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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2009
Volume 9 Issue 29



Santa Monica Daily Press

ROBERTS DEAD AT 91
SEE PAGE 10

We have you covered

THE MIXING AND MINGLING ISSUE

PREP SPORTS ROUNDUP

St. Monica boys waiting for revenge

BY DANIEL ARCHULETA
Managing Editor

ST. MONICA Despite losing the final of the St. Anthony tournament to the host last weekend, Head Coach Tony Depa said he was happy with the way his team responded to a big early deficit.

St. Anthony roared out to an 18 point halftime lead only to see it eroded to two as St. Monica began the second half on a 16-0 run.

"At that point our kids kind of hit a wall," Depa said.

Unfortunately, the Mariners couldn't sustain the surge and lost 69-61.

While St. Anthony held a major height advantage, it was their shooting from beyond the 3-point arc that doomed the Mariners.

"A team that big, shooting that well, always makes it tough," he said.

The loss on Saturday was St. Monica's second in a tournament final. The Mariners lost to Bell-Jeff in the final of its own St. Monica Tip-Off Invitational earlier this month.

The Mariners won't have to wait long to exact a bit of revenge against St. Anthony. The two teams will meet again on Jan. 25 at home.

"We can't wait to play them again," Depa said. "Next time it's at our place."

St. Monica will be out of action until Dec. 26 when the Mariners face Morningside in the Sea Hawk Beach Classic. It will be St. Monica's third and final tournament of the season.

ALL-CIF GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAMS NAMED

Pacifica Christian's Alex Gearin was named CIF Division V Co-Player of the Year. Teammate Gena Heger was named to the Division V first team.

Santa Monica High School's Dana Ritchie was named to the All-CIF Division III sec-

SEE ROUNDUP PAGE 9



FROM THE SKIES

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Three CH-46 Sea Knight choppers, which are used to rapidly transport Marines, supplies and equipment between bases or from ship to shore, fly over Santa Monica Airport on Tuesday. The craft are being used for the upcoming film, 'Battle: Los Angeles.'

Rose Bowl rallies boost tourism

BY NICK TABOREK
Daily Press Staff Writer

SM PIER It may have been a down year for tourism in Santa Monica, but at least it's going to end with a bang.

Both college football teams playing in the Rose Bowl game on New Year's Day — Ohio State and the University of Oregon — have decided to hold their pre-game pep rallies in Santa Monica, providing a needed boost to the city's tourist economy.

The rallies, to be held Dec. 30 and 31 next to the Santa Monica Pier, are expected to draw some 40,000 fans. The rallies will feature marching band performances, speakers and big screens playing highlights from the teams' seasons. Both rallies will be in the parking lot north of the pier where the Cirque du Soleil tent is now stationed. Cirque ends its run Dec. 20.

"For us, this is a tremendous way to end 2009," said Ben Franz-Knight, the executive director of the Santa Monica Pier Restoration Corp., which is responsible for promoting the landmark. "For many folks this has been a tough year."

Franz-Knight estimated businesses on the pier will see at least a 30 percent bump in sales during the two-day period.

Traditionally, Santa Monica competes for Rose Bowl pep rallies with other L.A.-area tourist centers like Universal City Walk, Pasadena and L.A. Live, Franz-Knight said. Santa Monica has hosted rallies before, but this is the first year both Rose Bowl teams are coming to town.

"We're thrilled. To get two of them is amazing," said Alison Best, vice president of sales and services with the Santa Monica Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The CVB partnered with Franz-Knight to make Santa Monica's pitch for the rallies at a tour operator convention in April, Best said.

"I think we have an iconic venue in the pier and the beach and I think when you're coming from Ohio or Oregon it's a draw to be [among] palm trees, life guard stations, [and an] open beach environment rather than a downtown environment or a high school field, which really could be anywhere," Best said.

The rallies will be held next to the beach, but the economic benefits will have a further reach, Best said, benefiting restaurants and bars, among other businesses.

"I think there'll be a significant spike in

SEE RALLIES PAGE 8


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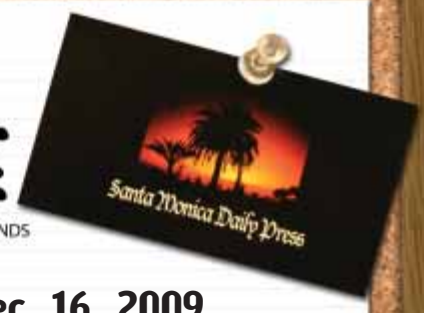
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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE
OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA AND SURROUNDS



Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2009

Last minute shopping

SMC Performing Arts Center, Art Gallery
Santa Monica Boulevard and 11th Street, 11 a.m. — 9 p.m.
Do some last minute holiday shopping for friends and loved ones at SMC's Holiday Art Sale. This two day event, taking place Dec. 15-16, offers a wide range of art including prints, ceramics, and jewelry. For more information call (310) 434-3000.

The art of skateboarding

California Heritage Museum
2612 Main St., 11 a.m. — 4 p.m.
Take a history lesson on the art of skateboarding during the California Heritage Museum's presentation, "SKATEBOARD: Evolution and Art in California." Listen to guest curator legendary Z-boy Nathan Pratt along with museum staff curator Michael Trotter and an expert advisory committee that includes original Z-Boy and Zephyr members. The exhibit showcases the development of boards pre-1950 to today as well as features information on the artists, riders, designers, and manufactures that helped spread skateboarding's appeal.

Thursday, Dec. 17, 2009

Songs of the season

Santa Monica Main Library
601 Santa Monica Blvd., 11 a.m. — 12 p.m.
Listen to SMC Emeritus' Lyric Chorus perform songs of the season as well as Broadway tunes during their winter concert. The Lyric Chorus will be led by Director Bill Elliot and accompanied by Assistant Director Tom Gerhold. For more information call (310) 458-8600.

Environmentally friendly

Santa Monica and other locations across California
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Join thousands of people across Los Angeles County to help save the environment by participating in Heal the Bay's third annual "A Day Without a Bag." Make use of reusable tote bags instead of disposable bags for 24 hours while taking advantage of special giveaways and promotions at participating locations. For more information on promotions and special offers, visit www.healthebay.org/nobag-day/2009/default.asp or call 1-800-HEAL-BAY ext. 116.

Flexing the golden pipes

Barnum Hall/Santa Monica High School
601 Pico Blvd., 7 p.m.
Samohi's choir presents its fifth annual winter concert of perpetual motion: Motus Perpetuus V. Students sing from all corners of Barnum Hall continuously and as soon as one group ends, another one begins. The audience holds their applause until the very end for a unique concert experience. This year, the concert will feature the Missa Criolla, a folk mass by Ariel Ramirez based on song and dance traditions of South America. The concert will end with the traditional singing of The Hallelujah Chorus where audience alumni choristers are invited on stage to sing along.

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

Energy-efficient traffic lights can't melt snow

DINESH RAMDE
Associated Press Writer

MILWAUKEE Cities around the country that have installed energy-efficient traffic lights are discovering a hazardous downside: The bulbs don't burn hot enough to melt snow and can become crusted over in a storm — a problem blamed for dozens of accidents and at least one death.

"I've never had to put up with this in the past," said Duane Kassens, a driver from West Bend who got into a fender-bender recently because he couldn't see the lights. "The police officer told me the new lights weren't melting the snow. How is that safe?"

Many communities have switched to LED bulbs in their traffic lights because they use 90 percent less energy than the old incandescent variety, last far longer and save money. Their great advantage is also their drawback: They do not waste energy by producing heat.

Authorities in several states are testing possible solutions, including installing weather shields, adding heating elements like those used in airport runway lights, or coating the lights with water-repellent substances.

Short of some kind of technological fix, "as far as I'm aware, all that can be done is to have crews clean off the snow by hand," said Green Bay, Wis., police Lt. Jim Runge. "It's a bit labor-intensive."

In St. Paul, Minn., for example, city crews use air compressors to blow snow and ice off blocked lights.

Some communities began installing cool-burning LEDs more than a decade ago, and it wasn't long before drivers started complaining about the problem.

Illinois authorities said that during a storm in April, 34-year-old Lisa Richter could see she had a green light and began making a left turn. A driver coming from the opposite direction did not realize the stoplight was obscured by snow and plowed into Richter's vehicle, killing her.

"Would the accident have occurred if the lights had been clear? I would be willing to bet not," Oswego police Detective Rob Sherwood said.

Authorities said dozens of similar collisions have been reported in other cold-weather states, including Iowa and Minnesota.

Not every storm causes snow to stick to the lights, but when the wind is right and the snow is wet, drivers should beware, said Gary Fox, a traffic engineer for the city of Des Moines, Iowa.

Exactly how much a technological fix will cost is unclear, but it will surely cut into the savings and the energy efficiency many cities are enjoying.

Wisconsin, which has put LED bulbs at hundreds of intersections, saves about $750,000 per year in energy costs, said Dave Vieth of the state Transportation Department. LEDs installed seven years ago are still burning, while most incandescent bulbs have to be replaced every 12 to 18 months, he said.

"With LEDs we have energy savings in excess of 80 percent, and we don't have to have crews replacing them as often," Vieth said. "So it's clear the overall savings are pretty significant."

In Minnesota, authorities are more than halfway to their goal of upgrading the state's 1,300 or so traffic lights to LEDs. The Transportation Department occasionally gets reports of an obstructed light, but often by the time a highway crew arrives, the wind has knocked out the snow and ice, said traffic systems specialist Jerry Kotzenmacher. Minnesota is experimenting with weather shields.



NICE TOUCH

Brandon Wise *brandonw@smdp.com*

Volunteer Mary Anne Saber (right) wraps Christmas gifts for John Keeler (left) at the free gift-wrap station on the Third Street Promenade on Sunday afternoon. The station was hosted by the Bayside District Corp. and will be available each weekend until Dec. 24.

Sales and home prices inch up across Southland

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO, Calif. Sales and prices of homes in Southern California may be showing signs of life, with an increase in sales and prices last month from the same time last year and an unexpected jump in new-home sales, a tracking firm said Tuesday.

San Diego-based MDA DataQuick said the sales have been stoked in recent months by several factors: The federal tax credit for first-time buyers, which would have expired last month before it was extended and expanded; robust investor activity, especially inland; record-low mortgage rates; the availability of government-insured, low-down-payment mortgages for first-time buyers; and the allure of "deals" for distressed properties.

A total of 19,181 new and resale homes sold in Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego, Ventura, San Bernardino and Orange Counties last month. That was down 13.3 percent from October's 22,132, but there is almost always a decline in home sales from October to November, according to DataQuick.

The sales were up 14.7 percent last month from 16,720 for November 2008, DataQuick said.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Taking responsibility for actions

Editor:

When are we going to accept the responsibility for what we are doing to this beautiful planet? We are just dragging our feet on finding alternative energy. Use all that money it takes to set up all those oil wells to make automobiles that don't burn all that gas. Make laws that demand solar energy be used for all new construction and charging stations for electric cars. And start making it mandatory to get rid of all gas hogs by a certain date. Every animal is important to this world and deserves the right to live here. We have caused enough damage to the eco system! Every man, woman and child will have to rethink their needs and wants. Please leave the polar bears their habitat. Thank you from a great-grandmother who wants something left for her future.

Monica Shanklin
Los Angeles

Brownley bill is bad for students

Editor:

Assembly Bill ABX5 8, sponsored by Assemblywoman Julia Brownley, will push testing in schools far beyond the unacceptable level it is at now.

As unbelievable at it sounds, ABX5 8 requires even more testing than No Child Left Behind (NCLB) required. NCLB testing was limited to reading and math. ABX5 8 calls for testing in reading, writing, mathematics, history/social science, and science. NCLB testing was required in grades three through eight and one time in high school; ABX5 8 mandates testing from grades two through 12.

ABX5 8 requires more frequent testing, "interim assessments ... given at regular and specified intervals throughout the school year."

ABX5 8 supports the development of interim tests at "the local level," but also says that these tests must be "tightly linked to standards." This makes it likely that standardized tests will be used that were created by the publishers who produced the text books based on the standards. Children will thus be evaluated by distant strangers rather than by professional educators who understand their students and their needs.

There is no evidence that increasing testing leads to better achievement; in fact, there is tremendous evidence that it has the opposite effect, converting instruction into test-prep rather than real learning, suffocating teacher creativity and students' desire to learn.

All educators understand the necessity of assessment, but it is our obligation to do the minimum amount of testing necessary, and no more. Every minute spent testing that is not necessary bleeds time from learning, and every dollar spent on testing that is not necessary is stolen from investments that really need to be made in schools.

ABX5 8 is a dream come true for test publishers, but it is a disaster for children.

Stephen Krashen
Professor emeritus
University of Southern California





Hiding in the Open

David Alsabery — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

U.S. should focus on Mexico, not Middle East

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT THE LEGAL SALE of medical marijuana in Los Angeles has hurt the marijuana sales of Mexican narco-terrorists? With American-made legal marijuana on the streets, these terrorists are having to cut costs and are growing marijuana in our state and federal parks.

Since 2004, there have been more than 200 American citizens who were executed or murdered in Mexico by narco-terrorists. These victims weren't in the drug business, but were innocent Americans on vacation. More Americans die at the hands of narco-terrorists than peaceful Israelis from Hamas or al-Qaida, yet we refuse to take action. Last year, an untold number of Americans died at the hands of these terrorists, yet our news outlets don't report it. U.S. drug czar John Walters said in October 2008, "They come across kidnap, murder and carry out assassinations. These groups do not respect the border."

According to a 2008 Justice Department threat assessment, "Mexican drug trafficking organizations represent the greatest organized crime threat to the United States."

There are reportedly more than 60 killers from Los Angeles County alone who officials believe have fled justice to the terrorist safe haven of Mexico. Like the Taliban in Afghanistan, Mexican narco-terrorists control 17 out of 31 States today. Using the same methods as Hamas in Gaza, these terrorists have taken over the Mexican government, courts, police and neighborhoods. Like Hamas, Mexican terrorists use the illegal smuggling for power and money. Our police now fear these terrorists, and are having to wear masks to hide their identity in the same manner as the police in Mexico and Gaza.

When we look at our peace loving friends and allies in Israel, 59 Israeli civilians have died from terrorist attacks since 2005, according to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In response to those 59 deaths, Israel unleashed one of the greatest military forces on the planet to protect their people from these thugs. American lives shouldn't be any less valuable than Israeli lives. Like the Israelis in Gaza, F16's should be flying over Mexico, and U.S. troops should be on the ground and at the border. We must stop the Mexican terrorists from killing Americans on our streets today! Both the Mexican people and their government must learn not to collude, harbor, protect and support terrorists that kill innocent Americans.

How many non-military Americans have been killed by the people of Iraq and Afghanistan? Yet, Mexican narco-terrorists are killing Americans and getting away with these murders. Hard working Mexicans flee to our country for better jobs and the safety of our borders. Yet we allow the thugs and terrorist to continue to run Mexico. We've sent the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to setup ground-penetrating radar to Israel in order to find tunnels under their border, yet our border gets no such treatment. Some suspect our elected officials are now taking bribes from these terrorists.

Mexico is on our border and we must do something to help our neighbor and friend. They're no longer able to help themselves. More than 14,000 non-soldiers have been killed in the last three years under President Felipe Calderon. General Felipe de Jesús Espitia, the comandante of the 5th Military District, has just taken over the state of Chihuahua due to the extensive corruption, but people don't know which side he's on. Gen. Barry McCaffrey (the drug czar in the Clinton administration) in a recent report said, "Mexico is not confronting dangerous criminality, it is fighting for survival against narco-terrorism." He goes on to say, "Squad-sized units of the police and Army have been tortured, murdered and their decapitated bodies publicly left on display." Many political figures are now warning us that if these terrorists are not contained, Mexico could become a failed state and the U.S. could find itself with an Afghanistan or a Somalia on its own southern border.

If oil is a reason for war, Mexico sends us 985,000 barrels of oil a day. That makes it our third largest supplier, right after Saudi Arabia and Canada. The second largest business in Mexico is the drug trade, and these terrorists are now running the show. Mexico is turning into Somalia right in front of our eyes, and yet we do nothing about it. With all of the weapons we shipped to South and Central America to fight communism, the Mexican terrorists are as well armed as the Mexican Army.

When do we start helping our friends and next-door neighbors instead of flying to the other side of the world to protect freedom? Mexico's in trouble and we cannot wait until the country collapses. We must restore Democracy, and give Mexicans safe and free elections. We must continue our fight against terrorism by purchasing legal marijuana. Mexico needs boots on the streets and planes in the air. How many more Americans and brave police officers like Deputy David March must die before we take action?

DAVID ALSABERY is a high performance driving instructor and all around nice guy. He can be reached at alsabery@gmail.com.

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CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL

The Santa Monica Daily Press is published six days a week, Monday through Saturday.

19,000 daily circulation, 46,450 daily readership. Circulation is audited and verified by Circulation Verification Council, 2006. Serving the City of Santa Monica, and the communities of Venice Beach, Brentwood, West LA. Members of CNPA, AFCP, CVC, Associated Press, IFPA, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce.

Published by Newlon Rouge, LLC

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Your column here

Scott A. Hodge
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Obama should look to Europe for help with jobs

PRESIDENT OBAMA HAS NOW HELD A job forum in Washington, started a Main Street Tour through cities around the country, all devoted to getting feedback from CEOs, small business owners and financial experts on how to create jobs.

His first stop was Allentown, Pa., where corporate taxes are the highest in the developed world: 35 percent federal and 9.99 percent state. But tax rates never got a mention.

Instead the president heard what he had arranged to hear, that a second stimulus bill loaded with job credits and more spending would bring the economy around, especially if the job credits are for so-called "green" jobs. He also wants to extend unemployment insurance again and add health care for the jobless, give more emergency aid to states and cities, and also provide aid to senior citizens.

Among these proposals, the job credit idea is the only one that even pretends to create jobs. If it passes, the government will pay companies some amount toward each new hire. Obama has mentioned $3,000 in the past. Job credits are common at the state level, and they've never worked well. The president's men know this, so they are actually gambling that the economy has turned the corner, and no matter how ineffective job credits are, they will look good if the economy is on the way up anyway.

Instead of focusing on short-term job creation, the president and Congress should be laying the groundwork for long-term growth. If he demanded an answer from candid CEOs, small business owners and financial experts, here's what they'd tell him.

The CEO could truthfully tell the president, "Mr. President, high U.S. business taxes — federal and state — make every country on Earth look like a corporate tax haven by comparison with U.S. tax rates. And the U.S. taxes our foreign profits while other nations let their companies earn profits abroad tax-free. We need some relief if we're going to grow and create jobs."

The small business owner — who pays her business taxes on her personal 1040 form — could candidly tell the president that she worries about the coming higher income tax rates. "Mr. President, I'm already paying a 35 percent top tax rate, plus Medicare and state taxes, not to mention property taxes and several others. If all three of the big tax hikes Congress is planning are enacted — the income tax hike of 4.6 percent, the health care surtax of 5.4 percent, and the war surtax — entrepreneurs like me could face tax rates of 60 percent. I can't be hiring people with such an uncertain tax climate."

The financial expert could honestly explain how high our taxes on dividends are. "Mr. President, the U.S. now has the third highest total tax on dividends among OECD nations. Just five years ago, our rate was eighth highest. If the House health reform plan passes, our dividend tax will be the world's highest in 2011."

These statistics should worry the president and his economic team as they consider policies for growing the economy over the long term. The very taxes that the U.S. ranks worst in are the most harmful for long-term economic growth according to the study "Tax and Economic Growth," published in July 2008 by economists at the OECD.

Sometimes criticized for leaning left, the OECD nevertheless publishes a report that flies in the face of every Obama tax policy. No administration in memory has shown as much hostility toward business and high-income individuals as has Obama's.

Sweden, of all places, cut its personal income tax rates this year to encourage people to enter the workforce. And, over the past two years, more than 50 nations — including China, Great Britain and Germany — have cut their corporate income taxes in order to maintain their global competitiveness. Many of these countries have pleasantly discovered that lower tax rates reduce the incentive for businesses and individuals to engage in income-shifting which means more taxable income stays in-country.

For the sake of the long-term health of the nation, the president may have to set aside his ideological beliefs for a new set of practical solutions that are working in other nations.

SCOTT A. HODGE is president of the Tax Foundation, a non-partisan tax policy research organization in Washington, DC. Learn more at www.taxfoundation.org.

The Q Line

Web wise?

A recent Daily Press article discovered that just 41 percent of Santa Monica companies have a Web site, and only 4 percent have online ads.

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

Do you think that those companies without an online presence suffer as a result or do you think that being on the Internet is overrated?

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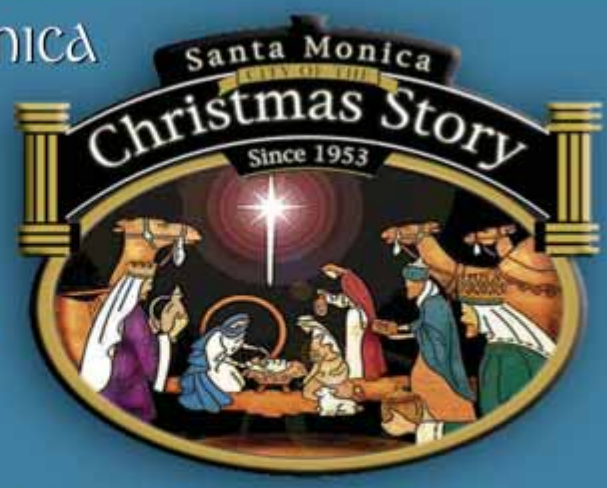
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Dec 9	Var	Chadwick		3pm
Dec 10-12	Var	Villa Park Tournament		TBA
GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER				
Dec 9	Var	San Pedro	JAMS	3:30pm
Dec 10	Var	Marymount	Marymount	3:15pm
BOYS SOCCER				
Dec 10	Var	Wilson	JAMS	3:30pm
Dec 10	JV	Wilson	JAMS	5pm
BOYS BASKETBALL				
Dec 14	JV	Millikan Tournament		TBA

Saint Monica Catholic High School

Date	Team	Opponent	Location	Time
GIRLS SOCCER				
Dec 10	Var	Buckley	Airport Park	3:15pm
Dec 11&12	Var	El Segundo Tour	El Segundo	TBA
BOYS SOCCER				
Dec 10	JV/Var	Beverly Hills	Beverly Hills	4:30/6pm
Dec 17	Var/JV	Morningside	Morningside	2:30/4pm
BOYS BASKETBALL				
Dec 8-12	JV	Salesian Tour	Salesian	TBA
Dec 8-12	Fr	Salesian Tour	Salesian	TBA
Dec 21-23	JV/Fr	El Segundo Tour	El Segundo	TBA
GIRLS BASKETBALL				
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Wholesale inflation spike sends stock prices lower

TIM PARADIS
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK The stock market fell for the first time in five days and Treasurys slipped after a jump in inflation stoked concerns that the Federal Reserve would be forced to raise interest rates.

Stocks extended their slide late Tuesday after General Electric Co. forecast that revenue and earnings would be largely flat in 2010.

Major stocks indexes slid 0.5 percent from 14-month highs, including the Dow Jones industrial average, which lost 49 points.

Trading was subdued as Fed policymakers gathered for a two-day meeting on interest rates. The Fed isn't expected to raise rates from their record low level, but the day's economic reports brought reminders that the central bank could be forced to raise rates sooner than expected to keep inflation at bay.

The government said wholesale prices jumped 1.8 percent last month, more than double the gain analysts expected. Core inflation, which excludes often-volatile food and energy costs, rose 0.5 percent, the biggest increase in more than a year.

Analysts said the increase in food and energy costs was likely a concern for Fed officials.

"They're the twin pistons of inflation," said Christopher Wolf, managing partner and co-chief investment officer at Cogo Wolf Asset Management LLC in San Francisco.

Meanwhile, the Fed said industrial production rose 0.8 percent in November, the biggest gain since August. The rise in production meant factories ran at a higher capacity. The portion of capacity being used remains below average, but if factories start seeing demand increase prices could rise.

The reports put inflation on investors' screens. If prices start rising and the Fed raises rates, it could choke off a nascent economic recovery. The Fed is expected to release a statement on the economy and interest rates Wednesday afternoon after its meeting.

"There is a fair chance that the Fed is going to have to start putting some brakes on the economy," Wolf said, adding that he doesn't expect any immediate actions from policymakers.

Higher rates would help shore up the dollar, which rose Tuesday, but has fallen against other major currencies since stocks began rising in March. It could also trip up the stock market as traders realign their holdings.

Stocks have slowed their nine-month advance in December as traders look to lock in gains for the year and seek clues about what might be able to drive the market in 2010. The benchmark Standard & Poor's 500 index has jumped 63.8 percent from a 12-year low in March on relief that the economy appears to be stabilizing. Analysts say investors will need substantive signs that the economy is improving to extend the gains next year.

The Dow fell 49.05, or 0.5 percent, to 10,452.00. The S&P 500 index fell 6.18, or 0.6 percent, to 1,107.93, and the Nasdaq composite index fell 11.05, or 0.5 percent, to 2,201.05.

The Dow and S&P 500 index closed Monday at their highest levels since October 2008 as concerns eased about global debt problems.

Bond prices fell, pushing yields higher. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.60 percent from 3.56 percent late Monday.

The dollar rose to its highest level in two months against the euro, while gold prices fell.

Crude oil rose $1.18 to settle at $70.69 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange and break a nine-day slide.

Investors turned cautious after GE's forecast. CEO Jeffrey Immelt said the conglomerate is making a rebound after a difficult year and that it is looking to rely more on its energy and health care businesses and less on its financial arm for earnings in 2010. The stock fell 20 cents, or 1.3 percent, to $15.75.

Meanwhile, Best Buy Co. said its fourth-quarter profit margins will face pressure as shoppers look for less expensive items. The comments came as the electronics retailer said its third-quarter earnings more than quadrupled. Best Buy fell $3.84, or 8.5 percent, to $41.53.

Three stocks fell for every two that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 1.2 billion shares, compared with 1.1 billion Monday.

Britain's FTSE 100 fell 0.6 percent, Germany's DAX index rose 0.2 percent, and France's CAC-40 added 0.1 percent. Japan's Nikkei stock average fell 0.2 percent.

House unveils job bill

ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON Responding to calls among rank-and-file Democrats for more infrastructure spending, House leaders Tuesday unveiled a plan to add almost $50 billion in spending on highways, housing, school repair as part of a year-end plan to create jobs.

The measure is aimed at keeping the fragile economic recovery on track with money for teachers, the unemployed and small businesses. A vote is planned for Wednesday.

The Senate, however, won't act until next month at the earliest and has less of an appetite for another costly round of economic stimulus measures.

All told the measure tops $150 billion once additional help for the unemployed and aid to strapped state and local governments is added to provisions designed to have an immediate impact on employment.

"This is legislation that brings jobs to Main Street by increasing credit for small businesses, by rebuilding the infrastructure of America, by keeping police and firefighters and teachers on the job," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. "It's a bill that creates jobs, that meets the needs those who are unemployed and puts us on a path to prosperity."

But the measure is certain to come under assault from Republicans, who say February's $787 billion economic stimulus bill has done little to boost the economy and hasn't prevented the jobless rate from hitting double digits.

Details were still under discussion Tuesday afternoon. But a draft of the measure includes:

• About $35 billion for highways and mass transit.

SEE JOBS PAGE 7

Fed is expected to leave rates at record low

JEANNINE AVERSA
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON The Federal Reserve is expected to leave interest rates at a record low this week. The big question is whether Chairman Ben Bernanke and his colleagues will hint about when they will reverse course and start boosting rates.

Plans for reeling in the unprecedented amount of money the Fed has plowed into the economy to bolster the recovery are likely to dominate its discussions during a two-day meeting, which started on Tuesday afternoon.

The Fed is expected to announce its policy decisions on Wednesday afternoon.

The central bank faces a high-stakes challenge: If it removes the stimulus too soon, it could short-circuit the fragile recovery. But if it moves too late, it could unleash inflation or new speculative asset bubbles.

Bernanke, who's seeking a second term as Fed chief, has made clear his No. 1 task is sustaining the recovery. Last week, he and other Fed officials signaled they are in no rush to start raising rates.

At the same time, Bernanke has sought to assure skeptical lawmakers and investors that when the time is right, he's prepared to sop up all the stimulative money. Some worry that the Fed's cheap-money policies will stoke inflation.

A new report out Tuesday showed that wholesale prices shot up last month, but most economists think it will prove fleeting.

Wholesale prices jumped 1.8 percent in November, lifted partly by more expensive energy products, the Labor Department said. That was up sharply from a 0.3 percent gain in October and marked the largest one-month increase since August.

Stripping out energy and food, closely watched "core" prices rose 0.5 percent, the biggest increase in more than a year.

Meanwhile, the Fed reported that industrial production jumped 0.8 percent in November from October, the largest gain since August. Factories and mines boosted production solidly after cutbacks in October. Production at gas and electric utilities fell.

Even with the stronger-than-expected showing, activity is still down 5.1 percent from a year ago, showing that the industrial sector is far from running at top speed.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke repeated his belief that such slack in the economy — meaning idle plants and the weak employment market — will keep inflation under wraps.

"The bulk of evidence indicates that resource slack is now substantial," Bernanke wrote in a letter released Tuesday. The Fed chief was responding to wide-ranging questions posed earlier this month by Sen. Jim Bunning, R-Ky.

Some encouraging signs for the economy have emerged lately. The nation's unemployment rate dipped to 10 percent in November, from 10.2 percent in October. And layoffs have slowed. Employers cut just 11,000 jobs last month, the best showing since the recession started two years ago.

Still, the Fed predicts unemployment will remain high because companies won't ramp up hiring until they feel confident the recovery will last.

Consumers did show a greater appetite to spend in October and November. But high unemployment and hard-to-get credit are likely to restrain shoppers during the rest of the holiday season and into next year.

"The economy isn't on solid footing yet," said Chris Rupkey, an economist at the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi. "So it's best for the Fed to keep with the script of low interest rates."

The economy finally returned to growth in the third quarter, after four straight losing quarters. And all signs suggest it picked up speed in the current final quarter of this year. But analysts worry that the economy could weaken next year as government supports fade.

Last week, Bernanke warned that the economy confronts "formidable headwinds." They include a weak job market, cautious consumers and tight credit. Against that backdrop, the Fed is all but certain to keep the target range for its bank lending rate at zero to 0.25 percent, where it's stood since last December.

The Fed also is likely to retain a pledge first made in March to hold rates at such levels for "an extended period." The central bank also isn't expected to make any major changes to a program, set to expire in March, to help further drive down mortgage rates.

In response, commercial banks' prime lending rate, used to peg rates on home equity loans, certain credit cards and other consumer loans, will remain about 3.25 percent. That's its lowest point in decades.

Super-low interest rates are good for borrowers who can get a loan and are willing to take on more debt. But those same low rates hurt savers. They're especially hard on people living on fixed incomes who are earning measly returns on savings accounts and certificates of deposit.

Tight credit is clobbering small businesses, normally an engine of job creation during economic recoveries. That's crimping their ability to hire and expand.

Many small businesses rely on smaller banks for credit. But troubled commercial real estate loans are concentrated at those banks. That's hobbled the flow of credit.

At a White House meeting Monday, President Barack Obama urged top bankers to increase lending to small businesses. Afterward, some banks pledged to do so.

Dems propose $50B for jobs

FROM JOBS PAGE 6

• More than $20 billion to pay teacher salaries in an attempt to save or create about 250,000 education jobs.

• $2 billion for job training, summer jobs for teenagers and for AmeriCorps.

• A guarantee of six months of unemployment checks and a 65 percent federal subsidy for health insurance premiums for the jobless.

• Extending the $1,000-per-child tax credit to 16 million poor families.

• Help for states to pay for the Medicaid program for the poor and disabled.

House Democrats had hoped much of the legislation could have actually become law before year's end by adding the jobs legislation to a must-pass Pentagon budget bill. But the Senate said no, leading frustrated Democratic leaders to advance the legislation although the Senate won't act as it is consumed by health care legislation.



Two rallies a first for city

FROM **RALLIES** PAGE 1

[hotel] occupancy due to securing the pep rallies and having the relationship with the tour operators," she said.

The pep rallies are put on by the alumni associations from the schools. The University of Oregon event will be held on Dec. 30 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Ohio State's event is on Dec. 31 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Franz-Knight said bringing both rallies to the same venue on consecutive days allowed the schools to benefit from economies of scale that cut down on some logistical costs.

Jay Hansen, a spokesman for the Ohio State University Alumni Association, said when his group is looking for a pep rally location it generally favors "something that's kind of representative of the bowl game that we're going to."

"When you think of California, people in the Midwest really think of the beach," he said.

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Pacifica Christian's Gearin named CIF player of year

FROM ROUNDUP PAGE 1

ond team.

St. Monica's Caitlyn Hall was tabbed for the All-CIF Division V second team.

SAMOHI GIRLS HOOPS LOSES TOURNEY FINAL

Santa Monica's girls basketball team fell to Ocean League rival Inglewood 46-37 Saturday in the final of the Redondo Classic.

The loss dropped Samohi to 5-3 on the season. Samohi will be in action later this week in the Nike Tournament of Champions in Arizona. The Vikings are scheduled to play Pinnacle in round robin action on Friday.

SAMOHI WATER POLO EARNS HONORS

Santa Monica High School's Marc Vonderweidt was named to the All-CIF Division V boys water polo first team on Monday. Teammates Eduardo Navarrete and Max Vilim-Brozyna were named to the second team.

Samohi Head Coach Matt Flanders said that all three juniors were instrumental in his team going 20-11 this season. The Vikings were ultimately eliminated in the semifinals of the CIF Division V playoffs.

With these three All-CIF performers returning, big things may be in the offing.

"We just get better next year," he said.

SAMOHI BOYS SOCCER FACES PALOS VERDES

Santa Monica's boys soccer team will host Palos Verdes at John Adams Middle School on Thursday at 3:30 p.m. It will be the last action for Samohi until Jan. 8 when the Vikings host Paramount.

SAMOHI GIRLS SOCCER WINS

Santa Monica's girls soccer team blanked North 3-0 on Monday at home.

The win improves the Vikings' record to 3-3-1. Next up for Samohi is a home game against Peninsula today at 3:30 p.m. Samohi plays home games at John Adams Middle School.

SAMOHI GIRLS WATER POLO COME HOME

Santa Monica's 6-4 girls water polo team will host Redondo at 3 p.m. today.

daniela@smdp.com

LOL: laughing out loud
BRB: be right back
MUSM: miss you so much
A/S/L: age, sex, location
BF: boyfriend
OLL: online love
LULAS: love you like a sister
POS: parent over shoulder
WTGP: want to go private?
LMIRL: let's meet in real life

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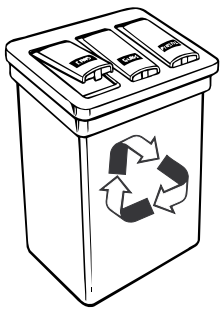
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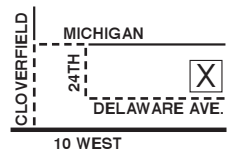


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Evangelist Oral Roberts dies in Calif. at age 91

JUSTIN JUOZAPAVICIUS
Associated Press Writer

TULSA, Okla. Oral Roberts, the evangelist who rose from humble tent revivals to found a multimillion-dollar ministry and a university bearing his name, died Tuesday. He was 91.

Roberts died of complications from pneumonia in Newport Beach, Calif., according to his spokesman, A. Larry Ross. The evangelist was hospitalized after a fall on Saturday. He had survived two heart attacks in the 1990s and a broken hip in 2006.

Roberts was a pioneer on two fronts — he helped bring spirit-filled charismatic Christianity into the mainstream and took his trademark revivals to television, a new frontier for religion.

Roberts overcame tuberculosis at age 17, and credited that triumph with leading him to become one of the country's most famous ministers.

He gave up a local pastorate in Enid in 1947 to enter an evangelistic ministry in Tulsa to pray for the healing of the whole person — the body, mind and spirit. The philosophy led many to call him a "faith healer," a label he rejected with the comment: "God heals — I don't."

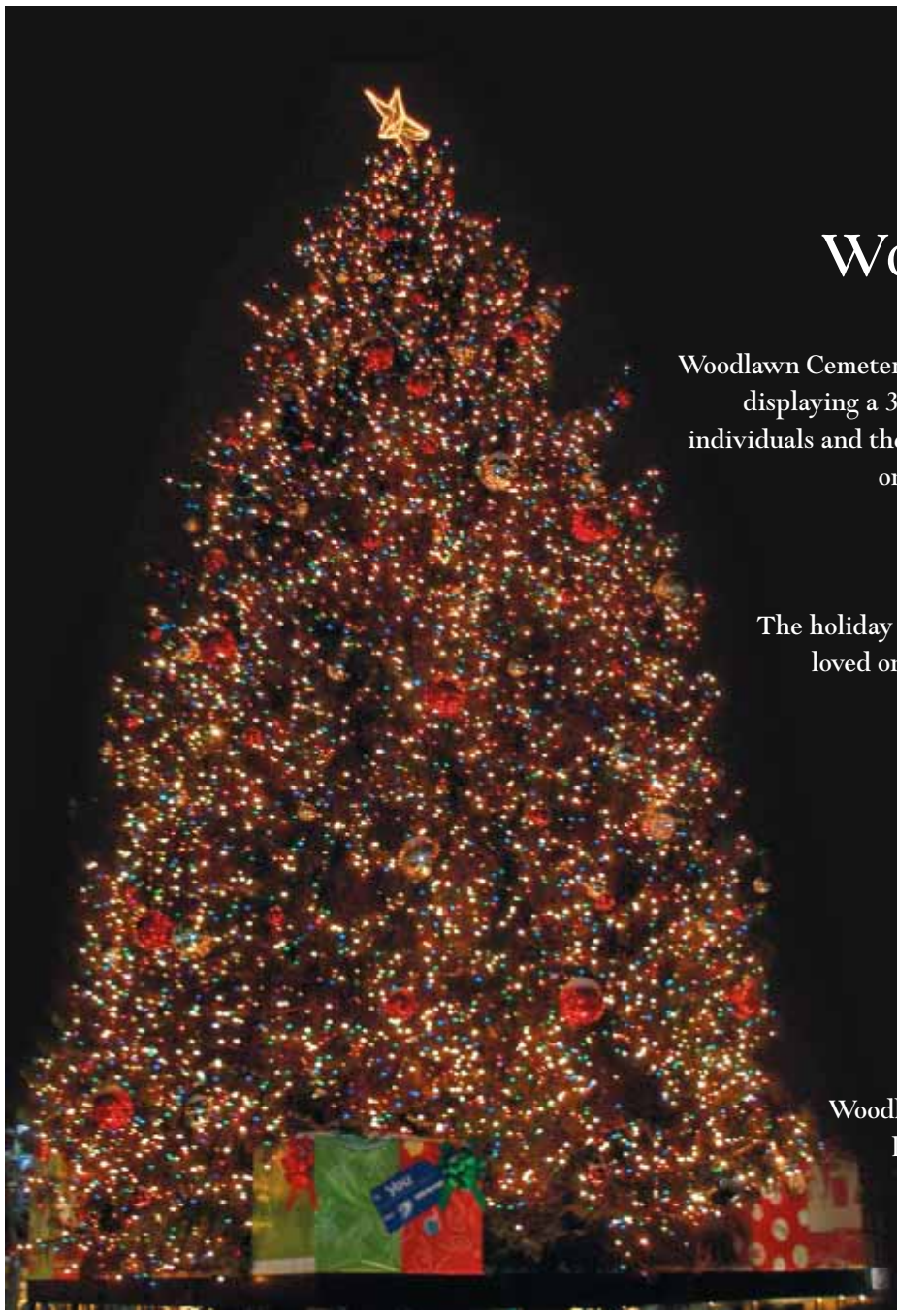
By the 1960s and '70s, he was reaching millions around the world through radio, television, publications and personal appearances. He remained on TV into the new century, co-hosting the program, "Miracles Now," with son Richard. He published dozens of books and conducted hundreds of crusades. A famous photograph showed him working at a desk with a sign on it reading, "Make no little plans here."

He credited his oratorical skills to his faith, saying, "I become anointed with God's word, and the spirit of the Lord builds up in me like a coiled spring. By the time I'm ready to go on, my mind is razor-sharp. I know exactly what I'm going to say and I'm feeling like a lion."

Unity of body, mind and spirit became the theme of Oral Roberts University. The campus is a Tulsa landmark, with its space-age buildings laden with gold paint, including a 200-foot prayer tower and a 60-foot bronze statue of praying hands.

His ministry hit upon rocky times in the 1980s. There was controversy over his City of Faith medical center, a $250 million investment that eventually folded, and Roberts' widely ridiculed proclamation that God would "call me home" if he failed to meet a fundraising goal of $8 million. A law school he founded also was shuttered.

Semiretired in recent years and living in California, he returned to Tulsa, Okla., in October 2007 as scandal roiled Oral Roberts University. His son, Richard Roberts, who succeeded him as ORU president, faced allegations of spending university money on shopping sprees and other luxuries at a time the institution was more than $50 million in debt.



4th Annual Tree of Life

Woodlawn Cemetery and Mausoleum

Woodlawn Cemetery and Mausoleum is pleased to announce that during this holiday season the cemetery is displaying a 30 foot living pine tree in the lobby of the mausoleum. The purpose of the tree is to allow individuals and their families and friends the opportunity to visit the mausoleum and to hang an ornament on the tree in memory of a loved one that has passed away. The cemetery will provide the ornaments which can be personalized. At the end of the holiday season, the tree will be planted on the grounds of the cemetery as an everlasting memory.

The holiday season can be a very difficult time for many people who have experienced the death of a loved one. In an effort to make this time a little bit more bearable and offer hope for the future, the Cemetery staff would like to extend an invitation to the Community to participate in the Tree of Life program

The ornaments will be available through December 24* during the follow schedule:

Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday 10:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

*** Thursday, December 24 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon**

Woodlawn Cemetery & Mausoleum is owned and operated by the City of Santa Monica and is located at 1847 14th Street (corner of Pico Boulevard and 14th Street) in Santa Monica.

For additional information, please contact the Cemetery Office at (310) 458-8717.

City of Santa Monica

Upbeat Obama says Senate near health care passage despite debate

DAVID ESPO
AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON President Barack Obama urged Senate Democrats to overcome the last, lingering disputes blocking agreement on a national health care overhaul Tuesday, declaring they were "on the precipice" of enacting historic legislation that has eluded administrations and lawmakers for decades.

In comments after a private meeting, the president said differences still remain over details, but he spoke in highly favorable terms about the measure that party leaders hope to pass by Christmas.

The bill includes "all the criteria that I laid out" in a speech to a joint session of Congress earlier in the year, he said. "It is deficit-neutral. It bends the cost curve. It covers 30 million Americans who don't have health insurance, and it has extraordinary insurance reforms in there to make sure that we're preventing abuse."

The meeting followed an intense two days in which Democrats struggled — apparently successfully — to keep the legislation moving forward despite a flare-up over a proposal to expand Medicare to uninsured men and women as young as 55.

Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., announced on Sunday he opposed the proposal, and he threatened to join Republicans in voting against the overall measure if it stayed in the bill. Democrats are ready to jettison the Medicare change, and Lieberman told reporters that assuming they do — and that any government plan or Medicare expansion stays out of the bill — "then I'm going to be in a position where I can say what I've wanted to say all along: that I'm ready to vote for health care reform."

That left Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb., the only known potential holdout among the 60 senators who are members of the party's caucus, a group that includes 58 Democrats, Lieberman, and Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.

Nelson has been seeking changes to increase restrictions on abortion coverage in a new insurance marketplace the bill would establish.

Democrats need 60 votes to overcome a threatened Republican filibuster.

The White House meeting unfolded as Democrats awaited a final cost analysis from the Congressional Budget Office on the latest version of the bill, and the full Senate pointed toward a vote on an amendment to permit the importation of prescription drugs from Canada and elsewhere.

At its core, the legislation is designed to spread coverage to 30 million Americans who now lack it, impose new consumer-friendly regulations on the insurance industry and slow the rate of growth in health care spending nationally. Most Americans would be required to purchase insurance, and the government would establish a new series of "exchanges" through which consumers could shop for policies.

The measure includes hundreds of billions of dollars in subsidies to defray the cost of insurance for families with incomes up to about $88,200 a year for a family of four. Additional assistance would go to small businesses to help them afford coverage for their workers.

Large firms would not face a requirement to cover their employees. But the government would impose charges on them if any of them did not do so and any of their workers qualified for federal subsidies to help them afford private coverage.

Democratic leaders mapped out a timetable that envisioned passage before Christmas — but just barely.

That assumed that Nelson and Lieberman would join 58 others in swinging behind the bill once the CBO cost estimates become available.

The House approved its version of the bill earlier this fall, and final negotiations between the two houses would follow a vote in the Senate.

In his remarks, Obama took issue with ads and claims by critics about the bill's impact on the federal budget, citing earlier CBO estimates that predicted it would reduce the deficit. "So all the scare tactics out there, all the ads that are out there are simply inaccurate," he said.

"There are still disagreements that have to be ironed out. There is still work to be done in the next few days," he said, without going into specifics.

But in a clear signal of his commitment to the bill, he said, "I told my former colleagues today ... that we simply cannot allow differences over individual elements of this plan to prevent us from meeting our responsibility to solve a longstanding and urgent problem for the American people."

Unless they act, he said, costs will continue to rise, employers will drop coverage and "Medicare and Medicaid will blow a hole through out budget.

"Those things are guaranteed. That's the status quo. That is the trajectory we are currently on," he said.

The legislation would be financed by about $460 billion in cuts in projected Medicare payments to health care providers over a decade. It also includes higher payroll taxes on individuals making more than $250,000 annually and higher taxes on high-cost insurance policies, drug makers, makers of medical device makers and others.

Associated Press writers **RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR** and **ERICA WERNER** contributed to this story.

Illinois prison to get Guantanamo Bay terror detainees

HENRY C. JACKSON
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON President Barack Obama is ordering the federal government to proceed with acquisition of an underutilized state prison in rural Illinois to be the new home for a limited number of terror suspects held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Obama's decision to acquire Thomson Correctional Center in Thomson, Ill., was disclosed by Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in a joint letter to Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn and Illinois Sen, Richard Durbin. The White House released a copy of the letter.

The decision is an important step toward closing the U.S. detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Thomson is located near the Mississippi River about 150 miles from Chicago. The prison is expected to house both federal inmates and no more than 100 detainees from Guantanamo Bay.

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Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 58°

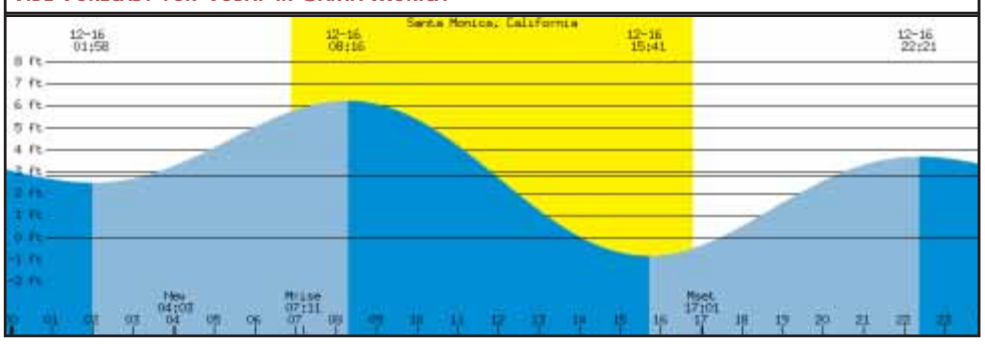
Swell Forecast

Looks similar to today with waist to perhaps chest high waves around west facing breaks and knee to waist high surf around south facing breaks.

Long Range Synopsis

Swell should build into the region from 285-290°. ETA is for SB/VC to see this before dawn, LA early morning, and then OC/SD mid to late morning.

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 9, 2009**

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

QUICK STATS (for the last 26 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 1
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 3
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 41 / 25
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 6 / 17

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

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

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

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

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 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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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.

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.

MLB

Dodgers ownership won't be decided by Opening Day

ANTHONY MCCARTNEY
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES An ownership dispute between Los Angeles Dodgers owner Frank McCourt and his estranged wife will linger through at least a third of the 2010 season after a judge on Tuesday set a hearing for late May.

McCourt, mired in a bitter divorce with wife Jamie, had wanted the ownership issue decided by spring training.

The case has been cited as a distraction for the storied franchise at a time when the free agent market is heating up.

The hearing was cordial but contentious, with both sides lobbing accusations in legal and baseball parlance.

Dennis Wasser, Jamie McCourt's attorney, complained that the proper documents to determine Frank McCourt's income and wealth hadn't been turned over.

"There's been game-playing in this case, and it's not baseball," Wasser said. "It's hide-and-seek."

He accused Frank McCourt of crying poverty and contracting a fictional illness, "RAIDS — Recently Acquired Income Deficiency Syndrome."

Frank McCourt's attorney, Sorrell Trope, questioned whether Wasser was arguing his case to Gordon or the two rows of reporters who attended the hearing.

"He's certainly not in the batter's box," Trope said. "He's out in left field."

Superior Court Commissioner Scott M. Gordon set a two-day hearing on spousal support payments for March 29 and said the ownership issue would be heard from May 24 to June 3.

The Dodgers begin the regular season April 5 in Pittsburgh. Gordon agreed to move up the spousal support hearing from that date because Frank McCourt would be traveling with the team.

"It's obviously a distraction to management," Marc Selter, one of Frank McCourt's attorneys, said about the case after Tuesday's hearing.

Jamie McCourt has also sought nearly $488,000 a month in spousal support, but the figure is likely to change once a complete picture of Frank McCourt's finances is known

Wasser said the firing of his client as the team's chief executive has caused any disruptions experienced by the team.

Frank McCourt fired his wife in October, along with her boyfriend-bodyguard. Jamie McCourt failed in her bid to be reinstated to the position.

The Dodgers have faced numerous challenges during the offseason. Their pitching rotation took a hit when one of their most reliable starters, Randy Wolf, signed with the Milwaukee Brewers.

The Dodgers opened the offseason with 16 potential free agents, including Manny Ramirez, who must decide if he will exercise his $20 million option for next season and return.



MOVIE TIMES

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

Sneak Preview
The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond (NA) 1hr 42min
7:30 p.m.

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade

2012 (PG-13) 2hr 38min
12:00, 3:15, 6:30, 9:45

Pirate Radio (R) 2hrs 9min
1:45, 7:25

The Hurt Locker (R) 2hrs 10 min
4:30, 10:05

Me and Orson Welles (PG-13) 1hr 54min
1:40, 4:20, 7:20, 10:00

Old Dogs (PG) 1hr 28min
1:30, 4:00, 7:00, 9:10

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

Fantastic Mr. Fox (PG) 1hr 27min
12:10, 2:20, 4:50, 7:15, 9:30

Ninja Assassin (R) 1hr 39min
12:30, 2:55, 5:15, 7:35, 10:00

Brothers (R) 1hr 50min
2:10, 4:45, 7:20, 9:55

Princess and the Frog (G) 1hr 35min
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 9:50

Princess and the Frog (G): Closed Captions 1hr 35min
1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

Up in the Air (R) 1hr 49min
12:20, 1:45, 2:50, 4:20, 5:20, 7:00, 8:00, 9:50

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

Precious (R) 1hr 59min
1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:00

Everybody's Fine (PG-13) 1hr 50min
1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 9:55

The Road (R) 2hr 7min
1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

According To Greta (PG-13) 1hr 46min
1:50, 4:20, 7:10, 9:40

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

The Blind Side (PG-13) 2hrs 6min
1:30, 4:30, 5:30, 7:30, 8:30, 10:20

Planet 51 (PG) 1hr 31min
12:40, 3:00

The Twilight Saga: New Moon (PG-13) 2hrs 10min
1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:10

Armored (PG-13) 1hr 28min
12:50, 3:10, 5:20, 7:40, 9:50

Invictus (PG-13) 2hrs 12min
1:00, 2:00, 4:05, 5:00, 7:00, 8:00, 10:00

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

Talking up a storm, Sagittarius

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Use a tendency to walk away from difficult matters, and learn to detach instead. Witness the power of pulling away the emotions rather than acting on them. You need to remain sensitive to another person's desires. Tonight: You feel pushed.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Proceed with a deliberate attitude and allow greater give-and-take. If you want to move through an issue, talk to the other person involved. You could be rather surprised by the end results. Tonight: Attempt to walk in another's shoes.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Others run with the ball. You might not be sure which way to go. Eliminate an initial problem, allowing greater give-and-take. Someone around you shows depth and caring but still might be unsure of him- or herself. Tonight: Have a long-overdue talk.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Dive into work, and you'll get a lot more done than you initially anticipated. If you need to, close the door. You might have enough to do without anyone else adding to your load. Schedule meetings as late as possible. Tonight: Could someone be in the midst of a power play?

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Understand what it takes to make a situation work. If you want to move a project forward, you can and will. New beginnings become possible if you relax. Understand your limits within key guidelines. Tonight: Know when to slow down.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ If you can work from home, you might accomplish more, but not necessarily work! A co-worker or associate feeds you and associates many different facts and suggestions. Realize what is happening within your circle. Tonight: Dance the night away.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ Your decision and manner of handling a personal matter could change dramatically. Conversations could confirm your hunches. Happily, you get important and significant information. Tonight: Find your favorite chair.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ You might be dealing with financial matters squarely and directly. What you are seeing could affect your thinking on much more. Be open to receiving necessary feedback. You need to hear all this information. Tonight: Hang out with friends.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ A natural confidence radiates through you. How you handle certain matters could be far different from what you anticipated. Sometimes when you come from a place of spontaneity, you might surprise yourself. Tonight: Talking up a storm.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ Though you're out of sorts at first, you can center and rethink a personal matter. Follow your sixth sense with finances. You'll handle a matter very differently as a result. Investigate different options or possibilities. Tonight: Gage your own energy level.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Be willing to take a stand and do more with situations around you. Meetings could prove to be powerful. You'll not only make your point, but you also will gain support. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Others look to you for advice and change. How you handle a matter and the choices you make could be very different and quite positive. Success greets you in an emotional or financial venture. Tonight: Where your friends are.

Happy birthday

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

Your energy is so powerful this year that many people easily could be overwhelmed yet awed at the same time. You will push through projects, come up with great ideas and see financial gains as you haven't in years. Put away part of your increased funds while you can. You could find that suddenly you are involved in a move, or you might buy a property out of the blue. Adventure surrounds events. If you are single, your magnetism can do quite a trick on others, encouraging potential suitors to come forward. Do know what you want. Fewer hearts will be broken that way. If you are attached, your relationship could easily become one-sided. Be careful to keep this bond as level as possible. Remember, it takes two to have a relationship. LIBRA can help you make money.

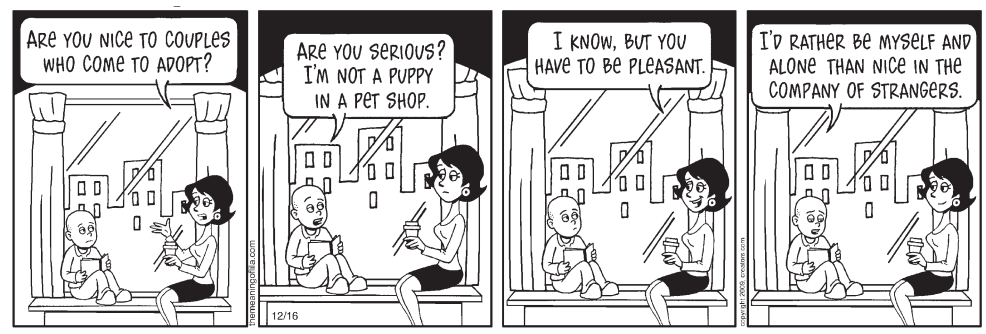
Girls and Sports

By Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



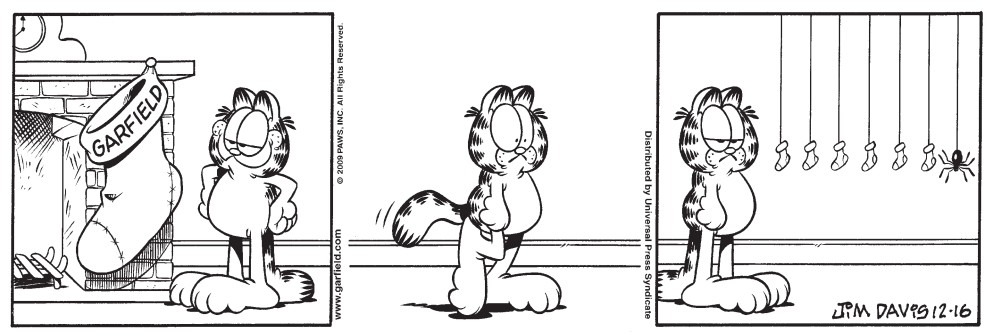
The Meaning of Lila

By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



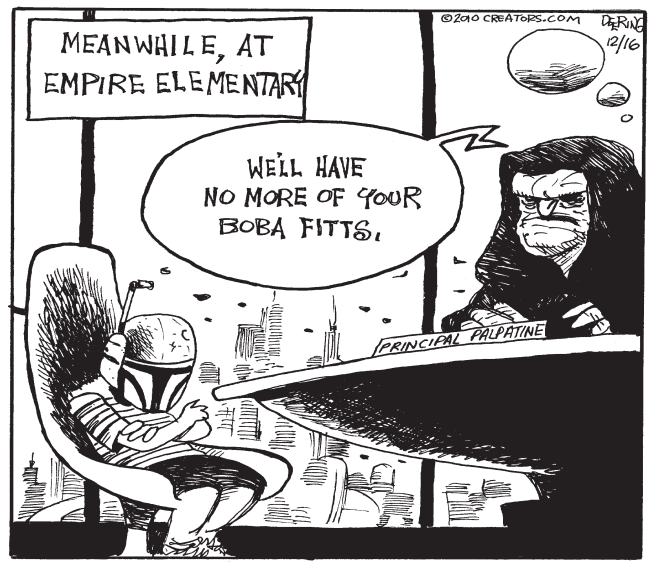
Garfield

By Jim Davis



Strange Brew

By John Deering



Speed Bump

By Dave Coverly



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Sudoku

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

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

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

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MYSTERY PHOTO

Leslie Thomas *news@smdp.com*

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

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Replay feature
6 Fishing aids
10 Lukewarm
11 — cotta
12 Inverted
13 Fanatical
14 Skating spot
15 Beach outfit
16 Mauna —
17 Down in the dumps
18 Kicker's aid
19 Tattletales
22 Singing group
23 Egg setting
26 Light activators
29 Lawyers' org.
32 — Cruces
33 Cereal bit
34 Arthur's aide
36 1920s art style
37 Visitor from afar
38 Like some cigars
39 Informal talk
40 Love to pieces
41 Pert talk
42 College books

DOWN

1 They have big bills
2 Not strict
3 Like amphitheaters
4 Stole stuff
5 Unmatched
6 Toucan's pride
7 Planet's path
8 Salty water
9 "Sexy" Beatles girl
11 Gladiators' weapons
15 Derisive cry
17 Looking displeased
20 "— the season ..."
21 Brief time
24 Makeshift storage
25 Serving aid
27 McKellen of "X-Men"
28 Go pieces
29 Stockpile
30 "Twilight" heroine
31 Opera pieces
35 Eye part
36 Ranch guest
38 Window-sill sitter

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

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

1	2	3	4	5	■	■	6	7	8	9
10					■	11				
12					■	13				
14				■	15					
16			■	17			■	18		
19			20				21	■	■	■
■	22				■	23		24	25	■
■	■	■	26		27					28
29	30	31	■	32			■	33		
34			35			■	36			
37					■	38				
39					■	40				
41				■	■	42				

12-16

DAILY LOTTERY

MEGA MILLIONS: 2 21 27 34 44
Meganumber: 45
Jackpot: $118M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 3 5 6 30 32
Meganumber: 17
Jackpot: $41M

Fantasy 5: 9 13 14 33 35

DAILY 3
MIDDAY: 5 8 1
EVENING: 2 0 1

DAILY DERBY
1st: 03 Hot Shot
2nd: 01 Gold Rush
3rd: 12 Lucky Charms
RACE TIME: 1.43.64

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

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Oops! In an October incident, an off-duty Jacksonville, Fla., sheriff's deputy forgot to leave her service weapon outside when accompanying her mother to Shands Jacksonville hospital for an MRI. The powerful magnet sucked her Glock away in a flash, trapping the deputy's hand between the machine and the gun. Repairs, plus the lengthy powering-down and re-powering of the machine, was said to have cost the hospital $150,000.

■ Google 1, FBI 0: In September, Nebraska prison guard Michal Preclik, 32 (who had been on the job for a year and had just been promoted), was discovered to be on the lam from Interpol for drug and fraud crimes in the Czech Republic. The Corrections Department's background check, on the FBI's National Criminal Information Center database, had turned up nothing, but when officials subsequently Googled Preclik, the Interpol wanted poster was one of the top results.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1392 Nanboku-chÿ – Emperor Go-Kameyama abdicates in favor of rival claimant Go-Komatsu.

1431 Henry VI of England is crowned King of France at Notre Dame in Paris.

1497 Vasco da Gama rounds the Cape of Good Hope, the point where Bartolomeu Dias had previously turned back to Portugal.

1575 The 1575 Valdivia earthquake takes place.

1598 Seven Year War: Battle of Noryang Point – The final battle of the Seven Year War is fought between the China and the Korean Allied Forces and Japanese navies, resulting in a decisive Allied Forces victory.

1653 English Interregnum: The Protectorate – Oliver Cromwell becomes Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland.

1689 Convention Parliament: The Declaration of Right is embodied in the Bill of Rights.

WORD UP!

appellation \ap-uh-LAY-shun\ , noun; 1. The word by which a particular person or thing is called and known; name; title; designation.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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North of Montana	$2,797,500	$1,522,500
Between Wilshire & Montana	$2,400,000	$694,000
South of Wilshire	$865,000	$653,000
Sunset Park	$1,249,000	$624,500
Ocean Park	$1,362,000	$899,475

Statistics Updated Every Monday

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