division Pacific Conference champs with an 8-3 overall record.

daniela@smdp.com



Morgan Genser *news@smdp.com*

MOVING: **Samohi's Cheyenne De Los Reyes dribbles up court against J Serra last week.**

ASPCA urges consumers to avoid pet store puppies

SUE MANNING
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES More puppies are sold at pet stores during the holiday season than any other time of year. Now the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and other groups are stepping up efforts to stop these sales, saying many of these dogs come from puppy mills.

Forty billboards in Los Angeles this month encourage people to fight puppy mills by boycotting pet stores and websites that sell puppies. More than 50,000 people have signed a pledge on the ASPCA's website vowing to uphold the boycott, and the ASPCA has an online database of targeted stores at nopetstorepuppies.com encouraging consumers to shop elsewhere. Consumers can also report a store to the ASPCA, and the organization will verify the source of its puppies, Menkin said.

"We are not just saying 'Don't buy a puppy,' but 'Don't buy anything in a pet store that sells puppies," said Cori Menkin, senior director of the ASPCA's anti-puppy mills campaign. "If pet stores are not able to turn a profit, they will stop selling puppies."

The Humane Society of the United States, Best Friends Animal Society and many other groups are promoting similar initiatives.

As malls and chains drop the commercial sale of puppies, one change for consumers is

SEE **PUPPIES** PAGE 13

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Sign of the times

Editor:

I have always considered the nativity scenes at Palisades Park to be a seasonal tourist attraction in a city that relies on tourists for a significant percentage of its revenue.

The Daily Press article "No room at the inn," Dec. 10-11, states that the nativity scenes have all but been displaced by atheist messages. The photograph accompanying the article shows a chain link cage enclosing a "Happy Solstice" sign.

In a city that micro manages the design of every business sign, building facade and planter box, how the hell did City Hall approve the design of this disgustingly ugly installation on what is arguably one of the finest view locations Santa Monica has to offer.

Since City Hall seems to have taken the position that anything goes, maybe next year the business community will apply for spaces and we will be able to see chain-link fence cages advertising "Jim's Tires" or "Arnie's Eats" or some political statement such as "Welcome to Soviet Monica."

Joseph Palazzolo
Santa Monica

Evicting the arts from Bergamot

Editor:

I attended the Bergamot community meeting last week ("Santa Monica residents look at Bergamot Station options," Dec. 9) and left with some big questions.

Why is there currently a middleman profiting at the city's (loss of revenue) and tenants' (higher rents) expense? Why doesn't City Hall enter into leases directly with the tenants at rents lower than they are currently paying, but higher than City Hall receives? There is no reason to have someone whose interests are not necessarily aligned with either side involved in the process.

I agree that the arts are something that should be promoted and preserved. As we've heard of "green washing," are the current uses being "art washed?" I'm not sure if high-end galleries and an auction house are really what we mean by the arts. We might all agree a local artist selling their jewelry creations is art, and that person cannot afford traditional retail space. However, would Tiffany & Co. or Cartier get subsidized space? Galleries selling expensive art are generally located in expensive retail locations. Why are these current galleries different?

Renting out unused, [former] industrial space was a great interim use of this site. Given the multi-billion dollar investment in light rail, it will no longer be appropriate. The only way for light rail to be successful is for dense urban development to be along its path and at its stations. It would be a crime to keep this site in its near current form. The current galleries do not employ very many people and we've heard their customers most likely will not use light rail. In fact, many of the galleries consider the light rail a negative.

If we are going to promote and subsidize high-end galleries, why not move them to another lower cost location in the city? The Santa Monica Airport currently has a greater concentration of local artists than Bergamot and that would be a natural place to relocate the tenants.

Unfortunately the only way to retain the current tenants on site is to do nothing and that is not an option. I question if the current tenants really represent what City Hall defines as the arts. If so, a new location needs to be found for them prior to redevelopment of Bergamot. If not, let's start with a clean slate for this property and promote the arts where it is appropriate. Property surrounding a new rail station is much too scarce a resource to not develop as effectively as possible.

Linda Fineman
Santa Monica

✉WHAT DO YOU THINK?

■ Send letters to **editor@smdp.com**



Life Matters

JoAnne Barge & Katrina Davy Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Don't pull a Kardashian

DEAR NEW SHRINK,

I am engaged and in the process of planning my wedding. Most of my friends have already gotten married but a number of them also have already split up. Some of them have young children that they are already arguing over. It's really sad.

I just don't understand it and it worries me. Am I headed down the same path? Why do so many marriages end so quickly?

Signed,
Worried about marriage

DEAR WORRIED,

Great question and I hope to be helpful. Unfortunately it is true, at least here in the U.S.; close to half of all first marriages end in divorce and there are even higher rates of divorce for second and third marriages.

Divorces are more likely in the young i.e., those who marry before the age of 25. They are still high but decline in percentage between ages 25 to 30 and the rates go way down after the age 30.

In our country there is no question that for most people there is a great deal more maturity after 25 and then certainly after 30. We are generally much more aware of what we want in our late 20s and early 30s. Actually, our brains don't even stop growing until age 25.

So I would say that part of the problem is that it is easy to fall in love, especially when we are young, but it is not so easy to stay in love. We call it "falling" into love because that is what it is, a falling into something. However, when the dust settles and we are faced with the realities of what we are, who our partners are and the differences and problems that exist in all relationships, the only easy falling is out.

It is now time for work, building a relationship that will work for both partners and can sustain the ebb and flow that always occurs in a relationship. This work seems so difficult for us to do. We have become used to getting what we want and having instant results and answers, and divorce has also become OK with many of us. It no longer carries the stigma that is use to do.

We are not taking the time to develop our patience, our characters and to really work on the problems that face us. We are used to the Internet and finding quick solutions and easy answers. But relationships are different because as human beings we are complex, have feelings and relationships require process. Conflict is inherent; relationships are never going to be instant and easy.

We can make them easier by taking marriage seriously and doing some premarital counseling. This is short term, maybe six to eight sessions, and examines our internalized views of family and our role expectations for our partners and ourselves. For example, we usually have ideas about what makes a good wife and what makes for a good husband. There are two sets of expectations making for the possibility of very different ideas about what is right or wrong.

In premarital work, you figure out what these expectations are and how closely they match. If they don't, then you have the opportunity to work it out in advance or perhaps you decide you are not as well suited for each other as you thought.

It is easy to talk about goals and feelings and what you want going forward. But who will take out the trash, which one will be responsible for the social calendar, the bills, meals and the many things that go with having children are not topics most folks think about or work out in advance. There can be some very hurt feelings and big resentments when things don't go as expected. Working this out in advance may not sound very romantic but it definitely can save a lot of heartache down the road.

IT IS EASY TO TALK ABOUT GOALS AND FEELINGS AND WHAT YOU WANT GOING FORWARD. BUT WHO WILL TAKE OUT THE TRASH, WHICH ONE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SOCIAL CALENDAR, THE BILLS, MEALS AND THE MANY THINGS THAT GO WITH HAVING CHILDREN ARE NOT TOPICS MOST FOLKS THINK ABOUT OR WORK OUT IN ADVANCE.

There is another thing to note and that is while there are more divorces among the childless, it is with the birth of the first child that a lot of marital problems begin. This is because we go from being a romantic dyad to a triangle. Triangles are difficult to negotiate and infants cannot be negotiated. The relationship that we have become accustomed to changes and if we are not prepared for it dads can feel left out, hurt and angry and look for solace elsewhere like work, alcohol or infidelity. Moms can easily feel abandoned if their husbands are suddenly not as available when they need them the most. Often couples start fighting and don't even know what they are fighting about. Lack of sleep does contribute to it, but the point is that if they don't start talking and figure it out, they are headed for a fall into the divorce pool.

Good news is that this can all be prevented with education, a thorough understanding of what can happen and ideally, some quick helpful premarital counseling.

Good luck with your wedding and marriage.

DR. JOANNE BARGE is a licensed psychologist and a licensed marriage and family therapist with offices in Brentwood. Visit her at www.drbarge.com or send your anonymous inquires and responses to newshrink@gmail.com. Got something on your mind? Let us help you with your life matters.

PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Kevin Herrera
editor@smdp.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Daniel Archuleta
daniela@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER
Ashley Archibald
ashley@smdp.com

CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER
Brandon Wise
brandonw@smdp.com

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Morgan Genser
news@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Bill Bauer, David Pisarra, Meredith Carroll, Jack Neworth, Lloyd Garver, Ron Hooks, Taylor Van Arsdale, Merv Hecht, Cynthia Citron, Tom Viscount, Michael Ryan, JoAnne Barge, Katrina Davy

NEWS INTERNS
Colin Newton, Kelly Zhou, Sophia Zhorne
news@smdp.com

PHOTOGRAPHY INTERN
Ray Solano
news@smdp.com

VICE PRESIDENT–BUSINESS OPERATIONS
Rob Schwenker
schwenker@smdp.com

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Steven Stuart
stevens@smdp.com

ADVERTISING TRAFFIC COORDINATOR
Rebecca Martinez
admin@smdp.com

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR
Michele Emch
michele.e@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
We have you covered

1640 5th Street, Suite 218
Santa Monica, CA 90401
OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
FAX (310) 576-9913

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Your column here

By Friends of Sunset Park

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Pointed commentary on appointments

THE SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS editorial writers are entitled to their own opinions, but not their own facts.

Regarding the Dec. 9 editorial about the Airport Commission ("Airport Commission's lack of diversity is troubling"): Are residents who attend the commission meetings supposed to feel guilty because pilots don't bother to attend? It's not quite clear as to what the editorial writer's complaint is. Perhaps pilots prefer to sit home and watch TV, or fly pattern loops over residential areas at night, while the rest of us sit shivering in the City Council Chambers.

Regarding City Council appointees to the Airport Commission, if one looks at the current applicants on City Hall's website, only one of them is a pilot, and he lives in Sunset Park and describes himself as active in Friends of Sunset Park. Since Santa Monica Airport is located within the boundaries of the Sunset Park neighborhood, it should come as no surprise that nearby residents are interested in the airport and apply to serve on the Airport Commission, just as people who are interested in the arts apply for the Arts Commission.

As to the implication that being active in a neighborhood organization should perhaps disqualify someone from serving on a commission, many members of city boards and commissions, as well as elected officials, are members of neighborhood organizations. Planning Commissioner Ted Winterer is a former president of the Ocean Park Association, Councilmember Kevin McKeown is a former chair of the Wilshire/Montana Neighborhood Coalition, and Mayor Richard Bloom is a former president of Friends of Sunset Park.

And contrary to the editorial, Friends of Sunset Park (FOSP) is not "vigorously lobbying elected officials to shut SMO down or at least extremely curtail operations there." If the Daily Press had assigned someone to cover the Nov. 3 "Can We Talk?" meeting in Sunset Park, the reporter would have received a copy of the FOSP board recommendations to city officials for 2012, which included the following:

Santa Monica Airport (SMO)

a) Ensure that the airport visioning process includes discussion of all options for reducing the impact of airport operations on residents, including safety concerns, concerns about aircraft emissions (ultrafine particles, black carbon, etc.), and concerns about noise.

b) Delay the awarding of phase two contracts with the consultants until the public is informed as to the scope of the work plan. Since the phase one reports from HR&A and the RAND Corp. seemed to assume "the status quo" as far as airport operations are concerned, we don't understand how the public is supposed to reach consensus via focus groups on "the middle road" for airport operations at SMO without being given any information as to possible "middle road" options, such as "best practices" at other airports.

c) Continue pursuing implementation of "standard" runway safety areas at SMO.

d) Continue working with other agencies to develop toxicity standards for ultrafine particles, with the goal of protecting residents who are impacted by jet operations at SMO. Explore using airport revenue to fund studies in this area.

e) Take measures to protect the safety and health (air pollution, lead emissions, partially burned jet fuel residue, and noise) of children at Clover Park (especially the Tot Lot, which is separated from parked, taxiing, and departing jets only by a chain-link fence), Airport Park, the newly approved Santa Monica Business Park child care center which will be adjacent to the airport, and the child care center in Marine Park.

f) Continue working with flight school operators to reduce the impact of their operations on residents in Santa Monica, Ocean Park, Venice, Mar Vista, and West Los Angeles. Inform the public in writing of progress in this area since the Aug. 29, 2011 student pilot crash.

g) Continue to limit the number of flight schools at SMO due to the impact on residents of both Santa Monica and Los Angeles.

h) Continue working with pilots to persuade them to follow the recommended flight paths, unless otherwise directed by air traffic controllers.

i) Educate departing jet pilots to cross the shoreline before turning north, unless otherwise directed by air traffic controllers.

j) Respond to residents' WebTrak complaints.

k) Report on both the number and the categories of residents' complaints at the monthly Airport Commission meetings.

l) Explore the possibility (1) of expanding the voluntary departure curfew hours, and (2) of encouraging arriving jet pilots to also honor the voluntary departure curfew (11 p.m. to 7 a.m.). For residents, being awoken out of a sound sleep by extremely loud and intrusive reverse thrusters is no more fun at 6 a.m. than it is at 1 a.m.

Does that sound like vigorous lobbying to shut SMO down? While the editorial writer may find the lack of diversity on the Airport Commission troubling, we find the lack of fact checking on the part of the Daily Press even more troubling.

This column was written by the **BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF FRIENDS OF SUNSET PARK.** For more information on the neighborhood group, go to www.friendsofsunsetpark.org/

The Q Line

Purchasing power

The debate over the pace and scope of development in Santa Monica has often been contentious as neighborhood groups favoring slower growth squared off against planners and developers pushing for more height and density. The recent discussion about the Village Trailer Park and the City Council's decision to explore purchasing the park to save low-income housing is a perfect example.

So, this week's Q-Line question asks:
What do you think should happen to the Village Trailer Park? Should the council try to preserve it, or should the market dictate its future?

Contact **qline@smdp.com** before **Friday at 5 p.m.** and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. You can also call **(310) 458-7737 ext. 107.**





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SOCAL BRIEFS

LOS ANGELES

Schools to sue state over $38M busing cut

The Los Angeles Unified school board has voted to sue the state over a $38 million cut in transportation funds it says will end leave 48,000 students without busing to school in January.

Superintendent John Deasy said at Tuesday's school board meeting the suit will be filed Wednesday in response to Gov. Jerry Brown's announcement that the district will lose a total of $46 million.

The announcement came after a student walkout Tuesday morning at Bravo Medical Magnet high School to protest the loss of busing. About four dozen students rallied outside the board meeting.

Senior Maria Martirosyan told the board that pupils come from as far as 25 miles away to attend the school.

Deasy says the district must provide busing under a 1981 federal desegregation order.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES

Acting Getty director Bomford returning to London

Museum officials say David Bomford is leaving his post as acting director of Los Angeles' J. Paul Getty Museum.

Getty Trust President and CEO James Cuno said Tuesday that Bomford will leave on Feb.1, returning to London for research, scholarship and writing.

Bomford joined the Getty in April 2007 as associate director for collections. He became acting director in January 2010.

While the museum searches for a permanent director, Cuno will take over as acting director.

Bomford oversaw several major exhibitions and the acquisition of several major works.

Before the Getty, Bomford was senior restorer of paintings at the National Gallery in London. He is the author of several books and articles on conservation and art history, and was a visiting scholar at the Getty in 2005.

AP

LOS ANGELES

L.A. Times editor stepping down

Russ Stanton, who led the Los Angeles Times to three Pulitzer Prizes in the midst of massive staff layoffs, has stepped down as editor and executive vice president, the newspaper announced Tuesday.

No reason for his sudden departure was given. Stanton will be replaced on Dec. 23 by Davan Maharaj, who is the newspaper's managing editor and has been with the Times for more than 20 years.

Neither Stanton nor the newspaper immediately indicated whether Stanton was fired or resigned. A statement from the newspaper did not provide a reason for the change or indicate Stanton's future plans.

Stanton was known as a "clear and outspoken" advocate for the journalism profession, said Bryce Nelson, journalism professor at University of Southern California's Annenberg School. His abrupt departure indicates that the Times is still undergoing financial tumult that led to the short-lived tenures of several of Stanton's predecessors, Nelson said, noting that Stanton lasted longer than other editors immediately before him.

"There's a lot of turmoil about revenue, the power of the online edition, the role of the print edition," Nelson said. "This is going on in every American newsroom but it's been especially anguished at the Times."

Stanton, 52, joined the Times in 1997 as a business reporter in Orange County. During his four years as editor, the newspaper was among many that faced with declining circulation and advertising revenue. Its newsroom staff shrank from more than 900 people to about 550.

AP

VERNON

City doesn't have $60M for disincorporation deal

A California legislator told lawyers and lobbyists from the corruption-plagued Los Angeles suburb of Vernon that he would kill a disincorporation bill if Vernon agreed to reforms and set aside $60 million for projects in surrounding cities.

Vernon officials accepted the deal and Los Angeles state Sen. Kevin De Leon, who earlier supported disbanding Vernon, came out against disincorporation.

Officials in neighboring Huntington Park, which stands to receive some of the Vernon grant money, also switched positions and the legislation was defeated last summer.

The Los Angeles Times says the struggling city of 110 residents is still trying to come up with the $60 million in handouts to other cities.

Three ex-city officials have been convicted for misusing public funds and the city's financial dealings are under federal investigation.

AP

LOS ANGELES

Man charged in attack on Simmons site

A Connecticut man affiliated with the Anonymous hacking group was arrested Tuesday on federal charges for an attack on a website belonging to Kiss bassist Gene Simmons, authorities said.

Kevin Poe, of Manchester, Conn., made his initial appearance Tuesday in federal court in Hartford, Conn., and was released on $10,000 bond. An email message left for deputy federal public defender Deirdre Murray was not immediately returned.

Poe was indicted in Los Angeles on two counts: conspiracy and unauthorized impairment of a protected computer. If convicted of both, he faces up to 15 years in prison.

Poe and others linked to Anonymous conducted a "denial of service" attack over a five-day period last October against Simmons' computer systems, sending tens of thousands of electronic requests designed to overload the server and render www.GeneSimmons.com useless.

Poe used a computer program favored by Anonymous that sends extremely large requests over a network in an attempt to overwhelm a target computer, according to the indictment.

Authorities didn't say why Simmons was targeted, but he made comments against copyright infringement at a convention in Cannes, France, days before the cyber attack.

No other arrests have been made.

Representatives for Simmons couldn't immediately comment about Poe's arrest because they weren't aware of it.

Low-end houses give SoCal market a needed boost

ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO Southern California home sales increased in November, bucking the usual seasonal decline as buyers snapped up lower-priced homes, a research firm said Tuesday.

However, the median home price in the region fell to $275,000, down 4.2 percent from $287,000 a year ago. It was the ninth straight month of annual price declines.

Sales of homes below $400,000 rose sharply in the six-county region, while expensive homes drew fewer buyers.

There were 16,884 homes and condos sold last month, up 4.2 percent from 16,208 a year earlier, DataQuick reported. Sales also rose from the previous month despite swoons that typically occur in November.

"'Tis still the season to go bargain-hunting, or at least that's what the November home sales suggest," said John Walsh, president of the San Diego-based firm.

Sales in wealthier coastal regions suffered after caps were lowered on federally guaranteed home loans, DataQuick said. The reduced limits that took effect Oct. 1 vary by county. In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the limit fell to $625,500 from $729,750.

Sales of properties priced between $600,000 and $750,000 plummeted nearly 23 percent in November from the year-ago period, while sales of homes above $800,000 tumbled nearly 18 percent.

On the bright side, first-time buyers buoyed sales of lower-priced homes, aided by federally insured loans that require relatively low down payments. DataQuick said sales of homes below $400,000 jumped more than 6 percent from last year.

San Bernardino County, the most affordable of the six counties surveyed, was the only one to post an annual price increase. San Bernardino's median price rose more than 2 percent to $155,500, while the number of homes sold increased nearly 5 percent.

Absentee buyers, mainly investors and vacation home buyers, accounted for about one of every four Southern California homes sold in November. They paid a median price of $200,000.

Michael Jackson's doctor wants court-paid lawyer for appeal

ANTHONY MCCARTNEY
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES The doctor convicted of killing Michael Jackson asked a court Tuesday to appoint a publicly funded attorney to handle his appeal because he cannot afford to hire counsel.

Dr. Conrad Murray filed an amended notice of appeal stating he is indigent and unable to pay for an appellate lawyer to try to overturn his involuntary manslaughter conviction.

The 58-year-old cardiologist intends to argue his case before the California 2nd District Court of Appeal, based in Los Angeles.

Murray's filing states that a court-appointed attorney would decide how to frame the appeal after reviewing transcripts and rulings from the case.

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that felony convicts have a constitutional right to assistance of counsel.

A jury convicted Murray last month in Jackson's June 2009 death. Murray is expected to serve roughly two years in jail, half of the four-year sentence that Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor handed down on Nov. 29.

Murray's had sought to present evidence to jurors about Jackson's finances, details of his deal for a series of comeback concerts, and information about other doctors treating the pop superstar. But the judge refused and stated the trial would be about Murray's care of the singer.

The Houston-based doctor had been giving Jackson nightly doses of the powerful anesthetic propofol as a sleep aid. The drug is normally given in hospital settings with extensive monitoring equipment, but testimony showed Murray had only basic equipment and left Jackson's bedside on the morning of his death.

Pastor has scheduled a hearing for Jan. 23 to decide whether to order Murray to pay any restitution to Jackson's family or reimburse them for funeral expenses, which totaled more than $1.8 million.

Jackson's estate estimated the singer would have earned at least $100 million if he had performed his "This Is It" concerts planned for London's O2 arena.

Murray will lose his medical license. He remains in a single-man cell in the Men's Central Jail, which is the address he listed on his appeals filings.

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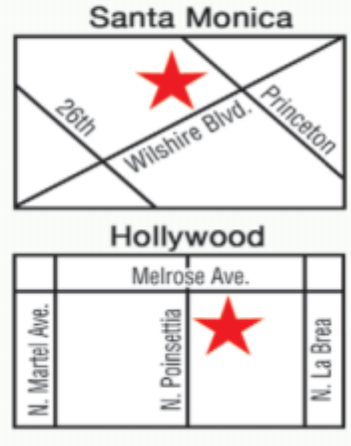

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Jurors recommend death for L.A. serial killer

GREG RISLING
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES Jurors deliberated for less than half a day Tuesday before recommending that a serial killer who took the lives of six women and a teenage girl be sentenced to death.

Michael Hughes was already serving a life sentence for the killings of four women in the 1990s when a jury convicted him last month of murdering two other women and a 15-year-old girl.

Hughes, dressed in a sleeveless sweater, tan pants and powder-blue shirt, showed no emotion as the verdict was read. He is scheduled to be sentenced by a judge March 30.

In issuing their verdict, the jury ignored a plea made earlier in the day from his attorney, who asked for a sentence of life in prison without parole.

"You don't have to kill him," attorney Aron Laub implored the jury during closing arguments. "The law does not compel it."

Laub cited the 55-year-old Hughes' troubled, violent childhood in asking for leniency.

Hughes, a former security guard, was investigated by a task force looking into the killings of dozens of women by the so-called "Southside Slayer." Police later concluded at least three serial killers, including Hughes, were stalking women during a crack cocaine epidemic that led some women onto the streets as prostitutes in order to support their habits.

DNA evidence tied Hughes to the murders that authorities say were committed for sexual gratification. His victims were strangled and some of their nude bodies were posed for discovery with their legs spread apart in order to shock whoever found them, prosecutors said.

Laub said Hughes had a lost childhood. He was 3 years old when his younger brother died and 5 when his infant brother passed away, Laub said.

Hughes' mentally unstable mother beat him repeatedly for 12 years with an extension cord. The violence eventually led Hughes to become a lifelong alcoholic and addicted to crack cocaine, his attorney said.

"That's not a childhood. That's a laboratory for destruction," Laub said.

On Monday, Deputy District Attorney Beth Silverman had argued while Hughes may have had an abusive childhood it didn't mitigate the severity of crimes he committed. She said a just punishment for Hughes is a death sentence because the only thing he cherishes is his own life.

"If there ever was a case where the death penalty is appropriate, it's this case," Silverman said.



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PLAYHOUSE

FROM PAGE 1

"It's always been hand to mouth, but these days it's a little bit dire," he said. "The bubble could burst at any time."

DeCarlo said ticket sales at the theater only make up 35 percent of its revenue, with another 35 percent coming from the educational programs the company puts on, both of which are down from past years. The rest must be made up through donations from individuals and rentals on the facilities.

In addition to producing live theatre, the playhouse also has a strong educational component, offering theatre workshops and programming for youth, often going into public schools to use the arts as a way to help students build self esteem and build problem-solving and leadership skills.

Staff at the playhouse, who are mostly part-time or volunteers, put out a plea on the playhouse's Facebook page last week and have been reaching out to previous donors and loyal fans. The goal is to raise enough funds to get through the winter as the spring and summer usually provide enough activity to get the nonprofit over the hump.

Landlord Jules Kievits, a local attorney with offices adjacent to the playhouse, confirmed the theatre company is behind on rent but would not elaborate.

"They work hard and they're good folks," he said of his tenants.

The playhouse isn't alone in its struggles to keep its doors open.

Jessica Cusick, the cultural affairs director for City Hall with over 20 years of experience both in the public and private sector, said securing funding for the arts is always challenging, but the pressure has been intensified by the economic woes plaguing the nation.

"Many foundations that are traditional sources of funding for the arts have yet to return to the level of giving prior to the economic downturn," she said. "In addition, discretionary spending on items such as theater tickets or acting classes also has yet to return to pre-2008 levels."

Cusick said losing the playhouse would "have a significant impact" on the cultural landscape of Santa Monica.

"Not only would it put an excellent, long-standing theater company out on the street, it would compound the recent loss of the Powerhouse Theater and give our community fewer choices when it comes to live, local theater," she said.

The Powerhouse Theatre in Ocean Park, which was operated by the Los Angeles Theatre Ensemble, hosted its last performance in September.

The plan for survival has to include getting more "butts in the seats," said Robert R. Scales, an expert on regional and community theater and the associate director of the USC Emeriti Center.

"You have to create a buzz," he said. "I've been to several shows lately in small theaters in Atwater Village where they have a couple of new theatres and the seats were filled. It has nothing to do with size, but of the quality of production and getting the word out.

"I haven't heard anything about Santa Monica Playhouse."



Daniel Archuleta *daniela@smdp.com*

THE SCENE: **Evelyn Rudie, the co-artistic director of the Santa Monica Playhouse, stands outside of the historic theatre on Tuesday.**

Scales said a way for smaller theatres to draw attention to themselves is to partner up with one another so they can pool their limited resources together.

Santa Monica Playhouse has done that, joining the L.A. Stage Alliance, a nonprofit that for a fee (smaller companies pay $300 annually) helps community theatres secure affordable advertising rates and sell tickets online, while also providing professional development and advocacy.

Neal Spinler, the communications and branding manager for the alliance, which has been active since 1975, said advocacy is particularly important today with budgets coming from both the state and federal levels, making it difficult for smaller companies to stay afloat. (The alliance is finally debt free, Spinler said.) He said many nonprofits will be making pleas this time of year for donations.

But will those pleas fall on deaf ears? Spinler said if a theatre group does not have a strong education or community-service component, they might. More donors are looking to give to nonprofits that provide a benefit to the community other than discounted performances.

"You are also seeing a lot of investment in the administrative side … rather than just putting money into the theatre side," he said. "They are investing in better business practices for the arts, which is interesting because in the past many funders stayed away from that."

It seems those who love the arts aren't interested in funding the next production, but rather putting theatre companies and other arts institutions on more solid ground so they can sustain for years to come.

Right now, DeCarlo and others at the Santa Monica Playhouse are just hoping for another few months.

"It's been pretty good, but not great," he said of the response to the 11th-hour fundraising push. "We're still praying things come in before … the end of the year."

For more information on the playhouse, its productions, services and how to donate, visit santamonicaplayhouse.com.

kevinh@smdp.com



PARK
FROM PAGE 3

decision.

Each felt that was laid out in a report prepared by historic resource consultant IFC International, which showed that the trailer park fulfilled two of six criteria needed to qualify for consideration as a landmark.

According to the report, the park was an "excellent example of a traditional trailer park," and represented a tangible peek into post-World War II Santa Monica.

The park also qualified as a rare specimen, being the last of two trailer parks in city limits.

A property or building need only qualify under one condition.

Although the seven-member commission voted to move the landmark consideration forward, they professed to do so out of a need for more information and respect for the process.

"I think we have a mandate to move forward with this and see where it goes," said Commissioner Ruth Shari, "but I am endlessly uncomfortable with this as a landmark."

Several had qualms about giving landmark status to a site that could not be seen from the street, and was comprised of residences classified as vehicles, which could be moved to another location.

"My question, and what would need to be explored, is what exactly is being landmarked?" said Commissioner Margaret Bach, noting that the homes in question were really vehicles with wheels, "albeit overgrown."

If the mobile elements could not be landmarked, were there "character defining features" at the park worth preserving, she wondered.

The 7-0 vote means that nothing at the site can be substantially changed and that City Hall may not issue permits for the site while the application is under consideration, said Deputy City Attorney Barry Rosenbaum.

It's too soon to tell what potential impacts a landmark status might have on Luzzatto's development rights.

"It's appropriate to be cautious, because I just don't know," Rosenbaum said. "They have a fair amount of latitude if they were to designate and what that designation is."

That designation could come as soon as February or as late as April.

Catherine Eldridge, a resident and advocate for Village Trailer Park, said Tuesday that she was "totally delighted" by the decision.

"This is a special site. There are different regulations and rules involved," she said. "It met all of their criteria for historic sites and neighborhood conservation, and that was being ignored."

Eldridge hoped that the park could become a "living museum," a testament to the working class people that it once housed that helped build Santa Monica.

If designated, Village Trailer Park would join the Monterey Trailer Park in northeast Los Angeles as one of the very few parks to earn landmark status.

The Los Angeles City Council landmarked that park in 2002.

The Los Angeles Conservancy pushed for the designation, pointing out the park's unique character and example of a 20th century recreation and historic resource.

"The notion of 'historic preservation' converging in the same sentence with 'trailer park' struck some as incongruous initially, but a deeper look at this unique site shows it to be an entirely logical link," the organization wrote in its November/December 2002 newsletter.

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SCENES
FROM PAGE 1

steps" to assure space in Palisades Park for all 14 booths of the nativity scenes and a menorah display in perpetuity.

The menorah display belongs to the local Chabad group. Petitioners included it in the request because it is a "time-honored tradition in Palisades Park."

The nativity scenes have been a holiday tradition in Santa Monica for over 55 years.

Save Our Nativity Scenes (SONS), the activist arm of the coalition, argues in the petition that the nativity scenes represent a "beloved tradition" that send a message of love, hope and peace to thousands of Santa Monicans and visitors that come to see the display each year.

The displays are put up by 14 Santa Monica organizations that represent more than 20,000 people, the petition reads, and City Hall should give the display preference over outsiders they feel wish to disrupt the tradition.

Those "outsiders" include Damon Vix, a prop builder in Hollywood who managed to make himself the face of the atheist takeover when he erected a sign last year with a quote from founding father Thomas Jefferson that reads, "Religions are all alike — founded on fables and mythologies," and other selections from other founding fathers and Supreme Court decisions about the importance of separating church and state.

Vix and other groups, largely living outside city limits, applied for and received 18 of the 21 available spots for displays in Palisades Park.

In previous years, only two or three organizations applied for space, and supply always exceeded demand.

This holiday season marked the first year where the number of applications far outpaced the number of spaces available, forcing the city to use a random lottery system to choose which groups would get to put up displays.

It was not, however, the first year that the coalition of churches requested protection for their displays, wrote City Attorney Marsha Moutrie in an e-mail.

"In the last few years, other groups asked for an equal opportunity to use display space in Palisades Park. Last year, in response to these competing requests, the group (that) puts up the nativity displays asked for preference based on the long-standing tradition of nativity scenes in the park," Moutrie wrote. "But the First Amendment requirements have no exception favoring traditional views or practices."

The church groups joined 12 other applicants for the 21 spaces for the 2011 season. Each applicant could request nine spaces, and three of the four groups selected through the random lottery did — Hunter Jameson, representing the nativity scenes; Joe Naranja, whose display is entitled "Christmas spirit"; and Raymond McNeely, who put up a solstice greeting.



Daniel Archuleta *daniela@smdp.com*

TAKING IT IN: **A woman stops to view one of the three nativity scenes in Palisades Park on Tuesday.**

McNeely and Naranja's applications were fulfilled in full. Jameson, however, was only allotted two spaces.

Three displays, including angels declaring the birth of Christ to the shepherds, the scene depicting the Christ child surrounded by the Wise Men and finally a "peace on earth" booth were put up this year.

City officials cannot select organizations based on their city of origin or how long they've been displayed at Palisades Park, Moutrie wrote. Any changes to the lottery process, like limiting the number of spaces that can be requested, would go through the City Council.

ashley@smdp.com

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PUPPIES
FROM PAGE 3

an increase in convenient locations for shelter adoptions.

In October, Jack's Pets announced they would no longer sell puppies at their 27 stores in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. They are working with shelters to offer in-store adoptions instead. Major chains like PetSmart Inc. and Petco Animal Supplies Inc. stopped selling dogs and cats several years ago, partnering with local shelters and rescues on weekend adoption events. Best Friends has helped several traditional pet stores convert to shelter sales.

Macerich Co., a regional shopping mall company, recently announced a ban on traditional pet stores at its 70 malls. Instead, at the company's mall in Lakewood, Calif., shoppers will find a store called Adopt & Shop, which gets its animals from the Southeast Area Animal Control Authority shelter. On Nov. 25, the store celebrated its 500th adoption, said Aimee Gilbreath, executive director of Found Animals, the organization that runs and subsidizes Adopt & Shop.

Some pet store owners say they're being unfairly maligned.

Jens Larsen, who owns Perfect Pets in Littleton, Colo., is on the ASPCA list and says it's not right. He has been in business for 18 years, sold 1,600 puppies last year and has an A-plus rating with the Better Business Bureau. He gets 80 percent of his dogs from commercial breeders in Nebraska, 10 percent from breeders in Kansas and Oklahoma and 10 percent from two Colorado breeders, he said.

Some animal activists are "radical and fanatical and want to put me out of business," he said. "I obey the law. So do my breeders and the kennels I deal with," Larsen said.

Larsen says that when you are selling 100 puppies a month, there will occasionally be a case of kennel cough or a parasite, and every once in a while, something more serious. But he believes if his dogs were continually getting sick, word would spread and he'd be out of business.

About 2 million puppies are sold online and in U.S. pet stores every year, said Menkin.

The ASPCA and other animal welfare groups have popularized a negative image of commercial dog breeders in recent years, claiming that poor breeding practices and substandard conditions leave some animals with chronic physical ailments, genetic defects or fear of humans.

Whether it's the impact of bad publicity or the recession cutting into purebred dog sales, the number of commercial dog breeders licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture is declining, from 3,486 in 2009, to 2,904 in 2010 and 2,205 in 2011, according to USDA spokesman Dave Sacks said.

Licenses in Missouri, with three times more breeders than any other state, dropped from 1,221 in 2009 to 745 this year, Sacks said. Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, Ohio and Indiana have between 100 and 300 licensed breeders. Sixteen states have none. Sacks says the USDA protects animals by making unannounced inspections of breeding facilities and by regulating food, care and housing for the animals.

Serina Brant believes her golden retriever, Ali, was a puppy mill dog. When Brant bought the 4-month-old pup 10 years ago from Perfect Pets for $400, Ali's papers had numbers instead of names listed for parents. Her first trip to the vet cost $800 to treat giardia, fleas and eye infections, said Brant, of Littleton, Colo.

Two years later, the dog started limping. X-rays showed hip dysplasia. Surgery, at $12,000 for both hips, was an option but came without guarantees, so Brant chose to medicate the dog instead. Then Ali got arthritis.

For the last six years, Ali has to stop every 50 feet to rest. Because of the medication, "we don't think she's in pain," said Brant. But over the years, the medicine has totaled $8,600.

"I am not going to put a dog down just because she's defective. We have the money to provide for her so we will," she said.

But next time she gets a dog, Brant says, she'll adopt one from a shelter.

SALE
FROM PAGE 1

of over $5.50 per square foot in some buildings, Rigsby said.

Lionstone, which already has the Lantana media campus, Penn Station/1630 Stewart St. and Broadway Place in its portfolio, purchased four buildings that are pre-1950s construction that have been fully renovated, offering prospective tenants plenty of space and functionality. Current tenants include POP Sound, Clearstone Venture, Pier 59 Studios and Bolthouse Farms.

The properties are located in Downtown and Bergamot Station and are said to be 90 percent leased.

The influx of tech companies in recent years helped Santa Monica and Venice earn the nickname Silicon Beach, which has now morphed into a brand that seems to be working, said Jeff Jarrow, a board member of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce and a broker with PAR Commercial.

Jarrow said once Lionstone had a foothold with the Lantana complex it most likely saw how much of a demand there was and jumped at the opportunity to increase their presence in Santa Monica despite the price to purchase.

“It just shows you there is a need and there is excitement amongst investors to spend in Santa Monica,” Jarrow said. “People keep waiting for the market to dip, and even if it does, it wouldn’t be much, so you have people like Lionstone with a lot of cash who see this as a protected investment.”

Jarrow said with the American Film Market, one of the entertainment industry’s largest, remaining in Santa Monica for another five years and the arrival of the Expo Light Rail line in 2016, Santa Monica real estate is only going to be more attractive and more expensive. And with industrial spaces, buyers have a lot of room to expand under new zoning framework.

“It’s all value added,” he said.

kevinh@smdp.com

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Christmas comes late to some homes

CHRISTINA REXRODE
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK When Emily Russell's two young sons wake up on Christmas morning, they'll find that Santa left them a note instead of the video games they requested.

"Hey, I couldn't get by your house last night," Russell, a single mother from Kernersville, N.C., plans to write to her sons and sign Santa's name. "Your mom is going to take you to the store when she can."

Some people have always postponed Christmas celebrations because their jobs don't pause for the holiday. But in the weak economy, folks are delaying Christmas for another reason: money.

Deloitte's annual holiday survey for the first time asked shoppers whether they planned to wait until January to do the bulk of their shopping for Christmas. Six percent of the more than 5,000 respondents said they did.

The strategy can pay off. After Christmas, retailers offer discounts of up to 75 percent on a wider variety of items than they do in the weeks leading up to the holiday.

It's something cost-conscious shoppers have gotten hip to. Retail sales during the seven days after Christmas rose year-over-year in three of the past five years, according to research firm ShopperTrak. And last year, year-over-year online spending grew by 22 percent on Dec. 26 and 56 percent on Dec. 27, according to computer giant IBM's retail consulting arm.

Elaine Wu and her husband plan to wait until the day after Christmas to shop because they've agreed not to spend more than $150 for each other — a difficult task given they like to splurge on upscale Marc Jacobs handbags and Armani shoes.

Wu says she's also waiting until after Christmas to shop for some of her friends. Real friends, she figures, wouldn't want her to go through the headache of shopping in the pre-Christmas madness anyway.

"Just because it's a day late doesn't mean it's going to be any less special or didn't come from the same sentiment," says Wu, 36, a marketing manager for the startup website BlogHer in Silicon Valley. "It just means that it's going to save us 60 percent."

Postponing Christmas Day, originally a Christian holiday to celebrate the birth of Christ, is almost unheard of in some circles. About 95 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas — including 80 percent of non-Christians, according to Gallup polls.

But Bruce David Forbes, author of "Christmas: A Candid History," says those who delay Christmas festivities can take some comfort in the fact that Dec. 25 isn't the date of the birth of Christ.

When Christians started celebrating his birth in the 300s after the Roman emperor Constantine converted to that religion, they didn't know the birthdate, so it appears that they picked a day to coincide with Romans' midwinter celebrations of their own gods. Meanwhile, Christians in more eastern countries, like Turkey and Greece, were already celebrating on Jan. 6.

So, Forbes, who teaches religious studies at Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, says if you're celebrating anywhere between Dec. 25 and Jan. 6, "you're not even doing it late."

That may be a relief to Mujtaba Al-Qudaihi of Baltimore, Md., who plans to spend Dec. 25 watching a movie, catching up on reading or killing time on the Internet. His real Christmas celebration — which includes his dad dressing up as Santa and the extended family exchanging gifts and eating a big meal — will happen a few days later.

That's because it's cheaper for Al-Qudaihi and other relatives to fly to his parents' home in Indianapolis after Christmas. Besides, Al-Qudaihi figures that the prices on gifts he plans to buy will be much cheaper after Christmas.

"Nothing changes," says Al-Qudaihi, 27, who works in information-technology consulting for a public university. "Just the date."

Danielle McCurley of Lacey, Wash., also is planning to postpone Christmas a couple days. She wants to wait until her financial aid check for her school tuition arrives so she can spend the extra money on gifts.

In normal years, McCurley would have finished her Christmas shopping weeks ago. But this year is different: After losing her job as a home health aide, McCurley, 32, returned to school to study social work this fall. Adding to that, her husband, Mario, was out of work for a year and a half, though he recently found a job as a security guard.

McCurley, who has three children ages 4, 5 and 11, thinks her youngest two won't really notice. Her oldest will, but she already bought his present: a secondhand netbook that she got for a third of the original price at $100. And she figures her mom, her three brothers and her husband won't really mind the late presents.

"They're adults," McCurley says. "I don't think they'll be too upset."

Meanwhile, Russell isn't sure how her sons, ages 8 and 10, will react when they learn Christmas will come late for them.

Postponing the celebration is the only way Russell, a customer service worker, can manage to afford Christmas this year because she had to take two weeks off without pay recently when her youngest had his tonsils removed. She figures if she waits until after Christmas to go shopping, she'll be able to scrounge up money to buy each boy a video game.

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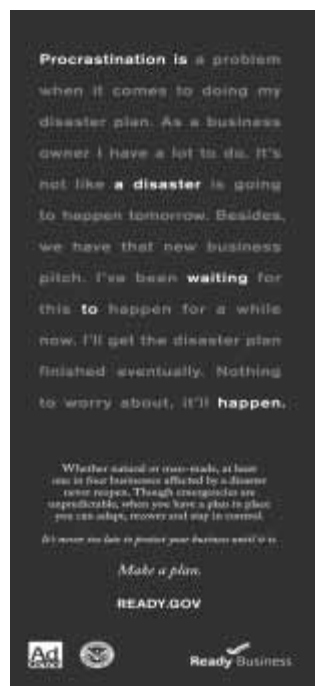

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Stock gains fade as Fed warns of market woes

MATTHEW CRAFT
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK A late afternoon slide pulled stock indexes lower after the Federal Reserve held off on any new steps to boost the economy. The Fed cautioned that strains in global financial markets still pose a danger, a nod to Europe's debt crisis.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 66.45 points, or 0.6 percent, to close at 11,954.94. The Dow dropped more than 70 points in the last hour of trading and had risen as high as 126 points earlier Tuesday after two strong auctions of European debt.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 10.74 points, or 0.9 percent, to 1,225.73. The Nasdaq composite fell 32.99 points, or 1.3 percent, to 2,579.27.

The Federal Reserve portrayed the U.S. economy as slightly healthier but cautioned that it remains vulnerable to the European debt crisis. "Strains in global financial markets continue to pose significant downside risks to the economic outlook," the Fed said. Stock indexes turned lower after the Fed released its policy statement at 2:15 p.m.

Stocks had been higher for most of the day after the Spanish government was able to sell short-term debt at much lower interest rates compared with a month ago, a signal that markets are becoming less fearful about the government's ability to repay its debt.

In its first sale of short-term bills, the European Financial Stability Fund raised 1.9 billion euros ($2.6 billion) from investors at an average rate of 0.22 percent. That's below the rate Germany pays for the similar bills. "This is an amazing success," Carl Weinberg, chief economist at High Frequency Economics, wrote in a note to clients.

The Dow sank 162 points Monday when Moody's and Fitch warned that the fiscal agreement reached last week among European leaders fell far short of what was needed to contain that region's debt crisis.

Barring any big news out of Europe, stocks are likely to be stuck in a range for the rest of the week, said Tim Hoyle, director of research at Haverford Investments. Trying to guess which way the market is going to go any day is a "fool's errand," he said.

The Commerce Department reported Tuesday that retail sales rose for the sixth straight month in November. Sales increased just 0.2 percent, below what analysts had expected. But the government also revised the previous month's slightly higher. Hoyle called that the encouraging part. "It reassures you that the economy is going in the right direction," Hoyle said.

Consumer discretionary stocks fell more than the rest of the market. Electronics retailer Best Buy plunged 15 percent. The company said its third-quarter income sank 29 percent as it cut prices on tablets and TVs to drive sales and traffic during the busy holiday season.

Utility stocks, traditionally a play for safety, were the only industry group in the S&P 500 that rose. The group has gained 10 percent this year, far better than any other industry. Financial stocks have fared the worst, 21 percent.

The euro sank 1 percent against the dollar, putting the European currency at its lowest level since January.

The Vix, a measure of stock market volatility, fell to 25 and has dropped 8 percent so far this month. The index remained above 30 from early August until last week. Hoyle said a sustained fall in the Vix usually is followed by a rise in stock prices. The recent trend "sets us up for a little Santa Claus rally between now and the end of the year."

In other corporate news:

• Pfizer Inc. gained 1.8 percent, the most of the 30 companies in the Dow. The drugmaker said it plans to buy back up to $10 billion of its own stock.

• Urban Outfitters jumped 5.3 percent, the most in the S&P 500 index, after the retailer said its sales were rising faster than analysts were expecting. The Philadelphia-based company owns Urban Outfitters stores, Anthropologie and Free People.

• Sprint Nextel Corp. rose less than 1 percent as it looked like its rival AT&T Inc. would be unable to pull off an acquisition of T-Mobile USA. Sprint agreed to drop a lawsuit against AT&T now that the deal appears to be in jeopardy. Sprint had been lobbying to stop it.

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF PREPARATION /NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING FOR A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE ROBERTS CENTER PROJECT

DATE:
December 14, 2011

TO:
State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Organizations andInterested Parties

LEAD AGENCY:
City of Santa Monica,
1585 Main Street,
Santa Monica, CA 90407
Contact: Jing Yeo
Telephone: 310-458-8341

The City of Santa Monica intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Roberts Center Project (the proposed project).

In accordance with Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the City of Santa Monica has prepared this Notice of Preparation to provide Responsible Agencies and other interested parties with information describing the proposal and its potential environmental effects. Environmental factors which would be potentially affected by the proposed project are: MACROBUTTON CheckBoxFormField Air Quality, Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Construction Effects, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Geology/Soils, Hazards/Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Neighborhood Effects, Noise, Public Services/Recreation, Shadows, Transportation/Traffic, Utilities, and Mandatory Findings of Significance.

PROJECT APPLICANT:
The Roberts Companies
2886 Colorado Avenue
Santa Monica, CA 90404

PROJECT LOCATION:
2849-2912 Colorado Avenue,
Santa Monica, California

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project would require the removal of the approximately 79,000 square feet (sf) of existing commercial space, surface parking areas, and vegetation on the project site. The proposed project would consist of mixed uses in four buildings with an overall allowable floor area ratio of 2.5 to 1. The project uses would include creative office/production space, neighborhood-serving retail and restaurant space such as a green grocer or café, housing units estimated to consist of somewhere between 169 and 231 for-rent units in a mix of housing types (ranging from market rate to low income with studios, one and two bedrooms, as well as live-work units). The proposed project would result in the construction of approximately 304,368sf of building area within four buildings.

Building A along Colorado Avenue would consist of up to 50,065sf of floor area, comprised of (1) up to 7,590 sf of floor area to be used for retail and/or restaurant uses on the ground floor (together with other ancillary uses permitted), (2) up to 5,020sf of floor area to be used for live-work units on the ground floor (including mezzanine space), and (3) up to 37,455sf of floor area to be used for residential uses on floors two through five, together with a swimming pool and other outdoor amenities on the roof of Building A. The height of the building would not exceed 45 feet total, with a 35-foot high frontage along Colorado, provided that additional height will step back in accordance with the plans.

Building B, fronting along the west side of the plaza, would contain up to 72,760sf of floor area, comprised of (1) up to 7,850sf of floor area to be used for a combination of neighborhood-serving retail and/or restaurant uses on the ground floor (together with the other ancillary uses permitted), (2) up to 8,560sf of floor area to be used for live-work units on the ground floor (including mezzanine space), and (3) up to 50,400sf of floor area to be used for residential uses in up to five stories. Building height would not exceed 57 feet.

Building C, fronting on the north side of the Pennsylvania Avenue extension, would contain up to 61,424sf of floor area, comprised of (1) up to 6,110sf of floor area to be used for a yoga/dance studio, restaurant, and retail uses on the ground floor (together with the other ancillary uses permitted), (2) up to 4,915sf of floor area to be used for live-work units on the ground floor (including mezzanine space), and (3) up to 50,400sf of floor area to be used for residential uses on all stories. Building C would not exceed 57 feet in height.

Building D, fronting on the south side of the Pennsylvania Avenue extension, would be constructed with one of two options. The first option (Option 1) would include up to 95,151sf of floor area to be used for production and post-production studio and creative office space, and the second option (Option 2) would consist of up to 95,151sf of floor area comprised of (1) up to 37,220sf of floor area to be used for production and post-production studio and creative office space uses on the ground floor and floor two (together with the other ancillary uses permitted) and (2) up to 57,931sf of floor area to be used for residential units on floors three through five (which s inclusive of 160sf of lobby on the ground floor). In either option, the building would not exceed 57 feet in height.

A two-level parking garage would be provided. Gym and exercise areas, and ancillary improvements such as lobbies, public showers, etc. in the subterranean garage would aggregate up to 24,468sf of floor area. The amenities at the subterranean levels would be private, serving the project tenants. Both options of the project would include a large plaza and public paseos allowing pedestrian access through the project site to streets at the boundaries of the property and related facilities. In addition, a retail kiosk up to 500sf of floor area would be provided in the plaza.

Under Option 1, a maximum of approximately 95,151sf of creative office uses, 22,050sf of retail, 22,468sf of amenity/open space (including the spa/gym or game room), and 169 residential units (18 Live-Work, 48 Junior Executive, 80 one-bedroom, and 23 two-bedroom) would be located on the site. Option 2 would develop up to 37,220sf of creative office, 22,050sf of retail, 22,468sf of amenity/open space (including the spa/gym or game room), and 231 residential units (18 Live-Work, 95 Junior Executive, 86 one-bedroom, and 32 two-bedroom). Total square footage and site plan would be the same for both Options.

The project proponent would extend Pennsylvania Avenue between Stewart Street and Stanford Street only across the project site. If the approved related project immediately to the west (Lionsgate) and the pending related project immediately to the east (Village Trailer Park) are constructed, the proposed project and the two related projects would extend Pennsylvania Avenue from Stewart Street east to provide a complete connection between Stanford and Stewart Streets.

In addition, a new north-south street (New Road) would be developed along the site's eastern border from Colorado Avenue. The New Road would intersect the Pennsylvania Avenue extension and terminate at the property's southern boundary. Access to the project site would be from Colorado Avenue, and Stanford Street and Stewart Street if and when the adjacent related projects are completed.

REVIEW PERIOD: As specified by the State CEQA Guidelines, the Notice of Preparation will be circulated for a 30-day review period. The City of Santa Monica welcomes agency and public input during this period regarding the scope and content of environmental information related to your agency's responsibility that must be included in the Draft EIR. **Comments may be submitted, in writing, by 5:30 p.m. on January 26, 2012** and addressed to: Jing Yeo, City Planning Division, 1685 Main Street, Room 212, Santa Monica, CA 90401 Fax: (310) 458-3380 E-mail: jing.yeo@smgov.net

SCOPING MEETING: The City is scheduled to hold a Public Scoping Meeting for the EIR to describe the proposed project, the environmental process, and to receive your verbal input on the information to be included in the EIR. The Public Scoping Meeting is scheduled at 7:00 P.M. on January 12, 2012 at Virginia Avenue Park (Thelma Terry Room).

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de la preparación de un reporte sobre los posibles efectos ambientales referente a la construccion propuesta de edificios de uso mixto, lo cual puede ser de interes a usted. Para más información, llame a Carmen Gutierrez, al número (310) 458-8341.



SURF REPORT

Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 61°

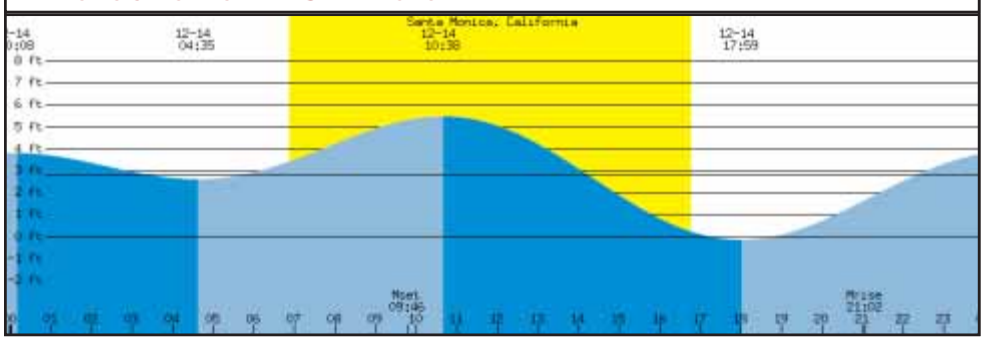
Swell Forecast

NW swell come ashore, hitting SB/VC early in the day, and finally SD mid to late morning. Size should run head high at most west facing breaks with pluses at standouts going about 2' overhead.

Long Range Synopsis

NW is expected to back off a bit, more along the lines of chest to at times head high for west facing breaks.

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 30 days up to the ending date of **December 7, 2011**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - www.healthebay.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS (for the last 30 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 10
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 27 / 13
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 0 / 0

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

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
Leo Carrillo Beach, at Arroyo Sequit Creek mouth.	B	F
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth.	B	B
El Pescador State Beach, between Lechasa and Las Alisos creeks.	ns	ns
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach.	A+	A+
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth.	A	A+
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth.	A+	A+
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private).	A+	A+
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth.	C	C
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach.	F	F
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	C
Solstice Canyon at Don Blocker County Beach.	F	A+
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth.	A+	A+
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd..	A+	F
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fences.	B	A+
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily.	F	F
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east.	A+	D
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon.	A+	A+
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero).	A+	B
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs.	A+	A+
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach.	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon.	ns	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth.	F	D
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	A+	F
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+	C

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

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

Odom, Carter eager to help defend Mavs' title

JAIME ARON
AP Sports Writer

DALLAS Lamar Odom knows what it takes to repeat as an NBA champion.

Vince Carter wants to know what it feels like to become an NBA champion.

The Dallas Mavericks are hoping a little of both — Odom's experience and Carter's hunger — can go a long way to help their title defense.

The two newcomers were the stars of Mavs media day on Tuesday because of what they represent. They're the proof that team owner Mark Cuban is serious about winning it all again, which is something fans were questioning just a few days ago when the billionaire was letting the core of last year's team dissolve with the departure of free agents Tyson Chandler, Caron Butler and J.J. Barea.

Sure, adding two more players in their 30s keeps Dallas among the league's older teams. But they also should keep the Mavs among the best teams in this lockout-shortened season, especially with the other newcomers joining the mix, such as Delonte West and Rudy Fernandez.

"Having depth and having good guys that can play is part and parcel to being effective," coach Rick Carlisle said. "The deepest team that can stay healthy and stay together is the team that's going to have the best chance to come out of the West."

Late last week, things were looking bleak for Dallas' chances of coming out of the West when the Lakers were poised to get Chris Paul from New Orleans, with Odom part of the bait. Then the league blocked that deal.

The Lakers were still willing to get rid of Odom and the Mavericks were eager to get him. The deal was struck quickly, using a trade exception Dallas acquired from New York as part of another move that helped pave the way for Chandler to join the Knicks.

Odom was stunned the Lakers didn't want him around. He was glad the commissioner rejected the deal to New Orleans because he wanted to contend for a championship, not start over with a young team. He said he told the Lakers that if they had to deal him, Dallas topped his wish list.

"It's definitely surreal," he said. "It happened like that," he said, snapping his fingers.

Odom also felt disrespected because he never saw this coming. Over seven years, he won two titles and last season was named the league's Sixth Man of the Year.

"If somebody is telling you, 'You can't be here, there's no more room for you,' you've got to understand that," he said. "I think it's because of how they did it that I took it so personally."

He wouldn't describe his initial thoughts about the deal to New Orleans, because, "I can't cuss." He appreciated Kobe Bryant speaking out against the trade, and found it curious that Los Angeles not only would send him to a conference rival, but to the team that swept the Lakers from the playoffs last season, ending their two-year reign as champs.

"Any time you make a sudden switch, it gets a little emotional," Odom said. "But I'm here now. I'm a Maverick. It's time to put the past behind me."

Since Odom left, there's been chatter about his reality show being a distraction to last year's team. He seems to believe that is revisionist history.

"It's something you've got to take with a grain of salt," he said. "I just wish that, if it was, somebody would've told me a little earlier. If it was, then I would've done something about it."

Odom also proudly noted that he had a great season while the cameras were rolling.

"You never know what's going to make you concentrate just a little harder, and I think it did," he said.

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MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
1328 Montana Ave.
(310) 260-1528

The Descendants (R) 1hr 5min
Election (R) 1hr 43
7:30pm

Discussion between films with director Alexander Payne.

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade
(888) 262-4386

Sitter (R) 1hr 40min
1:10pm, 3:20pm, 5:30pm, 8:00pm, 10:10pm

Jack and Jill (PG) 1hr 31min
1:30pm, 4:05pm, 7:00pm, 9:40pm

Tower Heist (PG-13) 1hr 44min
1:15pm, 4:15pm, 7:15pm, 10:00pm

Very Harold & Kumar 3D Christmas (R) 1hr 29min
1:45pm, 4:25pm, 7:10pm, 9:50pm

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 451-9440

Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 1 (PG-13) 1hr 48min
11:15am, 2:00pm, 4:45pm, 7:30pm, 10:15pm

New Year's Eve (PG-13) 1hr 57min
11:30am, 2:25pm, 5:25pm, 8:20pm, 10:30pm

Muppets (PG) 1hr 38min
11:10am, 1:00pm, 2:00pm, 4:05pm, 5:00pm, 6:45pm, 7:45pm, 9:30pm

Puss in Boots (PG) 1hr 30min
11:15am, 4:30pm, 9:30pm

Puss in Boots 3D (PG) 1hr 30min
1:50pm, 7:00pm

Immortals 3D (R) 1hr 50min
11:10am, 1:45pm, 4:20pm, 7:05pm, 10:00pm

J. Edgar (R) 2hrs 17min
11:45am, 3:10pm, 6:30pm, 9:50pm

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 478-3836

Like Crazy (PG-13) 1hr 29min
1:00pm, 5:20pm, 10:00pm

Knuckle (R) 1hr 25min
4:50pm, 9:55pm

Margin Call (R) 1hr 49min
1:50pm, 7:20pm

Crazy Wisdom: The Life and Times of Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche (NR) 1hr 29min
3:10pm, 7:40pm

Descendants (R) 1hr 55min
1:00pm, 4:10pm, 7:00pm, 9:45pm

Melancholia (R) 2hrs 10min
1:00pm, 4:00pm, 7:10pm, 10:10pm

AMC Criterion 6
1313 Third St.
(310) 395-1599

Happy Feet Two in 3D (PG) 1hr 45min
2:00pm, 7:15pm

Arthur Christmas 3D (PG) 1hr 37min
2:15pm, 7:45pm

Hugo 3D (PG) 2hrs 07min
11:15am, 2:05pm, 4:55pm, 7:45pm, 10:00pm

New Year's Eve (PG-13) 1hr 57min
1:00pm, 4:05pm, 7:00pm, 9:45pm

Sitter (R) 1hr 40min
11:45am, 2:10pm, 4:45pm, 7:15pm, 9:40pm

My Week with Marilyn (R) 1hr 36min
11:15am, 1:50pm, 4:40pm, 7:30pm, 10:20pm

Arthur Christmas (PG) 1hr 37min
11:30am, 5:00pm, 10:30pm

Happy Feet Two (PG) 1hr 45min
11:15am, 4:30pm, 10:30pm

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

The world is your oyster, Sag

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ Let spontaneity be your guide. The extra enthusiasm that stems from accepting impulsiveness makes you smile. Encounters with positive and open-minded people add to your potential and enthusiasm. Listen to your inner voice. Tonight: Center of your universe.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ If you really would like to have a home-based business, start the process now. A partner or a potential co-worker expresses interest in joining you. You also could make your office feel a little more homey. Add a plant or table fountain. Tonight: Where the action is.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Read Aries, and you will allow more of your impulsive spirit to emerge. Many people delight in your resilient and changing personality. As they say, "you are interesting." Others seek you out. Tonight: Enjoy the popularity.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ You delight in the holiday season, if you can give as you would like to. Drop the need to give so much on a material level. Think about what would be a good gift for the person you have in mind. Tonight: Share a favorite dessert.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ The Force is with you once more. Your creativity soars. Even if you're doing the same old thing, your mind makes this venture quite exciting. Pick up the phone and invite a friend to lunch. Whether you find a shortcut or are unusually quick, you cruise through the day. Tonight: Whatever makes the Lion purr.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ Listen to what is being suggested by various people. You probably need some time before making a decision. You know what works, but there could be a change here -- you sense that. Find someone you consider an authority. Talk. Tonight: Not to be found.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ You like people. You like being with your friends. You think anything is possible when you are in your upbeat mood. Relax and remain sure of yourself. Return calls and make calls you have put off for way too long. Tonight: Join friends at a favorite spot.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Open up to being more experimental than in the past. Understand your limits and what you feel you can no longer do. Be willing to say no or find an alternative. Don't let finances be the only issue; use good sense. Tonight: Revise your holiday list.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Your mind seems to be anywhere but on the topic at hand. Reining in your imagination could be close to impossible. Your sense of direction emerges only when you relax and go with the flow. Know that you are not always this way. Worry less. Tonight: The world is your oyster.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ Make time to pull back and handle a personal matter. Your ability to move in a new direction depends on your ability to recharge your batteries. You might need a break from the busy pace. Schedule a massage or decide on another stress-buster. Tonight: Vanish while you can.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Friends and associates seek you out. Don't cancel a meeting just to give yourself some space. Right now each meeting could be more significant than you realize. Know what you want from a key situation, then zero in on the goal. Tonight: Where your friends are.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★ You might be left holding the bag on a very important project. You find out that as much work as you have could cause problems with your energy. Do you really want to do this to your life? Tonight: Put your feet up. You deserve a break.

Happy birthday

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

Some years are easier than others. This year, you seem to flow more easily. You could have upsets, but the way you handle situations changes radically. You manifest a great deal of passion about living, look at new ways of re-framing and flow past self-imposed boundaries. Restrictions easily could tumble away. If you are single, someone quite dashing, exciting and different whirls into your life. What you do with this person is your choice. If you are attached, you enter a very dynamic year together. Opt for a special, long-talked-about vacation. LEO brings out your enthusiasm.



MYSTERY PHOTO

Daniel Archuleta *daniela@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*. Send your mystery photos to *editor@smdp.com* to be used in future issues.

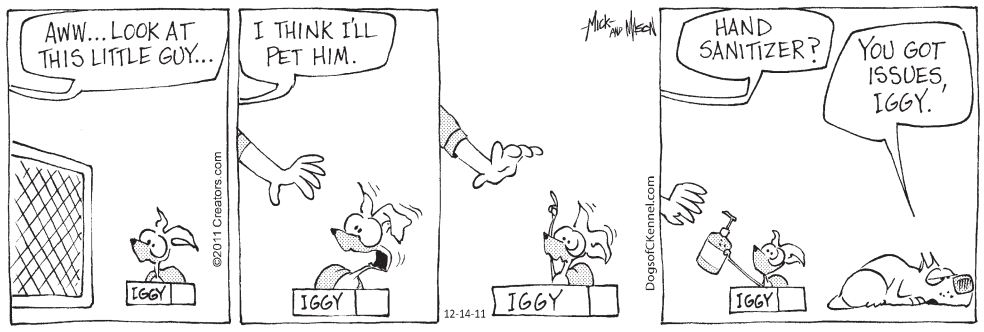
Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



Strange Brew
By John Deering



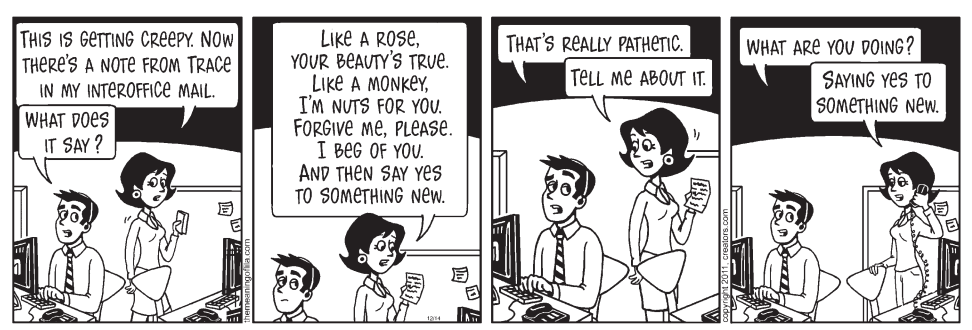
Dogs of C-Kennel
By Mick and Mason Mastroianni



Garfield
By Jim Davis



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



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 ★★★

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

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

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Painter Picasso
6 Coarse file
10 Slipup
11 Conductor Georg
12 Modeling asset
13 List-preceding punctuation
14 Stand-ins
15 Kingly fur
16 Try out
17 Ga. neighbor
18 Homer's neighbor
19 Letting out, conditionally
22 Orpheus played one
23 Folded food
26 Yule entertainment
29 Pendulum path
32 Bakery buy
33 — Aviv
34 Wilde's Gray
36 Paella base
37 Surrounded by
38 Eggs buy
39 Lowly workers
40 Improve, in a way
41 Great weights
42 Busybody

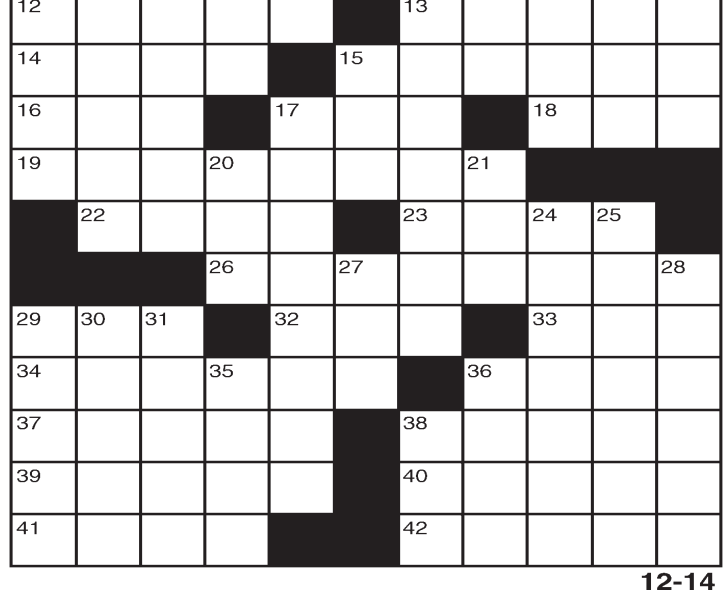
DOWN

1 Invigorates
2 Wakening
3 Payola, e.g.
4 Defeat
5 Valuable rock
6 Hotel unit
7 Bold poker bet
8 Sculpting medium
9 Longed
11 Pennsylvania city
15 Bulldog backer
17 Cheap hotels
20 Tolkien baddie
21 Lass
24 Voter, usually
25 Words on a penny
27 Use the track
28 Jackson of "A Touch of Class"
29 Rework
30 Famed lover
31 Sing à la Bing
35 Hostels
36 Capital on the Tiber
38 Calendar box

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

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



12-14

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• Insert the given numbers in the empty squares so when they are calculated in threes from left to right and top to bottom they satisfy the demands in the shaded boxes both horizontally and vertically.

• Each empty square dictates the math operation that must be performed to meet the demands.

• Remember to multiply or divide before you add or subtract.

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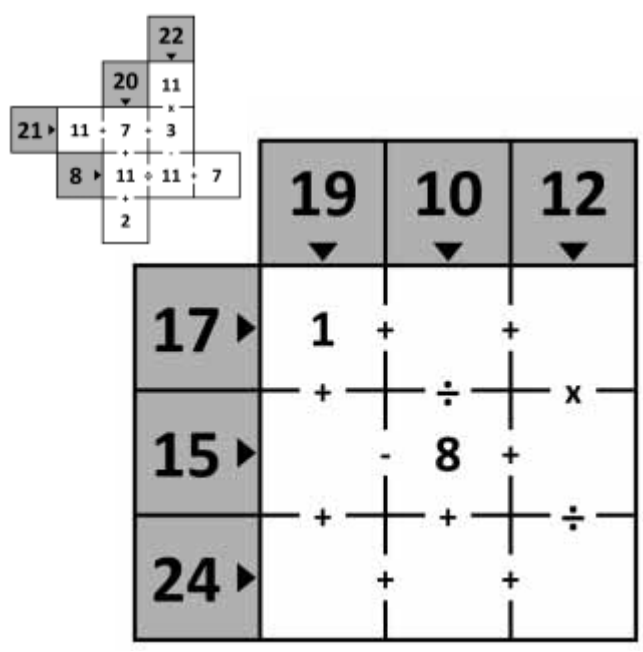
Fill in the empty fields with the given numbers so when calculated together they satisfy all Equas in the gray boxes:

7, 8, 8, 8, 9, 11, 12

Solution for Task 574



DAILY LOTTERY

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Meganumber: 44
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SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 7 15 31 32 47
Meganumber: 24
Jackpot: $15M

Fantasy 5: 8 16 20 24 27

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 5 7 5
EVENING: 6 1 0

DAILY DERBY:
1st: 07 Eureka
2nd: 12 Lucky Charms
3rd: 04 Big Ben
RACE TIME: 1:42.00

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Factory worker Billy Hyatt, who was fired in 2009 by north Georgia plastics company Pliant Corp., filed a lawsuit in August alleging illegal religious discrimination. Pliant (now called Berry Plastics) required its employees to wear stickers indicating the number of consecutive accident-free days, and March 12, 2009, was the 666th day. When Hyatt refused to wear "the mark of the beast" (embracing that number, he thought, would condemn him to hell), he was suspended and then fired.

■ The International House of Prayer in Kansas City, Mo., recently celebrated 12 consecutive years of around-the-clock musical praying, which Pastor Mike Bickle and his evangelical congregation believe is necessary to fight the devil's continuous infiltration of the realms of power in society (business, media, government, etc.). "To keep the music going," according to an October Los Angeles Times dispatch, "the church has 25 bands playing throughout the week in two-hour sets," divided between "devotional" music and "intercessions," in which God is petitioned to help some cause or place. Bickle claims that there are "thousands" of 24/7 prayer groups in the world.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1995 Yugoslav Wars: The Dayton Agreement is signed in Paris by leaders of various governments.

1999 Kiribati, Nauru and Tonga join the United Nations.

2003 President of Pakistan Pervez Musharaf narrowly escapes an assassination attempt.

2004 The Millau viaduct, the tallest bridge in the world, near Millau, France is officially opened.

2004 Cuba and Venezuela found the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas.

2006 American spy satellite USA-193 is launched.

WORD UP!

cortege \ kawr-TEZH \ , noun;
1. A procession, especially a ceremonial one.
2. A line or train of attendants; retinue.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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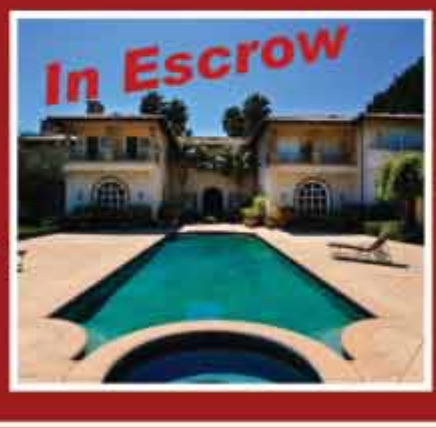

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From ALL agents in ALL companies
Listed for Sale As of Mid - December 2011

	-	Single Family Homes	Condos & Town-homes
Santa Monica Canyon	=	$1,900,000	$2,995,000
North of Montana	=	$3,195,999	$1,074,500
Between Wilshire & Montana	=	$1,985,000	$799,500
South of Wilshire	=	$799,000	$499,000
Sunset Park	=	$1,150,000	$499,000
Ocean Park	=	$1,399,000	$1,149,000

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