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DECEMBER 17-18, 2011
Volume 11 Issue 31



Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

AMERICANS SIPPING ON MORE BUBBLY
SEE PAGE 7

THE BUY SOME ART ISSUE

'Recycling capital' shelves recycling center

City Council kills six-year proposal for covered facility because of exorbitant cost

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL A new look at the way City Hall disposes of waste has a long-time provider of recycling services nervous about its future and the future of recycling in Santa Monica.

Leadership of the Allan Co., which has provided recycling services at the City Yards on Michigan Avenue since 1992, came before the City Council earlier this week to express concerns about a new "concept" proposed by staff that not only eliminated a $32 million recycling center and waste transfer station for the company, but potentially forced the company to leave the city.

"I couldn't believe that was going to happen," said Jason Young, the CEO of the Allan Co.

The decision to eliminate the covered recycling center and self-haul facility ends over six years of planning, beginning with a City Council ad hoc committee formed to study the issue of waste diversion in 2005.

A new recycling center would have kept recycling local as well as fixed a long standing issue with neighbors at the Mountain View Mobile Home Park who complain about the smell of the waste left outside and exposed. The current facility has no roof.

One proposal being considered would involve trucking recyclables out of the city to another Allan Co. facility, despite the environmental footprint.

But the cost of building the facility far

SEE CENTER PAGE 14





TRADITION Doug Olmedo *news@smdp.com*

Residents of the Pico Neighborhood take part in the traditional 'Las Posadas' celebration at Virginia Avenue Park Thursday. The posadas re-enact Mary and Joseph's cold and difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of shelter; in Spanish the word means 'lodging.' The reenactments are typically done every evening from Dec. 16 to Dec. 24 in observance of the nine months Mary is said to have carried Christ in her womb.

Homeless turn eastern art into a hopping business

BY ASHLEY ARCHIBALD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CLOVERFIELD BLVD A new business selling eastern-influenced artwork has blossomed at a local homeless services provider, giving clients both self-esteem and community.

Safe Haven Designs, founded by a formerly homeless individual, makes and sells paintings of a classical Buddhist artform for the benefit of mentally-ill homeless.

The business is completely client-driven and funded.

Safe Haven, a project housed at OPCC for which the business is named, only provides "encouragement and space," said Luther Richert, director of Safe Haven.

The Safe Haven program in Santa Monica is one of 100 across the country funded through the federal Housing and Urban Development department. Safe Haven's mission is to reach long-term, chronically homeless individuals with mental disabilities that make them hardest to help, Richert said.

"We meet clients where they're at,"

SEE ART PAGE 10


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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Saturday, Dec. 17, 2011

Art sale
First United Methodist Church
1008 11th St., 10 a.m. — 2 p.m.
Upward Bound house invites people to attend its open house and art sale featuring art, jewelry and other gifts designed by local artists. Upward Bound House is a Santa Monica-based nonprofit with a mission to eliminate homelessness among families with children. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.upwardboundhouse.org or call Jaclyn Lantz at (310) 458-7779 ext. 203.

Opening up
Santa Monica Pier
11 a.m. — 3 p.m.
The Santa Monica Pier Restoration Corp. will be hosting an open house featuring Santa Claus and free carousel rides and refreshments. Get a picture with the man in red. For more information go to www.santamonicapier.org or call (310) 458-8786.

Down the rabbit hole
O'Brien's Irish Pub & Restaurant
2941 Main St., 2 p.m. — 6 p.m.
Rabbits Black, an online community of music lovers and artists, is proud to present "Home For The Holidays: A Charity Concert to Aid The Homeless in our Community This Winter." Several bands will performing in this intimate setting. Prizes will be offered and O'Briens will also be donating a portion of the bar sales to the cause. Together with PATH (People Assisting The Homeless), Rabbits is going to move at least three families into permanent homes from the funds raised. Entrance is free with RSVP. RSVP with guest count at info@rabbitsblack.com.

Final performance
Santa Monica Conservatory of Music
1501a Colorado Ave., 3 p.m.
John Redfield, Alena Bernardi, and the Santa Monica Conservatory of Music will host the final concert of their fall session. The free event will be in an open house style. The public is invited to see the space, meet the teachers and listen to the music. There will be audience participation and instrument introduction. For more information call (310) 633-4885.

Pub crawl with a cause
Citywide
5 p.m.
Fast becoming a holiday tradition, the third annual Santa Monica Pub Crawl is expected to draw over 3,000 people who will donate food in exchange for deals at local bars. Last year enough food was collected for 21,000 meals, organizers said. Over 20 bars and restaurants will be participating. Remember to dress in holiday attire. For a complete list of bars, pub crawl maps, routes, bus stops, updates, or to download the mobile app, visit the official Web site at www.santamonicapubcrawl.com. Remember, do not drink and drive!

Sunday, Dec. 18, 2011

Going to the dogs
Santa Monica Swim Center
2225 16th St., 12 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.
For one day only the Santa Monica Swim Center will open its doors to a whole new breed of customer — man's best friend! Before the Swim Center closes for winter maintenance, the Splash Pool will be transformed into one of the best dog-only pools this side of the Mississippi. While entry for all dogs with valid Santa Monica dog licenses is free, entry for their human counterparts ages 18 and up is $3.25 and youth is $1.25. Proof of Santa Monica residency is required to gain access to the dog-only pool party — sorry kitties! A strict one dog per person rule will be in effect as well as no swimming by owners.

Cafe au play
Ruskin Theater
3100 Airport Ave., 7:30 p.m., 9 p.m.
Only have time for a short trip to the theater? Make it count with the last night of the Ruskin Theatre's Best of L.A. Cafe Plays 2011. Tickets are $15 for the 7:30 p.m. show and $10 for the 9 p.m. show. For more information, call (310) 397-3244 or visit www.ruskingrouptheatre.com.

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



CORRECTION

In the article "Landmark process underway for Village Trailer Park," which appeared in the Dec. 13 edition of the Daily Press, it should have stated that ICF International was the historic resources consultant hired to study the park's potential to be declared a landmark.

Director Oliver Stone talks conspiracy, controversy at Annenberg

BY COLIN NEWTON
Special to the Daily Press

ANNENBERG BEACH HOUSE Oliver Stone is never far from controversy.

So perhaps it would be natural for a group as controversial as Occupy L.A. to approach him for some practical advice.

During an interview with Stone at the Annenberg Beach House conducted Thursday night by David Talbot, founder and CEO of online liberal magazine Salon, a woman who identified herself as part of Occupy L.A. stood up and asked Stone how the movement could create lasting and positive change through the media.

Stone rubbed his temples briefly and admitted it was a complicated question that required a complicated answer.

The Occupy movement was only one of the topics covered during the interview, which was part of Salon's "American Spring Series," which aims to further Salon's offline presence through events.

History was the main topic of the interview, and a quick glance at Stone's filmography shows that the director of "JFK" and "Nixon" is no stranger to the more delicate parts of America's past.

"I regard Oliver as an intrepid explorer of history and truth," Talbot said before launching the interview into a discussion on honesty in American history.

Stone touched on "The Untold History of the United States," an upcoming show that he created for Showtime.

The show will focus on American history in the first half of the 20th century, Stone said, and look at figures in American history that are usually passed over by textbooks.



STONE

While Stone did not discuss specifics about the show, he mentioned Major Gen. Smedley Butler and Vice President Henry Wallace as being fascinating and key figures that are often overlooked.

"These people are not known to the younger generation," he said.

Stone said that he hopes, if nothing else, he can impact education, and give students another source of information on American history.

"I think of all the children who grew up with it," Stone said of history the way its usually presented. "It's us at the center of the world."

"We're trying to say this is not true," he said.

Stone's alternative looks towards the past have garnered him negative media attention before.

"I can't think of a film maker who came under the firestorm you came under in 1991," Talbot said, referencing Stone's political thriller "JFK," and its conspiratorial handling of the John F. Kennedy assassination.

"Liberal, conservative and center journalists came after you," he said.

Stone said that the creation of that film was carefully researched, but members of the media, during interviews on shows like "Nightline" and "60 Minutes," didn't see it that way.

"Dan Rather, he asked me 20 loaded questions," Stone said.

Stone has noted the harsh treatment that he and other political dissidents have received from governments and media throughout American history and in other parts of the world.

Stone went on to say that dissidents in America could learn courage from those in Central and South America.

Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro and Evo Morales all displayed strength and were unafraid to back down when faced by the media, Stone said.

SEE **STONE** PAGE 10



Rendering courtesy of Santa Monica College

IN THE FUTURE: **The design for SMC's Performing Arts Campus East Wing facility, shown on the left in this rendering, was honored for excellence in the 'Un-built' category by the Southern California Development Forum.**

Design for SMC's performing arts campus honored

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

SMC Representatives from Santa Monica College and local architecture firm DLR Group WWCOT accepted a design award from the Southern California Development Forum (SCDF) for the college's Performing Arts Campus East Wing facility.

The project, which just completed the design phase, was honored for design excellence in the "Un-built Concepts" category at a banquet this past Tuesday.

The SCDF is an organization dedicated to providing continuing education opportunities for real estate and design professionals in Southern California. Each year, the organization sponsors an awards program to recognize local charities, and to honor the contributions and creative work of architects, engineers, and contractors.

Among the distinguished jury members for the design awards this year was Jeffrey Averill, AIA, Campus Architect at UCLA; Gregory B. Ames of Trammell Crow Co.; and William Robertson of Cushman & Wakefield.

"This addition is a high quality building with great interior space which utilizes natural light in public spaces to help connect it to the adjacent plaza," noted the jury. "Its use of high quality materials and planar surface detailing connects it nicely to the existing main theater."

The Performing Arts Campus East Wing facility will provide SMC with state-of-the-art performance and rehearsal studios. The 12,000-square-foot facility will contain a multi-purpose room, offices, and music classrooms. This project is part of SMC's recent round of performing arts improvements, which has included The Broad Stage and Edye Second Space.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Who's next, the Chumash?

Editor:

Next year I hope the atheists leave one space for the indigenous peoples. Maybe they could do a display that has an opening in the back of the set that points towards "The Western Gate" near Point Conception. If the atheists want to challenge the existence of the Chumash and their beliefs, we could see how "The Raven Comes" and the Chumash concept of life and death on this planet meets up with the concepts that the atheists propose. Something tells me that The Western Gate would soon become yet another self imagined threat to the atheists as they talk of free speech and public land.

Kyle Conrad
Santa Monica

Season of shame

Editor:

For many years this city has taken pride in the nativity scene for all residents and visitors who come far and wide to enjoy the displays. However, this year, in this season of shame, you have allowed atheist zealots to overrun our joy. Our residents, regardless of religious persuasion, have less to be proud of as these atheists aren't even from Santa Monica. It is disgraceful to have allowed this to happen and whomever is responsible should be fired.

Herb Silverstein
Santa Monica

Atheists lack showmanship

Editor:

It floors me that the atheists who played the system quite well to gain control of the sets at the park, did not use their space to celebrate atheism. They could have had an attractive and educational display that purported that Christmas was based on the pagan celebration of the winter solstice. The display could have shown the Earth, the universe, and explained why this yearly event made the pagans not only take note, but cerebrate.

Instead the atheists made an ugly display that does not educate, does not attract, and does not encourage any curiosity into atheism. Damn the Christians if you will, but they did not solely create this info-tainment society. If you claim space, make it speak. Make it celebrate. If you will, make it sell. The displays are such a poor excuse for a protest, for a counter statement, that it makes one wonder if the atheists were given this opportunity by non-Christian believers on the City Council.

Cassidy Ford
Santa Monica

Well wishes for atheists

Editor:

Dear Atheists,

In spite of your intolerance and Scrooge-like behavior, Jesus still loves you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Joseph E. Fitzsimons
Santa Monica

Simple solution

Editor:

I'm all for the atheist displays. It just shouldn't have been at the expense of the nativity scene. I love all of the displays, including the atheist ones. Where City Hall went wrong was that they didn't expand the number of spaces when they received all those applications. If they had done that, there would been enough spaces for the complete nativity scene, and the atheist groups would have had spaces for their displays, and whoever else applied for a space would have one for their displays as well. Then everyone would have been happy. There is no other solution. Everyone has the right to set up their displays, and they should be able to do so. The ideal holiday display would be the nativity scene, the atheist displays, a menorah, and a Kwanzaa display. That would showcase freedom of religion. And also there would be something for everyone.

Merry Christmas, happy Chanukah, happy Kwanzaa, and happy solstice!

Evan Warech
Los Angeles

On the Beat

By NRO Richard Carranza — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Staying safe during the holiday season

Q: WITH MY CHILDREN GETTING OUT of school for the holidays, we may be heading out of town for a few days. What are some precautions my children and I can take to help prevent being a victim during this joyous time?

A: The holiday season can be the most wonderful time of the year. Yet, with all of the hustle and bustle going on, people tend to forget there are still criminals out there waiting to take advantage of all of the holiday season's stresses and distractions. Shoppers in particular can become fixated on finding the perfect gift and in turn become careless and vulnerable to theft and other types of serious crime.

Here are some tips to protect your children:

• Since children are out from school for the holidays, remind them to let parents and/or guardians know where they will be if they leave the house and how long they will be gone. If they go to a friend's house, tell them or their parents to text you when they arrive. Try to walk in a group, or at least with another friend.

• When walking on the sidewalk, instruct kids to walk opposing the flow of traffic; it's easier to see strangers passing in oncoming vehicles. If they see the same vehicle pass more than once and they feel uncomfortable, tell your kids to go into the closest business and call the police.

• If a stranger offers them a ride, tell them to say, "No, thank you" and run away into the closest open business.

• Remember, we want to know about anything that happens to your children as much as you do, so please call the SMPD as soon as it occurs. It does no good to wait and discuss whether or not something rises to the level of calling the police. When in doubt, call us!

Here are some crime prevention tips that you should always remember, before, during and after the holidays:

• Always lock your doors and windows even when leaving "just for a minute."

• If you have an alarm, use it!

• Never leave a house key under a doormat, in a flower pot, or on the ledge of a door; someone will eventually notice.

• Make sure the exterior of your home is well lit, especially entrances and exits.

• Use timers so that the lights, radio, and TV go on and off throughout the residence to indicate that someone may be home.

SAFE SHOPPING

• While out shopping, stay alert and be aware of what's going on around you.

• Park in a well-lighted area, and be sure to lock the car, close the windows, and hide shopping bags and gifts in the trunk.

• Avoid carrying large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card whenever possible.

• Deter pickpockets and purse snatchers. Don't overburden yourself with packages. Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Carry a purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.

• Shopping with kids? Teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if you get separated.

PROTECT YOUR CAR

• Loading up all those gifts in your car is a sign of progress in the holiday shopping. But if those packages are left out in the open, your car has become a likely target for thieves.

• Always lock your vehicle and store all items out of sight. Breaking into an empty car isn't worth a thief's time. However, anything left in plain view, from your holiday gifts to spare change, sunglasses, CDs, cell phones or briefcases, may tempt a thief. Don't leave windows open for ventilation either.

PROTECT YOUR HOME

• We all want our homes to reflect the joy of the season, but avoid displaying where they can be seen from windows or doorways.

• Arrange to have packages delivered to a neighbor if you're not home to receive them.

• Dispose of gift wrapping materials and packaging discreetly. Break down TV, computer equipment, and stereo boxes and place them in recycling bins the evening prior to trash pick-up. Often criminals will spot packaging you've discarded and target you for their next burglary. And, remember, if you see someone suspicious casing your alley call the Santa Monica Police Department at (310) 458-8491. If you see a burglary in progress, call 911 immediately.

• If leaving town for the holidays, tell trusted neighbors to keep an eye on your home, and to call police if anyone you are not expecting is seen casing your home.

IF A STRANGER COMES TO THE DOOR

• Criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts. And it's not uncommon for people to try to take advantage of others' generosity during the holidays by going door-to-door for charitable donations when there's no charity involved. Ask for identification, and find out how the funds will be used. If you aren't satisfied, don't give. Help a charitable organization you know and like instead.

TAKING STOCK

• Start the New Year by updating or creating your home inventory. Take photos or make videos of items, and list descriptions and serial numbers. If your home is burglarized, having a detailed inventory can help identify stolen items and make insurance claims easier to file.

• Make sure things like TVs, VCRs, stereo equipment, cameras, camcorders, bicycles, jewelry, silver, computers, home office equipment, and power tools are on the list. Remember, check it twice!

CELEBRATE RESPONSIBLY

• The holiday season is a time of celebration. Drinking and driving is a danger to everyone on the road. Anyone with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher is in violation of the law and may be arrested. Remember, the risk isn't worth it. If you choose to drink alcohol at a party, don't drive. Have fun, but remember to celebrate responsibly.

Last but not least, don't let holiday stress get the best of your holiday spirit. Make time to get together with family, friends, and neighbors. And think about reaching out in the spirit of the season and helping someone who's less fortunate or lonely.

Do your part to make the holidays a safe and happy time for everybody, except criminals.

This column was prepared by **NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE OFFICER RICHARD CARRANZA** (Beat 1: coastal, beach and pier areas). He can be reached at (424) 200-0681 or richard.carranza@smgov.net.

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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.

This past week, Q-line asked:

What do you think should happen tot he Village Trailer Park? Should the council try to preserve it, or should the market dictate its future?

Here are your responses:

"MY ANSWER AND MY NEIGHBORS IS YES, save it at all costs. We have enough empty spaces and empty stores, and the people who live in the park deserve to keep their homes and the spaces around them, and the peace and quiet for as long as they live, and at least be able to sell it or rent it if they're not living in it. But please, save the park."

"I REALLY WOULD HATE TO LOSE MY HOME. I'm 75 years old. I have a little garden. I know they're trying to place us in other areas, but I already know I wouldn't have place to make a garden, or sit in the sun and read a book. And we're so congested anyway with traffic. Please leave us alone."

"I AM A RESIDENT OF SANTA MONICA, 30 years, and I think that the Village Trailer Park should be preserved at all costs. It's a slice of Americana. I think it would be a good tourist draw in some aspects. Also, it would save a lot of heartache and terrible consequences for older adults living there, who may end up becoming homeless. We do not need more homeless anywhere at any time. So save, save, save."

"MY OPINION IS TO SAVE THE PARK. It's a green treasure. It represents Santa Monica's commitment to variety and justice for all. And it's not just a place where old people live, it's a place where old people give a testimony and a model for the value of life to all others. Older people need not do anything else but to continue to live, to live in peace and in safety and in dignity."

"I WANT TO REGISTER MY OBJECTION TO changing the Village Trailer Park to another kind of zoning or for destroying this park and building a new project. The new project is crazy, especially in view of the new economic crisis, and in my opinion is yet another white elephant in Santa Monica that will benefit only the developers. This is a developers' pipe dream. They'll make money out of it. But of course, it'll be impossible to actually create this project. I very vehemently suggest that this is a crazy, crazy project, for the moment, putting 51 residents of [the] trailer park onto the street in spite of the promises made by the developers, which are mere promises and won't be materialized. Santa Monica has way more than enough condominiums, apartment blocks and houses. This is a unique park and a unique landmark, and until the Landmarks Commission has done its work, apparently, according to one of your reporters, neither the city nor anyone else can go ahead with this project."

"THE MARKET ABSOLUTELY SHOULD DICTATE what happens with the Village Trailer Park. It is a blighted, underutilized parcel and a higher and better use should be found. If people want to live in a trailer park then they can move their trailers to Arizona."

"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR THE residents of Village Trailer Park is that they are not forced out of Santa Monica, but that City Hall finds living space for them. I have lived at the city-owned Mountain View Mobile Inn for 15 years and I way prefer a trailer home over apartment living. Mountain View would take 25 to 27 of their residents, but that still leaves 25 to 27 out. These people should be moved to low-rent apartments. The best thing for the residents of Village would be for City Hall to purchase the property and upgrade it and offer new mobile homes like the city has so generously done here."

"CITY COUNCIL WILL SAY THEY CAN'T afford to buy the Village Trailer Park land. They will also say they can't force the owner to run a trailer park. What they can do, however, is not change the zoning on the land, or enter into a development agreement with the owner/developer that will allow them to build outside what current zoning allows. By allowing the developer to build beyond existing zoning, council incentives closing the trailer park. If the council was serious about protecting residents over developers, they'd tell the developers that if they demolish the trailer park, they're not going to be able to cash out on a huge new development."

"LET THE LAND USE AND CIRCULATION Element answer these questions! 'The plan is designed to maintain our city's character, protect our neighborhoods ... [and thus] ensures a high quality of life for all Santa Monicans now and in the future' (LUCE, Executive Summary, p. 1). Historical preservation? Neighborhood protections? Development density? The answers are in the LUCE. Hold all development until LUCE neighborhood plans are completed. Respect the LUCE."

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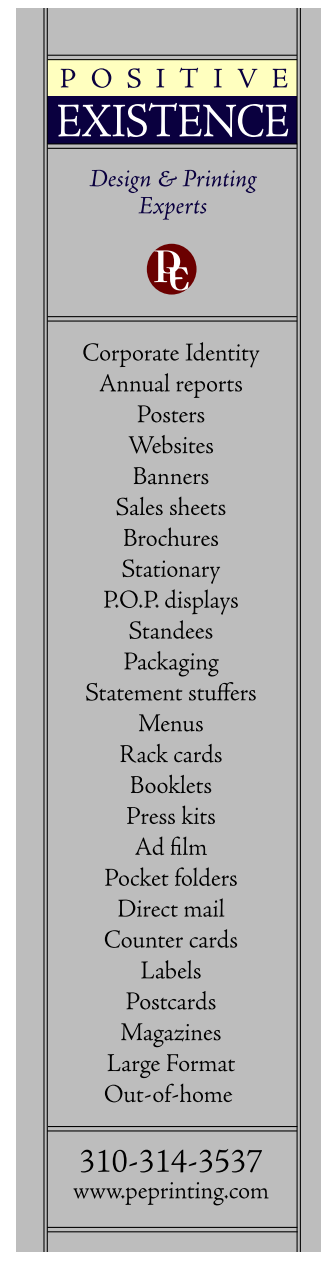






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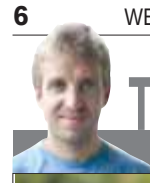
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Tour De Feast

Michael Ryan
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Photo By Michael Ryan *news@smdp.com*

IT'S A WRAP: **The chicken shawarma at Z Garden, the restaurant's most popular item.**

Out with the old, in with Z new

LIKE ANY NEW BUSINESS Z GARDEN is indeed working out some of the unexpected yet unavoidable kinks.

Co-owner Shadi Abed, posts himself close to the entrance working partly as a greeter and also as the guy who has to shut the faulty door that wants to constantly stay open. The dining area still awaits the Farmers' Market hook-up who promised foliage to accompany their brand new wood furnishings. And the landscaper still has to do an overhaul of the exterior to truly make a garden out of Z Garden. Meanwhile, in the kitchen the other owner, Nasar Nasir, mans the grill and seems to have a handle on the light, mid-afternoon crowd.

Z Garden opened up about two and a half weeks ago in the space that used to be Tom's #1 Family Restaurant for the past 21 years just east of Cloverfield and Pico boulevards. Apparently people still walk up to the counter attempting to order a burger, not even realizing that a change was made. I was compelled to stop in after riding my bike down Pico, doing a double take, and realizing that the old greasy spoon had bitten the dust.

A story of friendship, serendipity, and love for food led Shadi and Nasar out of their homeland of Tunisia and into Z Garden. Nasar spent many years cooking for a Saudi prince and traveling the world. Shadi moved to Los Angeles and worked in hookah sales. Most notably, he was the man to embellish the well-known Gypsy Cafe in Westwood with their smoking supplies. Both men reunited in Santa Monica and started Green Taxi in 2008, which they recently sold to buy Z Garden. Nasar married Shadi's sister, and now these two friends and business owners are brothers. What a whirlwind!

Mediterranean at heart, Z Garden could best be compared to Zankou Chicken, but more personable and stylish (especially once the plant guy delivers the goods). The menu offers all of the staples and standards including shawarma, kabobs, falafel, vegetarian plates, and salads. Sandwiches range around $7 and entrees are about $10. Both options include sides, making the prices very reasonable.

They pride themselves in making everything in house and fresh to order. The falafel I tried had a seriously crispy shell but the inside was soft, aromatic, and ultimately very good. I noticed more than a few people ordering the chicken shawarma. Shadi informed me that the chicken shawarma is their most popular item and I will be inclined to check it out my next time around the block.

Any new restaurant, while tempered with uncertainty, reaps great rewards when it is a success. Hopefully Z Garden will become a mainstay in the Pico area that has seen much improvement over the years. They already have a steady flow of locals, curious newcomers, and people not realizing Tom's #1 has gone out of business. It is certainly worth a look if you are in the mood for some good Mediterranean food.

If you go

Z Garden
2350 Pico Blvd.
Santa Monica, Calif.
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(310) 392-2900

MICHAEL can be seen riding around town on his bike burning calories so he can eat more food, or on CityTV hosting his own show, "Tour de Feast." To reach him visit his website at tourdefeast.net.



Photo by Michael Ryan *news@smdp.com*

PARTNERS: **Friends and business partners Nasar Nasir and Shadi Abed sold Santa Monica Green Taxi and opened Z Garden on Pico Boulevard. Mediterranean at heart, Z Garden could best be compared to Zankou Chicken, but more personable and stylish.**

Americans are feeling bubbly about Champagne

BY MICHELLE LOCKE
For The Associated Press

The economy may be in a funk and consumer spending in a slump, but there's one glass that seems to be more than half full — flutes of Champagne to be precise.

After seeing sales tumble as the recession hit, Champagne shipments were up nearly 22 percent comparing the first six months of this year to the same period in 2010, with a total of 7.5 million bottles shipped to the U.S. as of June, according to the Washington-based Champagne Bureau.

From July 2010 to June 2011, 18.3 million bottles were shipped, about a 20 percent increase over the July 2009-June 2010 period.

The trend may be due to people spending more, between $30 and $50 on a bottle of wine, says Gwendolyn Osborn, wine expert for online retailer Wine.com. Since there are some good Champagnes to be found in that range, "people are buying them, since it is viewed as a luxury," she says.



Veuve Clicquot Brut Yellow Label, which sells for about $45 on the site, was No. 6 on Wine.com's Top 10 sellers for 2011.

Bargain-priced bubbles were popular too, of course. The No. 2 wine on the list was a cava from Spain, Jaume Serra Cristalino Brut Cava, which goes for $7.99. Still, there was definite interest in Champagne. Dom Perignon 2002, which has a price tag of around $160, jumped from 67th place last year to No. 27 on the list this year.

No need to sell author and wine expert Leslie Sbrocco on the joys of Champagne. She's such a fan she had a glass of pink bubbly tattooed on her calf.

Sbrocco, author of "Wine for Women" and founder of the website ThirstyGirl.com, likes all kinds of sparkling wine, including cava from Spain and prosecco from Italy. "But Champagne is the icon, it is the mother ship, if you will, of bubbles," she points out. "So when I think of bubbles I immediately am drawn to Champagne."

To be called Champagne, the wines have to be made with grapes from the Champagne region of France. Sparkling wines are believed to have originated as a happy accident: Grapes were fermented and barreled during a cool harvest, which made the yeasts that turn sugar into alcohol go dormant. A warm spring then woke up the yeasts, restarted fermentation and, in the process, created bubbles.

Just where and when that happened is unclear, but records show that sparkling wines were produced in the Languedoc region of southern France decades before the Champagne region became renowned for its sparkling wine.

At first, winemakers saw bubbles as a flaw, and a dangerous one at that since the re-fermentation could cause the weak glass bottles of the era to explode. The advent of better corks and stronger bottles helped turn Champagne into a reliable product, one that was taken up by the French royal court.

These days, sparkling wines are available from all over the world, including many that are made the same way as Champagne. Still, Champagne has maintained its cachet, not least because of a robust name protection campaign waged by French producers who have reached agreements with wine regions and governments around the world to stop referring to sparkling wines from elsewhere as Champagne. U.S. officials signed an agreement in 2006 to stop new producers from using the name. However, existing brands were grandfathered in, though they are required to put the origin on the label, i.e., "California" or "American."

French Champagne tends to be expensive, with some bottles commanding hundreds of dollars. But there are values to be found. Sbrocco advises looking at non-vintage blends offered by some of the big houses, including the Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label and Louis Roederer Brut Premier.

Another emerging trend is "grower Champagnes," made by smaller producers who mostly grow their own grapes, as opposed to the big Champagne houses that buy grapes from all over the region. One way to identify a grower Champagne is if it has the initials RM on the label, which stands for Recoltant-Manipulant, literally, harvester-handler.

Sarah Elliott, certified sommelier and wine director at Commonwealth restaurant in San Francisco, sees grower Champagnes as producing more unique styles tied to smaller parcels, something that seems to be contributing to a trend of more people viewing Champagne as a good food wine, not just something you pop in celebration.

At Commonwealth, chef Jason Fox is known for experimental dishes with unexpected flavor combinations or textures, like vinegar foam served with nori-flecked potato chips, and Elliott finds that "bubbles are a lot of fun with his food."

Another change on the Champagne front is renewed interest in drier style wines that have had very little or no sugar added after the in-bottle fermentation. Some examples are Laurent-Perrier Ultra Brut and Pol Roger Pure, which Sbrocco would pair with "oysters or goat cheese or anything salty."

About that tattoo: It's based on a glass of Billecart-Salmon rose (ro-ZAY), and was documented on the reality TV show LA Ink.

Like Sbrocco, Osborn, the Wine.com expert, likes to drink pink, citing a Canard-Duchene Brut Rose on the website that sells for about $45 she says is "really fantastic."

True Champagne "has a taste unlike any other," says Osborn. "It brings all of these wonderful assets together, beautiful packaging, beautiful to look at. I would rather have one beautiful glass of Champagne that a few glasses of just about anything else."

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Startup sees entrepreneur-ship as solution to visa problem

BY BROOKE DONALD
Associated Press

SUNNYVALE, Calif. You've heard of tech companies starting in a Silicon Valley garage. What about on a ship?

That's the idea being floated by a California startup that wants to dock a vessel off the coast to house foreign entrepreneurs who have dreams of creating the next Google but can't get visas to work in the United States.

Sunnyvale-based Blueseed Co. says current immigration rules can sink promising ventures and torpedo innovation and job creation.

The ship aims to provide a remedy by giving foreign entrepreneurs a place to build their companies only a short boat ride from high tech's hub.

"A lot of people say, 'I'd like to go to Silicon Valley' but there is no way for them to do it," said Max Marty, Blueseed CEO and co-founder.

Marty, the son of Cuban immigrants, thought of the ship after listening to international classmates of his at the University of Miami business school lament about having to leave the U.S. after graduation.

Politicians have wrangled with the issue, but efforts to change the system have stalled.

Last July, President Barack Obama said during a Twitter town hall he wanted to make sure talented people who studied in the U.S. were able to stay to create jobs.

"We don't want to pay for training them here and then having them benefit other countries," Obama said.

A bill to address so-called brain-drain was reintroduced this year by Sens. Mark Udall, D-Colo., John Kerry, D-Mass., and Richard Lugar, R-Ind. The Startup Visa Act would allow immigrant entrepreneurs and foreign graduates from U.S. universities to appeal for a two-year visa "on condition that they secure financing from a qualified U.S. investor and can demonstrate the ability to create American jobs."

But Blueseed founders don't expect any real reform from a bitterly divided Congress during an election year.

"Our solution is an entrepreneurial solution," said Dario Mutabdzija, Blueseed's president.

From cruise ships to oil rigs to military aircraft carriers, there are several examples of individuals living and working on ships. This one would accommodate about 1,000 people and be docked 12 miles southwest of San Francisco Bay, in international waters.

It would be registered in a country with a reputable legal system, maybe the Bahamas or the Marshall Islands, Marty said. Residents would be subject to the laws of that nation.

Residents would be ferried ashore with temporary business or tourist visas, which are easier to get, to meet with investors, collaborators, partners and others. Mutabdzija said the ability to have face-to-face meetings cannot be underestimated when trying to gain trust — and secure funds — from investors.

"Yes, we live in an interconnected age with Skype and other video conferencing. But if you want to grow a company, physical interactions are of paramount importance," Mutabdzija said. "We're a startup. We ran into this. Some people said if you're not within a 20 mile radius, we won't talk to you."

The proximity to high-tech's center, Silicon Valley, is also important.

"The talent, the money, the expertise and a cultural acceptance of risk. Elsewhere if it doesn't work out, you're a black sheep and the funds dry up," Mutabdzija said.

The ship would be a remodeled cruise ship or barge that Blueseed leases or owns. It would have all the high-tech amenities expected of a startup incubator and the look of employee-friendly Internet giants Facebook and Google, famous for their modern campuses complete with gourmet cafeterias, exercise facilities and an environmentally-sustainable design.

A live-work space would cost about $1,200 a month.

Logistical support, including food and other supplies, would come from local businesses along the coast, helping the economies of Half Moon Bay and San Francisco, though it hasn't been determined exactly which port Blueseed would use.

A helicopter also would be available for emergencies.

Critics deride the ship as a publicity stunt, and say investors would be better served contributing to ventures that help Americans create businesses.

"I would say the whole thing is a perfect metaphor for how in corporate America the practice to grow talent and incubate business locally is drifting away — quite literally," said Bob Dane, of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, which advocates for limited immigration.

But supporters of foreign entrepreneurship say immigrants are responsible for some of the most successful businesses in the world and if the U.S. doesn't try to attract them, others will.

"The ship may sound like a crazy idea but it illustrates how seriously flawed the immigration system here is," said John Feinblatt, who runs Partnership for a New American Economy, which advocates for immigration reform.

The organization published a report in June that said 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children.

Feinblatt said countries including Chile, Singapore and the United Kingdom have programs to attract immigrant entrepreneurs.

"While the U.S. is driving people away, other countries are welcoming them with open arms," he said. "If you miss out on them, you miss their talent, their ideas and ultimately the jobs that they create and the taxes that they pay."

Christopher S. Bentley, a spokesman with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, said the agency has not seen the proposal and it's premature to comment.

Maritime experts say such an idea is feasible, but very costly.

"A good single point mooring costs in the millions of dollars but it could restrain a ship-shape vessel in quite severe storms and in deep water," said Bil Stewart, CEO of Houston-based Stewart Technology Associates, an engineering consultancy specializing in offshore and marine structures.

"But it would be prudent if the vessel had its own propulsion if you had a Pacific hurricane come along," Stewart added.

Blueseed's idea has started gaining steam.

Silicon Valley investor Peter Thiel, a founder of PayPal, announced he would lead Blueseed's financing search. Thiel has been a big supporter of "seasteads" — self-ruling cities on the ocean — and both Marty and Mutabdzija worked at the Seasteading Institute.

Blueseed wants to raise $10 million to $30 million over the next year and a half. The goal would be to launch in late 2013.

Confusion cited in Calif. wildfire report

BY MICHAEL R. BLOOD
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES Federal investigators Friday revealed conflicting accounts of why an air tanker was not summoned in the early hours of what became the largest wildfire in Los Angeles County history, but concluded it's not possible to know if different decisions would have curtailed the damage.

The 2009 Station Fire killed two firefighters, destroyed 89 homes and blackened 250 square miles on the edge of Los Angeles, and residents who were burned out have long complained the U.S. Forest Service failed to bring in enough firefighters and aircraft to halt the spreading flames.

Government records released after the blaze opened questions about whether firefighting aircraft could have been ordered and deployed more quickly, including at night, and whether a tight federal budget drove firefighting decisions on the ground.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office report concluded the Forest Service needs to clear up foggy policies that could cause confusion when working with local firefighters, but it stops short of suggesting the Station Fire could have been snuffed in its early stages.

GAO noted that firefighting decisions are made under heavy pressure with "imperfect information," and it acknowledged investigators had "only limited ability" to second-guess firefighters, given the conditions on the ground.

"Even less clear is whether, and to what extent, different decisions might have changed the outcome of the fire," the report concluded.

The report urged the agency to "clarify ambiguous operational processes" to improve how it manages future fires.

In a statement, U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., urged the agency to clearly determine when night flights are needed and to improve how aircraft and firefighters are deployed. She lamented that "firefighters were so close to containing it on the first night."

Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif., said "mistakes were made but there is a valuable opportunity to learn and improve" the way wildfires are managed.

The eagerly awaited study began more than a year ago, when members of Congress asked the watchdog GAO to conduct a broad review of the fire started by an arsonist in the rugged mountains that border the nation's second-largest city.

The Associated Press first disclosed details of the report Friday after obtaining a draft.

The study represents something of a capstone to a long debate over strategy, equipment and tactics used by the Forest Service, which faced questions after a relatively small fire on the afternoon of Aug. 26, 2009, turned into an inferno.

The document noted the blaze started in conditions ripe for intense wildfire: low humidity, high temperature and it began in 50-year-old dense shrubs and vegetation about 6 to 8 feet high, composed of more than 50 percent dry, dead material. It said that within about an hour of being reported, the fire covered approximately 15 to 20 acres.

It said seven helicopters and two air tankers were mobilized to respond to the fire during the first afternoon, with several aircraft arriving over the fire before 4 p.m. on the first day of the fire, on Aug. 26, 2009.

But an air tanker was nearby that never made it. The report said that tanker carrying fire-suppressing gel could have been diverted to the Station Fire, but accounts differed as to why that didn't happen.

Citing interviews, the report said a supervisor at the Station Fire believed firefighter efforts "appeared to be working" and did not have a site selected for the plane to release the gel, and a second official supervising the flight was concerned about approaching darkness. But the pilot told investigators darkness was not an issue and "he believed there was ample time for the tanker to fly to the Station Fire, make its drop, and return to base before nightfall."

The pilot "did not believe that the Station Fire aviation supervisor offered to find a location ... to drop its load," and believed the plane would interfere with helicopters over the fire, the report said.

But the report also notes large air tankers, typically used to dump retardant or water along ridge lines, might have had problems in the steep canyons where the fire was burning. "The tankers would have had to fly high enough to be safe from the power lines and the drops from such heights would likely have been ineffective," the report states.

Government records released after the blaze showed the Forest Service summoned several powerful firefighting airplanes in the early stages of the wildfire, then canceled and reordered them, causing a two-hour delay in their arrival on the second day of the fire. Recordings of calls between fire managers and dispatchers released last year showed the difficulty of communication in the mountainous region, and the problem of deploying aircraft as multiple fires burned in the state.

But the report found that because of rest requirements for flight crews and other issues, "it appears unlikely that any federal air tankers could have arrived over the Station Fire sooner than they did."

A federal review in 2009 found the fire slipped out of control because it jumped into steep, inaccessible terrain, not because the Forest Service scaled back firefighters and aircraft attacking the flames.

"We are not constrained by cost. We want to get the fire out," Forest Service Fire and Aviation Management Director Tom Harbour said at a congressional hearing earlier this year, defending the agency's response in the early hours of the blaze.

Federal foresters have long discouraged night flying because of the risk of operating aircraft in darkness in rugged national forests, but the agency reached an agreement with local firefighters earlier this year that makes it easier to get water-dumping helicopters into the air at night over the fire-prone Angeles National Forest. The Forest Service continues to review its own policies for night flights.

Critics have suggested that deploying waves of water-dropping helicopters could have slowed, or extinguished, the fire on its first night, before it raged out of control.

The report found the Forest Service requested a night-flying helicopter from the county about 5:30 p.m. on Aug. 26, but it was diverted to handle a medical emergency.

"Forest Service and Los Angeles County Fire Department officials told us that the recall of this helicopter did not affect the response to the Station Fire," the report said. Night flights were also discussed later that evening but officials decided "the gain from flying at night was not sufficient to warrant the risk."

The agency has argued that there are scant cases in which aircraft alone extinguish fires, since embers, brush and grasses on the forest floor can continue to burn even after a water or retardant drop.

Forest Service spokesman Joe Walsh said agency officials were reviewing the report and had no immediate comment.

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STONE
FROM PAGE 3

"They had balls, that's all I can say."

However, with the growth of literacy and free communication, the future looks bright, Stone said.

"This is a changing world. It gives me hope," he said.

Fellow dissidents, members of the Occupy movement seemed to be looking for guidance, and self identified members came from as far away as Italy to ask Stone what his advice on creating and sustaining change would be.

Stone said that tenacity, something he believes the movement possesses, is key.

Stone also stressed keeping the Occupy movement in the media, which could be used as a tool of positive awareness.

"The title is good, the media likes it," he said.

"But they've been very nasty to you guys," Stone said.

Stone, citing his Buddhist background, stressed peaceful protests as a vehicle for change.

Stone warned members that they might encounter police brutality and pepper spray, but that even that could be used to their advantage.

"People will be disgusted by that because you'll be nonviolent," Stone said.

"And keep out the thugs."

news@smdp.com



ART
FROM PAGE 1

Richert said. "Working a Safe Haven is not a desk job."

Clients are encouraged to initiate projects as a form of empowerment, Richert said, like the art sales and a community garden project.

"We build people's self-esteem and make them feel they have a voice. We're not telling them what to do, we're listening," Richert said.

Timothy Caldwell, an alumni of Safe Haven, founded Safe Haven Designs as a way to engage residents and members of the program, and raise money for annual activities like a trip to the county fair and picnic.

They used to do car washes, but had to stop because of liability issues, Caldwell said. That left the redemption of recyclables collected from the center as the only source of income for residents, a laborious activity that earned just $60 a month.

When Caldwell stumbled upon the eastern artform of "mandalas," he found a solution to the clients' money problems.

The word mandala means circle in the Indian language of Sanskrit.

According to the Mandala Project, a nonprofit that promotes peace through art and education, a mandala is any integrated structure organized around a unifying center.

Most mandalas are circular with a repeating pattern that converges on one focal point. The artform is traditionally used as a form of meditation and healing.

Multiple people can collaborate on a mandala at the same time, which makes the artform perfect for a group environment like Safe Haven where organizers put a high premium on community building.

At the same time, it's not an activity they have access to in their daily lives.

Chronically homeless individuals don't have the security to buy or store art supplies without fear of having them stolen. Bringing the homeless together under the umbrella of Safe Haven to make art removes one of those barriers, and allows them to express themselves, Caldwell said.

Most importantly, however, mandalas are simple to put together, which makes it easier for Safe Haven Designs' artists to approach the new challenge.

"You can take someone with no artistic talent, and create something beautiful," Caldwell said.

That's how Caldwell felt when he found Paul Heussenstamm, a mandala artist based in Laguna Beach, Calif. who teaches workshops on how to begin making mandalas.

"Mandala Paul" told Caldwell that he could teach anybody to make gallery-quality art, Caldwell said.

Caldwell took the courses Heussenstamm offered, brought the knowledge back to Safe Haven and began producing artwork.

It took off. Safe Haven Designs has eight artists producing pieces priced between $25 and $80 a pop, which are sold in Venice Beach, various locations throughout Santa Monica and, for the first time, online at www.safehavendesigns.com.

Caldwell made his first online sale Wednesday.

Artists get approximately $5 for every hour of their work through the sales, Caldwell estimated.

It's a far cry from how he used to make money, playing chess in the park.

"That was long, hard work, but I had to play chess to feed myself," Caldwell said.

As acknowledgment of the group grows, Caldwell aims to pump up the volume and drop the price to encourage sales, as well as expand the repertoire beyond the lotus flower design and utilize symbols from other religions and ideologies in an attempt to be more inclusive.

Although the money is helpful, the payoff for Safe Haven Designs' workers is intangible.

"We're not greedy, although it is a source of income," Caldwell said. "It's really about building community and self-esteem."

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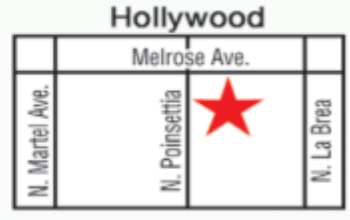
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BALL CONTROL

Morgan Genser *news@smdp.com*

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DRIBBLE DRIVE

Morgan Genser *news@smdp.com*

Samohi guard Jordan Starling dribbles around Valencia's Riley Honaker Thursday during a non-league game at Samohi. The Vikings won 59-43.

CENTER

FROM PAGE 1

exceeded expectations because the proposed site was once a landfill, and the ground at the site could not have supported the new facility without major, and expensive improvements, according to city staff.

"We didn't know that there were void spots in there," said Martin Pastucha, Public Works director in the city. "We found out that it's not solid soil all the way down. We design for the structural stability of the soil, and to get that stability, we needed pilings 40 to 60 feet into the ground."

It's an expensive proposition, and would have resulted in a $17 per month increase for rate payers for the next 20 years just to cover the cost of building the facility.

The cost came on top of a wider concern about space, aging facilities at the City Yards and a zero-waste plan that city staff is currently drafting that could impact what services the city needs from its recycling company and disposal company, Southern California Disposal.

A number of uses, like a public safety storage facility, have been planned for the City Yards, but the recycling center would take up too much space to meet all the needs.

The Exposition Light Rail line, much lauded in City Hall, also comes with the elimination of a maintenance facility on Colorado Avenue, which is proposed to relocate to City Yards.

"The only logical location is coming back to City Yards," Pastucha said. "With the elimination of the transfer station, we need to see how's the best way to make that facility look."

Although it's only a concept at this point, the deck looked stacked against the Allan Co. and its recycling center. The new idea would involve expanding its relationship with the Southern California Disposal company to haul recycling to a facility outside of Santa Monica.

There are benefits to staying in the city, Pastucha acknowledged.

"Being in Santa Monica is a positive for them. They benefit from the fact that there are a lot of recyclers that bring materials to them to cash those in," Pastucha said. "They saw that as valuable."

Allan Co. representatives at the meeting admitted that building a $32 million facility in a down economy was a bad idea, but argued that killing the idea outright would be detrimental to the company and City Hall's goals of producing less waste.

"If you're looking at a zero-waste strategy, eliminating a recycling facility that services 240 residents a day, six days a week is a bad idea," said Adam Holt, manager for the recycling center.

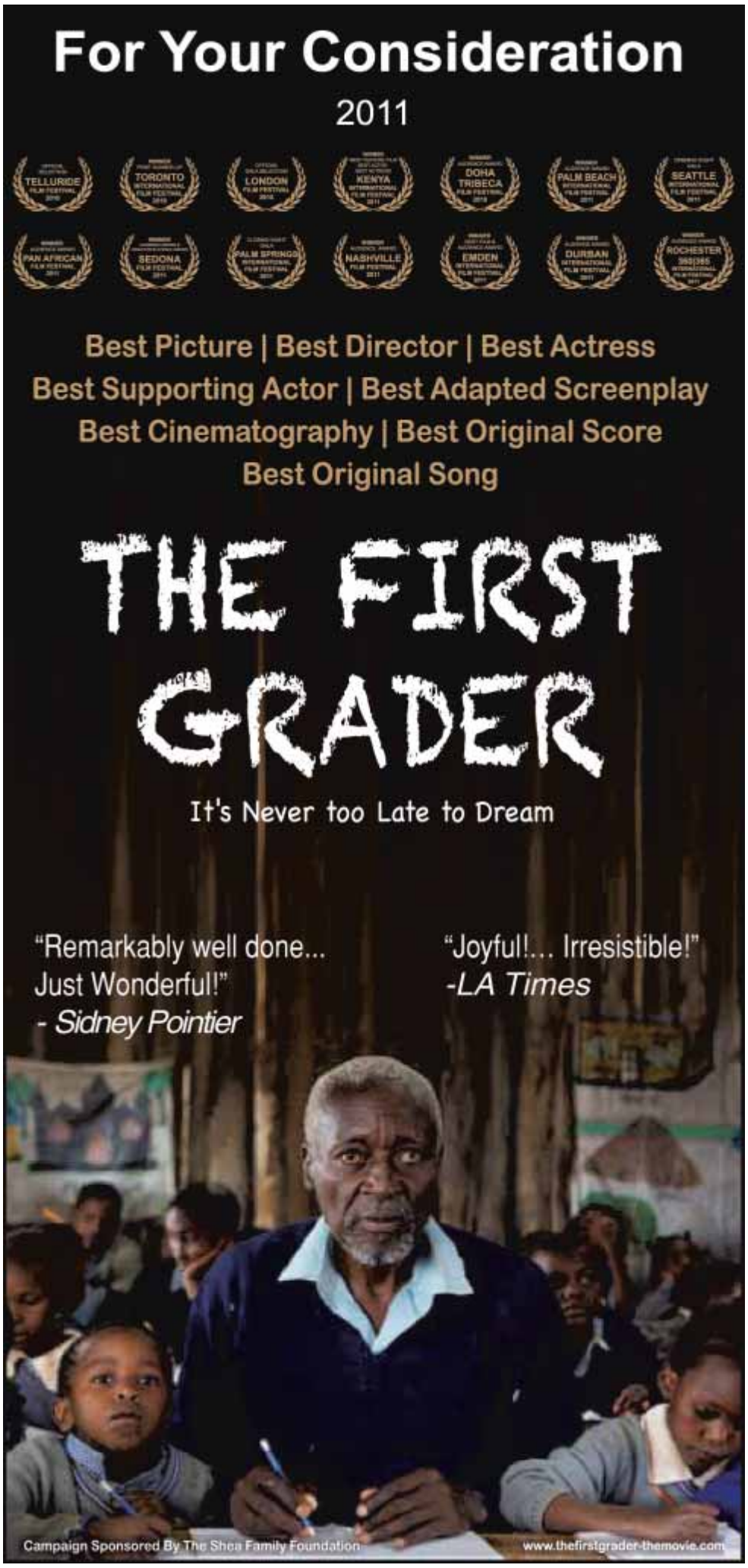
City Councilmember Kevin McKeown warned Pastucha that the proposals would free up a lot of land for reorganizing and incorporating new uses at the site, but the cost to the city had to be considered.

"Is freeing up that much land worth it to us not to have a recycling company here in Santa Monica, the global capital of recycling?" he asked.

The council voted in favor of eliminating the project and allowing city staff to continue negotiations with the Allan Company and SCD to redefine the terms of their agreements.

Whatever happens, residents won't see a change in service, Pastucha said.

ashley@smdp.com







Anonymous donors cover strangers' layaway accounts

BY MARGERY A. BECK
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. The young father stood in line at the Kmart layaway counter, wearing dirty clothes and worn-out boots. With him were three small children.

He asked to pay something on his bill because he knew he wouldn't be able to afford it all before Christmas. Then a mysterious woman stepped up to the counter.

"She told him, 'No, I'm paying for it,'" recalled Edna Deppe, assistant manager at the store in Indianapolis. "He just stood there and looked at her and then looked at me and asked if it was a joke. I told him it wasn't, and that she was going to pay for him. And he just busted out in tears."

At Kmart stores across the country, Santa is getting some help: Anonymous donors are paying off strangers' layaway accounts, buying the Christmas gifts other families couldn't afford, especially toys and children's clothes set aside by impoverished parents.

Before she left the store Tuesday evening, the Indianapolis woman in her mid-40s had paid the layaway orders for as many as 50 people. On the way out, she handed out $50 bills and paid for two carts of toys for a woman in line at the cash register.

"She was doing it in the memory of her husband who had just died, and she said she wasn't going to be able to spend it and wanted to make people happy with it," Deppe said. The woman did not identify herself and only asked people to "remember Ben," an apparent reference to her husband.

Deppe, who said she's worked in retail for 40 years, had never seen anything like it.

"It was like an angel fell out of the sky and appeared in our store," she said.

Most of the donors have done their giving secretly.

Dona Bremser, an Omaha nurse, was at work when a Kmart employee called to tell her that someone had paid off the $70 balance of her layaway account, which held nearly $200 in toys for her 4-year-old son.

"I was speechless," Bremser said. "It made me believe in Christmas again."

Dozens of other customers have received similar calls in Nebraska, Michigan, Iowa, Indiana and Montana.

The benefactors generally ask to help families who are squirreling away items for young children. They often pay a portion of the balance, usually all but a few dollars or cents so the layaway order stays in the store's system.

The phenomenon seems to have begun in Michigan before spreading, Kmart executives said.

"It is honestly being driven by people wanting to do a good deed at this time of the year," said Salima Yala, Kmart's division vice president for layaway.

The good Samaritans seem to be visiting mainly Kmart stores, though a Wal-Mart spokesman said a few of his stores in Joplin, Mo., and Chicago have also seen some layaway accounts paid off.

Kmart representatives say they did nothing to instigate the secret Santas or spread word of the generosity. But it's happening as the company struggles to compete with chains such as Wal-Mart and Target.

Kmart may be the focus of layaway generosity, Yala said, because it is one of the few large discount stores that has offered layaway year-round for about four decades. Under the program, customers can make purchases but let the store hold onto their merchandise as they pay it off slowly over several weeks.

The sad memories of layaways lost prompted at least one good Samaritan to pay off the accounts of five people at an Omaha Kmart, said Karl Graff, the store's assistant manager.

"She told me that when she was younger, her mom used to set up things on layaway at Kmart, but they rarely were able to pay them off because they just didn't have the money for it," Graff said.

He called a woman who had been helped, "and she broke down in tears on the phone with me. She wasn't sure she was going to be able to pay off their layaway and was afraid their kids weren't going to have anything for Christmas."

"You know, 50 bucks may not sound like a lot, but I tell you what, at the right time, it may as well be a million dollars for some people," Graff said.

Graff's store alone has seen about a dozen layaway accounts paid off in the last 10 days, with the donors paying $50 to $250 on each account.

"To be honest, in retail, it's easy to get cynical about the holidays, because you're kind of grinding it out when everybody else is having family time," Graff said. "It's really encouraging to see this side of Christmas again."

Lori Stearnes of Omaha also benefited from the generosity of a stranger who paid all but $58 of her $250 layaway bill for toys for her four youngest grandchildren.

Stearnes said she and her husband live paycheck to paycheck, but she plans to use the money she was saving for the toys to help pay for someone else's layaway.

In Missoula, Mont., a man spent more than $1,200 to pay down the balances of six customers whose layaway orders were about to be returned to a Kmart store's inventory because of late payments.

Store employees reached one beneficiary on her cellphone at Seattle Children's Hospital, where her son was being treated for an undisclosed illness.

"She was yelling at the nurses, 'We're going to have Christmas after all!'" store manager Josine Murrin said.

A Kmart in Plainfield Township, Mich., called Roberta Carter last week to let her know a man had paid all but 40 cents of her $60 layaway.

Carter, a mother of eight from Grand Rapids, Mich., said she cried upon hearing the news. She and her family have been struggling as she seeks a full-time job.

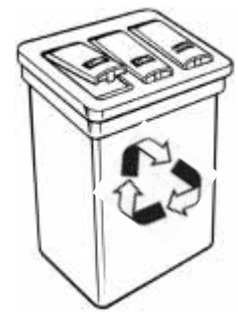
"My kids will have clothes for Christmas," she said.

Angie Torres, a stay-at-home mother of four children under the age of 8, was in the Indianapolis Kmart on Tuesday to make a payment on her layaway bill when she learned the woman next to her was paying off her account.

"I started to cry. I couldn't believe it," said Torres, who doubted she would have been able to pay off the balance. "I was in disbelief. I hugged her and gave her a kiss."

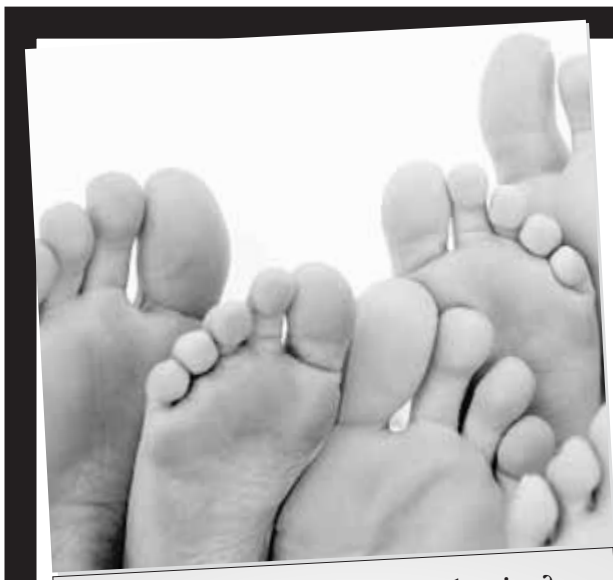
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Highs and Lows of the Criminal Justice System – Drug Offenses

One of my clients recently commented to me that she was very thankful that our criminal justice system afforded her an opportunity to help her kick her nasty drug habit. Her comments got me thinking about how often the criminal justice system is denigrated and maligned by a large majority of the population (and a large majority of those who go through the system) for the inability to rehabilitate and treat offenders in order to prevent a reoccurrence or repeat offense. Despite this widely held sentiment, there is a much better track record of success when it comes to the system's approach to drug offenses. California law makers and prosecutorial agencies decided long ago that it is far better to treat drug offenders than to punish them. This is a precarious and often delicate relationship because while no one wants to condone drug use, virtually everyone realizes that harsh punishments more often than not simply breed recidivism. This article will focus on two ways to combat drug use through the criminal justice system: DEJ and Prop 36.

California's drug laws maintain a close relationship with the electorate of California. That is to say that as popular feelings and opinions on drugs softens, so too do the laws criminalizing drug possession. For example, California Penal Code Section 1000, more commonly known as DEJ (Deferred Entry of Judgment), and the passage of Proposition 36, reflects California citizens' collective sentiment that drug offenders should be given every available option to seek treatment and stop using drugs before a court imposes jail or prison.

DEJ is covered by Penal Code Section 1000 and applies to cases where a person is caught in possession of a controlled substance, smoking device, or even alcohol. The basic principle behind DEJ is that is an offender in possession of a controlled substance (i.e. cocaine, methamphetamine, ecstasy or a pipe, etc.) may enter a guilty plea, stay clean, take drug treatment classes, and then have the guilty plea withdrawn and the case dismissed after an 18 month period. Note that even if the underlying offense is dismissed some employers and licensing agencies may still pursue administrative action. DEJ only applies to cases where the controlled substance is for personal use (meaning not a sales case) and where the offender is first determined to be eligible. Moreover, if an offender violates DEJ and defies a court's orders the judge may enter the guilty plea and sentence the offender accordingly.

In order to be found eligible for the DEJ program it must be demonstrated that: 1) There are no prior convictions for any offense involving controlled substances, 2) The offense charged did not involve a crime of violence or threatened violence, 3) There is no evidence of a violation relating to narcotics or restricted dangerous drugs, 4) The defendant's has not previously violated probation or parole, 5) The defendant has not been placed on DEJ within 5 years of the offense date, and 6) The defendant has no prior felony conviction within five years. If all of these requirements are satisfied, then a person is eligible for DEJ and has the opportunity to earn a dismissal.

Similar to DEJ, Proposition 36 was passed by California voters in November 2000 as a legislative means to allow drug offenders to receive probation with treatment rather than incarceration. For practical purposes, Prop. 36 is a secondary option to get addicts and users treatment when DEJ and/or other programs have failed to get people the help that they so desperately need. A user is ineligable for probation under Prop. 36 if they have a prior felony "strike" within five years, if in the same case they have been convicted of a non-drug related felony or misdemeanor, if they were in possession of a firearm while under the influence, and/or if they have twice failed Prop. 36 or continuously refuses treatment.

A person sentenced to Prop. 36 will complete drug treatment classes, counseling, and whatever other courses are deemed appropriate by the court. The offender will also submit to urine or blood testing as well. Upon successful completion of the Prop. 36 program the case is not automatically dismissed as is the case with DEJ; however, one can petition to the court to dismiss the action with a showing that they have successfully completed the program and gone above and beyond what was required.

The DEJ and Prop. 36 programs can work wonders for drug users and offenders. It is often quite refreshing to see someone enter the program as a downtrodden, distraught, and disheveled drug addict and exit the program clean, sober, and enlightened about the many dangers of drug use. I will never forget the look of happiness, joy and relief that filled my client's face when the judge congratulated her on her progress and then dismissed her case. There was applause from the small audience in the courtroom, and my client felt as though she had accomplished something positive rather than felt the shame of having committed a crime. It was refreshing to both of us that the criminal justice system actually helped and truly served the interests of justice.

If you or anyone you know has been arrested for a drug related offense or any other misdemeanor or felony offense contact criminal defense attorney and former prosecutor Jacob Glucksman through The Legal Grind immediately to preserve your rights!

THIS COLUMN WAS PREPARED BY JACOB GLUCKSMAN, A CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY. HE CAN BE REACHED THROUGH THE LEGAL GRIND AT 310-452-8160 OR REFERRAL@LEGALGRIND.COM

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5:00–6:00pm	(1st & 3rd Monday/Month) Tenant Rights, Auto accidents, Products Liability, Insurance & Business Disputes, Personal Injury & Small Claims with Attorney Mark Palmer
TUESDAY	
9:00-12:00noon	Patent, Trademark and Copyright Law with Attorney Marcus Risso (By appointment only)
1:00-4:00pm	Employment Law: Wrongful Termination, Sexual harassment, Disability Accommodation, Leave Law, Discrimination, Retaliation, Whistle Blower, Wage & Hour disputes with Attorney Sara Eliot
4:00-5:00pm	(1st and 3rd Tuesday/Month): Civil and Criminal Law with former Deputy District Attorney Hart Levin. Hart has expertise in all criminal and traffic issues, and he also has extensive knowledge in many areas of civil law including business disputes, fraud, personal injury and employment law.
WEDNESDAY	
5:00-6:30pm	Divorce and Legal Separation; Domestic Partnerships; Child Custody, Support and Visitation; Spousal Support; Prenuptial Agreements & Mediation with Family Law Specialist Attorney Elizabeth Fields at the Novel Café located at 2901 Ocean Park Blvd. in Santa Monica, 90405.
THURSDAY	
12:00-2:00pm	Immigration and Family Law with Attorney Galorah Keshavarz (By appointment Only)
5:00-6:00pm	Chapter 7 and 13 Bankruptcy Filings, Debt Negotiation and Personal Injury cases with Attorneys Paul Mankin and/or Jeff Hughes (By appointment Only)
4:00–5:00pm	(2nd & 4th Thursday/Month) Landlord/Tenant Rights & Obligations, Small Claims, Restraining Orders/Domestic Violence & General Practice Law with Attorney John Wittig
FRIDAY	
4:00-5:00pm	(2nd & 4th Friday/Month) Criminal, DMV & Traffic Law: Felony and Misdemeanor Crimes with former Deputy D.A. and Attorney Jacob Glucksman
4:00–5:00pm	(2nd & 4th Friday/Month) Small business start-ups, Corporations, Contracts, Non-Profit Organizations, Green Law, Employment Law, Green and Sustainable Business Practices with Attorney Becki Kammerling.
SATURDAY	
10am-12noon	(1st, 3rd, & 5th Saturday/Month) Estate Planning, Trust & Will Contests Probate, Elder Law, Business Litigation, Formation & Dissolution, Contracts, HOA & Personal Injury with Attorney Richard Ruman
10am-11:30am	(2nd & 4th Sat/Month) Employment/Labor Law including wrongful termination, sexual harassment, wage & hour claims, severance issues; and Family Law/Divorce including support, custody, & prenuptial agreements with Attorney Todd Smilovitz.

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States are unlikely to heed NTSB call for cellphone ban

BY JIM SALTER
Associated Press

ST. LOUIS Lawmakers in Missouri had the chance, after two buses packed with high school band members slammed into a freeway wreck caused by a teenager who was sending a flurry of text messages, to impose tougher limits on driver cellphone use. It got filibustered.

Federal transportation officials are citing that accident in pushing for states to enact an all-out ban on cellphone use by drivers, restricting the use even of hands-free devices. But spurring lawmakers to take up the cause may be difficult. Skeptical lawmakers give the proposal little chance at succeeding in state capitols around the country, and many aren't planning on introducing ban bills.

The reason? While acknowledging growing safety concerns, lawmakers are wary of inconveniencing commuters and say a complete ban would be one of the deepest government intrusions yet into the daily lives of motorists who have woven their phones tightly into their daily routines. Others are worried a ban would be unenforceable. And the cellphone legislation in most states already took years to get approved.

"It's a popular thing to pass another law," said Bill Stouffer, a Missouri Republican and chairman of the state's Senate Transportation Committee. "But anything that takes your eyes off the road is just as deadly as texting or talking on the cellphone. Where does it end? Why not ban map reading or eating while driving?"

The centerpiece of the NTSB's proposal was an August 2010 wreck southwest of St. Louis in which a pickup truck slammed into the back of a semi cab that had slowed for road construction, and the buses then crashed into the wreckage. The pickup driver, Daniel Schatz, 19, and a bus passenger, Jessica Brinker, 15, died. Thirty-eight people, mostly students, were hurt.

Investigators said Schatz had sent and received 11 texts in 11 minutes just before the accident.

The NTSB's recommendation far exceeds the patchwork, and largely unenforced, prohibitions many states now have. Thirty-five states and the District of Columbia ban texting while driving, while nine states and Washington, D.C., bar handheld cellphone use. Thirty states ban all cellphone use for beginning drivers. No state bans the use of hands-free devices for all drivers.

In Idaho — which has historically resisted federal mandates and is one of seven states without any sort of regulation on the use of cellphones by drivers — proposed bans have been rejected the last two legislative sessions after lawmakers questioned their enforceability and the need for new government dictates. South Dakota has a broader law discouraging "distracted driving" but lawmakers have steadily opposed specific bans on electronic devices.

"I was listening to all this heart-wrenching testimony against texting behind the wheel, and I got to thinking about all the calls I'd gone off to where someone was hurt in a car accident," said South Dakota Republican Rep. Betty Olson, an emergency medical technician from Prairie City. "In just about all of them, they were distracted, so what they were doing was already against the law," Olson said. "They wouldn't be paying any more attention to a law banning texting."

Driver inconvenience is also among the factors state lawmakers cite in their opposition. Others note that cellphones have benefits. In some parts of rural South Dakota, Olson said, a driver's cellphone can be "a life saver."

With enforcement of cellphone and texting laws already difficult, Stouffer said police will have an even harder time if hands-free devices are banned.

"How's an officer going to know if I'm singing my favorite song with the radio or talking on the phone?" he asked.

Even in Missouri, where the bus crash occurred, the lawmaker who tried to broaden the texting ban afterward believes a full-blown cellphone prohibition goes too far.

The state has barred drivers 21 and younger from texting while driving since 2009. Several lawmakers proposed legislation the next year to extend that to all drivers but failed, partly because of concerns over whether it could be enforced. After the bus accident, a similar attempt to broaden the ban was defeated by a filibuster. Democratic Sen. Ryan McKenna said he'll likely try again for the texting ban, but not for the overall ban.

In California, which bars drivers from talking on handheld phones but permits hands-free devices, state Sen. Joe Simitian doubts states would oblige the NTSB with an absolute ban.

"I think the NTSB recommendations are dramatic and I think they are helpful in highlighting the risks associated with distracted driving," Simitian said. "As a practical matter, an outright ban is a nonstarter" he said, noting it took five years to pass the state's existing law, and citing expected opposition to an all-out prohibition.

In recent years, phone features have multiplied and so have the distractions. For commuters, texts, pop-song ringtones, e-mails and even video calls are but a few of the potential distractions competing for their attention behind the wheel.

As phone features multiply, so have accidents blamed on texting and wireless calling. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said there were 3,092 fatalities blamed on distracted driving last year, 408 of which involved cellphone use. It was the first year the administration broke out cellphones as a separate cause of distraction.

The wireless industry initially fought state legislation against cellphone use while driving, but has in recent years mainly emphasized personal responsibility and driver education over legislation. After the NTSB's recommendation Tuesday, industry trade group CITA-The Wireless Association repeated its support for bans on texting while driving but added that larger prohibitions should be left to the states.

Even lawmakers who are willing to push for a complete ban concede that passage won't come easy.

Alaska is considering such a move, said Anne Teigen, senior policy specialist for the National Conference of State Legislatures. That ban has supporters among some police agencies. In Minnesota, which passed a texting ban three years ago, Democratic state Rep. Frank Hornstein said that based on the NTSB recommendation, he will introduce legislation aimed at banning cellphone use by drivers.

Hornstein and Alaska state Rep. Max Gruenberg, a Democrat from Anchorage, noted that battles over road safety laws — such as tougher seat belt requirements or lower blood-alcohol content limits in drunk driving cases — often take years to pass. Hornstein also acknowledged that some residents would oppose a cellphone ban, believing they can police themselves.

"A lot of people will say, 'I can do this fine, I'm a good driver. It's other people,'" Hornstein said.

Texas drought takes cow numbers down by 600K

BY BETSY BLANEY
Associated Press

LUBBOCK, Texas The worst drought in Texas' history has led to the largest-ever one-year decline in the leading cattle-state's cow herd, raising the likelihood of increased beef prices as the number of animals decline and demand remains strong.

Since Jan. 1, the number of cows in Texas has dropped by about 600,000, a 12 percent decline from the roughly 5 million cows the state had at the beginning of the year, said David Anderson, who monitors beef markets for the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. That's likely the largest drop in the number of cows any state has ever seen, though Texas had a larger percentage decline from 1934 to 1935, when ranchers were reeling from the Great Depression and Dust Bowl, Anderson said.

Anderson said many cows were moved "somewhere there's grass," but lots of others were slaughtered. He said that in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Louisiana and Arkansas, about 200,000 more cattle were slaughtered this year, a 20 percent increase over last year.

That extra supply could help meet increased demand from China and other countries, but the loss of cows likely will mean fewer cattle in future years.

"Consumers are going to pay more because we're going to have less beef," Anderson said. "Fewer cows, calves, less beef production and increasing exports."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that beef prices will increase up to 5.5 in 2012, in part because the number of cattle has declined. That follows a 9 percent increase in beef prices in the past year.

Oklahoma, the nation's second-largest cattle producer, also saw about a 12 percent drop in cows, Oklahoma State University agriculture economist Derrell Peel said.

Anderson said beef production nationally will be down 4 percent next year.

In Texas, the problem is primarily due to the worst single-year drought in the state's history. From January through November the state got just 46 percent of its normal rainfall of about 26 inches.

The drought was the result of a La Nina weather pattern, which brings drier than normal conditions to the southwestern states. Forecasters have said La Nina is back, meaning another dry year for Texas, Oklahoma and other nearby states.

The lack of rain coupled with blistering summer heat caused pastures to wither, leaving rancher with the choice of buying feed for the cattle or selling them.

Betsy Ross, a 75-year-old rancher from the small central Texas community of Granger, said she sold all but 80 of the 225 grass-fed animals she had in January. With feed costs up 40 percent and her pasture parched, Ross said she didn't have any other option.

"It's not a profitable year, heavens no," she said. "If you can't keep them on grass when they're grass fed you're not going to make any money."

About 200 miles north in Sulphur Springs, Texas, part-time rancher Dwyatt Bell said producers in his part of the state sold off up to half their herds. Bell said high prices for cattle have helped offset increases expenses, but many ranchers still are struggling to stay afloat.

"It's been a rough year," he said.

Across Texas, the drought has caused an estimated $5.2 billion in losses to farmers and livestock producers, and that figure is expected to rise

Nationally, the number of cows has dropped by an estimated 617,000 this year, a 2 percent decline from the 30.9 million animals on Jan. 1. That number would be larger, but states in northern plains such as North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska, increased their cow herd.

Anderson said it's unclear whether high beef prices would hurt U.S. sales or limit exports. The U.S. is the world third largest consumer of beef per capita at 85.5 pounds per year. Uruguay is first at 137 pounds per capita.

"Exports have been the strongest part of beef demand all year and they're expected to remain so but higher prices should constrain their growth," he said.

City of Santa Monica

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
SANTA MONICA HOUSING AUTHORITY
2012 DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN
AND ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN**

The City Council/Housing Authority Board of the City of Santa Monica will hold a public hearing to receive comment and adopt the 2012 Annual Plan and proposed revisions to the Santa Monica Housing Authority's Administrative Plan. The Annual Plan outlines the Housing Authority's policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. The Administrative Plan establishes oversight policies to operate the Santa Monica Housing Authority's (HA) housing rental subsidy programs in a manner consistent with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. The draft Annual Plan and Administrative Plan are now posted for review during the 45-day public comment period ending January 9, 2012. Copies are available to view at the Santa Monica Housing Authority Office at 1901 Main Street, 1st Floor, Suite A, Santa Monica, CA 90405 and on the web at: http://www.smgov.net/%09Departments/HED/Housing_and_Redevelopment/Housing/Draft_Administrative_and_Annual_Plan_2012.aspx. Please send your written comments to the above address, Attn: Annual Plan, by January 9, 2012.

**The Public Hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, March 20, 2012
At 6:30p.m. in the City Council Chambers
located at 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica**

The Council Chambers are wheelchair accessible. If you have any special disability-related needs/accommodations, please contact the Housing Authority at (310) 458-8743.

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AP Analysis: Iran's fortunes in post-US Iraq clouded

BY ROBERT H. REID
Associated Press

CAIRO The U.S. military's departure from Iraq opens the door to expanded Iranian influence in the Middle East, though that door could close fast if Iran's closest Arab ally Bashar Assad falls from power in Syria.

That's among the uncertainties looming over the Middle East in the wake of President Barack Obama's decision to remove all U.S. troops by the end of this month, fulfilling a campaign promise to end the unpopular war and abandoning efforts to negotiate an extension of the year-end deadline agreed to by the Bush administration in 2008.

At first glance, that would make Iran the big winner, especially if the U.S. move heralds a tectonic shift of power in the strategic Persian Gulf region as the United States shifts its military focus to East Asia and the Pacific. But the tumult from the Arab Spring, on top of the end of the nearly nine-year Iraq War, has made the rivalry between Iran and the U.S.'s Arab allies even trickier and predictions more cloudy.

No longer will tens of thousands of American troops be stationed along Iran's western border. They are leaving behind an Iraqi government dominated by Shiite Muslim parties beholden to the Iranians, who sheltered them for years when Saddam Hussein and his Sunni-dominated Baath regime were in power.

With the American military presence reduced to a few hundred members of an embassy-based liaison mission, Iran is likely to step up infiltration of Iraq's intelligence services — the key to manipulating Iraq's internal politics — and expand its links to both Shiite and Kurdish politicians, to the alarm of the country's Sunni minority.

As the second most populous country in the Gulf, with some of the world's largest proven petroleum reserves, an avowedly pro-Iranian Iraq would be a game changer in the power struggle between Iran and the U.S.-backed, conservative Gulf states led by Saudi Arabia.

Iran already wielded considerable influence in Iraq even when U.S. troop strength approached 170,000. The U.S.-led invasion of 2003 produced a strange alliance between the Americans and religiously based Shiite parties tied simultaneously to both Washington and Tehran. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite who had been cool toward Iran, has moved closer to the pro-Iranian groups since a political crisis in 2010 nearly cost him his job.

With the American military gone, Tehran's prospects for bolstering those ties in Iraq look bright.

At closer examination, however, the future appears less certain. Much will depend on how the key players — including the United States — maneuver diplomatically through the new environment created by the end of the Iraq War.

"The United States must succeed in limiting and countering Iranian influence in Iraq and in creating Iraqi forces that can defend the country," wrote analyst Anthony Cordesman of the Center for International and Strategic Studies. "The United States must also restructure a mix of forward-deployed U.S. forces and ties to regional powers that can contain every aspect of Iran's military forces and political ambitions."

Iran's ability to manipulate a post-America Iraq is by no means unlimited, in part due to a flowering of Iraqi nationalism which survived the horrific bloodshed of the Sunni-Shiite sectarian war.

Many ordinary Iraqi Shiites harbor bitter memories of the 1980-1988 war with Iran, when young Shiite soldiers bore the brunt of the casualties. Among the Sunni minority, hostility to Iran runs even deeper, and much of the talk of Iranian domination stems from overblown comments by Sunni politicians seeking to discredit their Shiite political rivals.

"The Iraqis have no desire to be a client state of their Persian neighbor," said Doug Ollivant, senior fellow at the New America Foundation and former director for Iraq on the National Security Council in both the Bush and Obama administrations. "This is a real threat ... but the threat is overstated."

An Iranian strategic victory in Iraq could also be checkmated by a regime change in Syria, where Assad is facing mounting resistance to his family's autocratic 40-year rule.

The fall of the Assad regime would be the biggest blow to Iranian foreign policy since the Iran-Iraq war and would render Tehran's international isolation nearly complete.

In strategic terms, Syria is an even bigger prize for Iran.

Syria is Iran's bridge into Lebanon, a near-client state of Damascus where the militant Shiite movement Hezbollah has flourished for decades with Iranian support, channeled through Syria. Iran would also lose its conduit to the radical Palestinian group Hamas, which is headquartered in Damascus.

With the stakes high and so much still shrouded in uncertainty, the major players in the region are scurrying to retool their political strategies.

Fearing that Iraq will eventually fall into Tehran's orbit, Saudi Arabia and its Gulf partners have focused on Syria in hopes of containing Iran's influence. The key to that is to cut the links between Iran and Syria, and to accomplish that, the Gulf states have been at the forefront of moves by the Arab League to impose sanctions against Syria over the killing of protesters.

At the same time, the Saudis are pushing their Gulf partners into bolstering support for Jordan, which also borders Iraq, Egypt and Morocco in hopes of maintaining a strong bloc of Sunni Arab states — some of whom have been shaken by the Arab Spring — in the face of a resurgent Iran.

In the end, all these scenarios will be influenced by what happens in Iraq now that the American troops have gone.

"Tehran will likely react to that power shift by trying to build more influence in Iraq," wrote analyst Paul Salem of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "However, Iranian influence over tomorrow's Baghdad is not a foregone conclusion. Iraqi and Arab nationalism run deep in Iraq, and Iran might find it as hard to dominate Iraq as the Americans did."



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Veteran consumer advocate takes on big-time sports

BY DAVID CRARY
AP National Writer

NEW YORK On the wall of Ralph Nader's office hangs a color portrait of baseball legend Lou Gehrig, an old-fashioned hero who seems to rebuke so much of today's sports world — the sex-abuse and drug scandals, labor strife, rampant commercialization.

Gehrig, who set a standard for durability while playing 2,130 consecutive games over 15 seasons, is the only sports idol acknowledged by Nader, himself a kind of "Iron Horse" in his chosen playing field, America's consumer movement.

Since 1965, when he lit into the U.S. auto industry for marketing cars "unsafe at any speed," Nader has taken on issues ranging from deceptive advertising to water pollution to nursing home fraud. Now, at 77, he's channeling an increasing share of his attention and anger to problems across the gamut of U.S. sports — the major pro leagues, the NCAA, even youth sports.

"It's spinning out of control," says Nader. "It's profit at all costs, win at all costs, and often it's damaging the health of the athletes."

Throughout his career, which has been punctuated by four presidential campaigns, Nader has helped form scores of public interest groups, including one called the League of Fans that advocates for sweeping changes in the sports world.

Items on its agenda include ridding youth sports of tyrannical coaches, discouraging taxpayer funding of stadiums, promoting broader participation in sports at schools and colleges, and outlawing fighting in pro hockey. Many of its concerns are being addressed in a 12-part manifesto that's on the verge of completion.

In a sense, League of Fans is a misnomer. Nader envisions it as a think tank, watchdog and advocacy group, rather than a membership-based organization.

"Fans are hard to band together," says Nader, who gave up on a fan-based initiative in the late 1970s when he could entice only about 1,100 people to pay dues.

Fans are better-informed about sports than voters are about public policy, and can become outraged by various slights, Nader said. "But their anger is very abbreviated when it's kickoff time or the umpire says 'Play ball.'"

In a phone interview, Nader didn't sound overly optimistic about forcing the major pro leagues to be less exploitive.

"They have anti-trust exemptions — they can engage in collusion," he said. "They can wine and dine politicians, and give them special seats in their suites, and in the meantime it's costing a family $300 or $400 to go to a game."

Professor Andrew Zimbalist, a sports economics expert at Smith College, questioned whether a Nader-inspired consumer movement could make much headway in influencing the major leagues' policies or spreading the concept of community-owned teams.

"Fans love their sports as they are," he wrote in an e-mail. "Owners are too well situated politically."

At the college level, Nader has been among the legion of critics of the football Bowl Championship Series system, and believes public pressure could force changes before long to increase fairness and give more teams a chance to gain spots in the most lucrative bowl games.

He's also joined a chorus of calls for the NCCA to adjust its policies on athletic scholarships, so athletes who leave their teams for injury or other reasons could be sure of remaining on scholarship as long as their academic work is adequate.

"The NCCA keeps saying, 'We're on it' and it keeps getting worse," Nader said. "The players have become gladiators in the groves of higher education instead of being students and playing athletics on the side."

Nader had expressed support for the Drake Group, a coalition of college faculty and staff seeking to defend academic integrity as the college sports industry grows ever more powerful. The group's president-elect, University of New Haven management professor Allen Sack, has suggested that — in the absence of major reforms — the NCAA might face efforts by Congress to end its tax-exempt status. Sack, who played football at Notre Dame, is a fan of Nader.

"It always helps to have someone out there shouting in the wind, getting a lot of grief for saying things that make people feel uncomfortable," Sack said. "They say politics is the art of the possible, and Ralph doesn't seem bothered by that adage."

Nader believes the League of Fans can make progress with at least some of its agenda by linking up with specific sports and fitness initiatives unfolding across the country.

"The phys-ed and anti-obesity movement can get much stronger — it's got to be more insistent about getting more people into participatory sports at all ages," he said. "What pro sports has done is glued millions of people to the TV screen while their weight increases and their cardiovascular system deteriorates."

He also rails against the expansion of high-powered, high-pressure youth leagues in which some boys and girls now practice and play their chosen sport virtually year-round.

Nader isn't an ardent hockey fan, but he was dismayed by the recent series of New York Times articles about Derek Boogaard, the National Hockey League enforcer who died in May of an accidental overdose of alcohol and oxycodone. The Times reported that Boogaard, who'd been groomed since adolescence to be the fist-fighter for his teams, suffered from chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a degenerative brain ailment related to Alzheimer's disease that is caused by repeated blows to the head.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman says there's not enough data yet to draw conclusions about the brain ailment, but Nader says the league shouldn't wait to ban fighting.

The man recruited by Nader as sports policy director of the League of Fans is Ken Reed, a former sports marketing consultant who became disenchanted with tasks such as helping owners sell stadium suites and club seats.

Reed notes that the United States, unlike many other nations, has no sports ministry or other government agency that helps set sports policy.

"Our sports policy basically developed by the sports powers, the owners, and those policies filter down through college, high school, the youth level," he said.

Encouraging activism among fans may be difficult, Reed acknowledges.

"We need to increase awareness and even when we do, there's a lot of pushback," says Reed. "Fans say, 'Don't bring reality into my sports life.'"

Nadar's favorite National Football League team is the Green Bay Packers — as much for the fact that they are community-owned as for their current success on the field. But his list of sports heroes is short.

"The one sports figure who really had an influence on me is Lou Gehrig," Nader said. "He represented stamina, he represented working through adversity. He was a very decent guy."



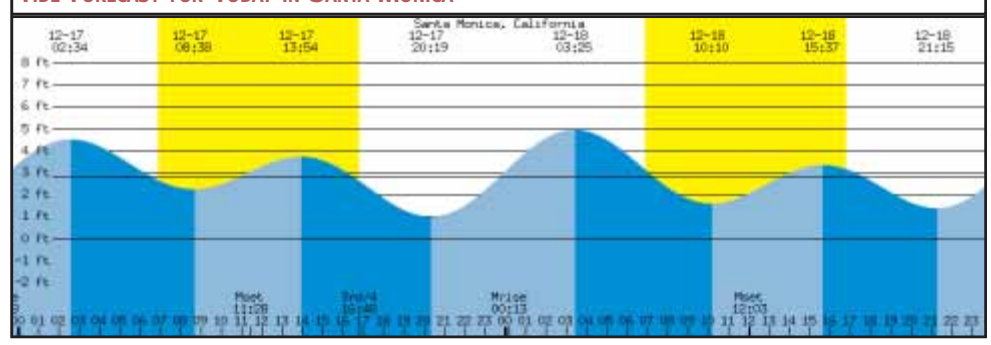
SURF REPORT

Surf Conditions **Water Temp:** 61°

Swell Forecast
Some light NW swell is due, about waist to chest for west facing breaks.

Long Range Synopsis
Looking at head high surf at 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 14, 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 -- 8
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 27 / 9
- 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, Grousbeck 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.	A	B
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth.	D	A
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.	B	B
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth.	A+	D
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private).	A+	A+
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth.	B	F
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach.	F	F
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth.	A+	F
Solstice Canyon at Don Blocker County Beach.	F	A+
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth.	A+	D
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd..	A+	F
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence.	A	A+
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily.	F	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+	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.	B	F
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+	A

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+	F
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua).	B	F
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain.	A+	F
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain.	A+	F
Santa Monica Municipal Pier.	F	B
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain.	F	F
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms).	A+	B
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain.	A	F
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain.	A	F
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+	B
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower.	A	D
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).	B	A
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain.	A+	A
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant.	A+	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain.	A+	F

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.

MOVIE TIMES

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

Saturday, Dec. 17, 2011

Breakfast at Tiffany's (NR) 1hr 55min
Rhubarb (NR) 1hr 34min
Orangey the Cat double feature
7:30pm

Sunday, Dec. 18, 2011

Up (PG) 1hr 36min
Family Matinee with Ed Asner in person
2:00pm

Y Tu Mama Tabien (NR) 1hr 46min
Children of Men (R) 1hr 49min
Emmanuel Lubezki and Alfonso Cuaron double feature
7:30pm

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

Arthur Christmas 3D (PG) 1hr 37min
2:30pm, 7:40pm

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) 1hr 27min
11:30am, 2:00pm, 4:30pm, 7:00pm, 9:25pm

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

Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (PG-13) 2hrs 08min
12:30pm, 3:45pm, 7:00pm, 10:15pm

Arthur Christmas (PG) 1hr 37min
11:50am, 5:05pm, 10:15pm

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

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) 1hr 27min
10:00am, 11:00am, 12:20pm, 1:30pm, 2:40pm, 4:05pm, 5:00pm, 6:30pm, 7:20pm, 9:00pm, 9:45pm

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, 11:15pm

Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (PG-13) 2hrs 08min
10:20am, 11:00am, 1:30pm, 2:00pm, 4:40pm, 5:15pm, 7:50pm, 8:30pm, 11:00pm, 11:30pm

Muppets (PG) 1hr 38min
11:10am, 2:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:45pm, 10:20pm

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

Cook County (NR) 1hr 33min
1:00pm, 3:20pm, 5:40pm, 8:00pm, 10:15pm

Margin Call (R) 1hr 49min
5:55pm

Crazy Wisdom: The Life and Times of Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche (NR) 1hr 29min
3:45pm

Descendants (R) 1hr 55min
1:20pm, 4:10pm, 7:00pm, 9:45pm

Melancholia (R) 2hrs 10min
12:45pm, 8:30pm

Dangerous Method (R) 1hr 39min
1:50pm, 4:30pm, 7:20pm, 9:50pm

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

Hugo 3D (PG) 2hrs 07min
11:05am, 2:05pm, 5:05pm, 8:10pm, 11:00pm

New Year's Eve (PG-13) 1hr 57min
11:00am, 1:50pm, 4:45pm, 7:40pm, 10:35pm

Sitter (R) 1hr 40min
12:45pm, 3:15pm, 5:45pm, 8:15pm, 10:40pm

Young Adult (R) 1hr 34min
11:10am, 1:40pm, 4:15pm, 7:00pm, 7:45pm, 9:45pm, 10:30pm

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

Happy Feet 2 (PG) 1hr 45min
11:30am, 2:20pm, 5:00pm

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



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.

Run some holiday errands tonight, Leo

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ You might feel as if you are left holding the bag. How much are you setting yourself up? Evaluate this issue as you try to move past an emotional matter. Be caring, and you'll gain greater results. Tonight: Could go quite late.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ Get into weekend mode. You could be delighted by what comes up for you if you relax. A romance could feel a bit awkward in the morning. By the afternoon, whether chatting over a meal or shopping playing Santa's elves together, you feel connected. Tonight: Add that extra touch.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Stay close to home. You might decide at the last minute to throw a tree-decorating party. Whatever you do, keep your priorities in mind. Tonight: Add some Christmas music or go caroling.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ You might be the one who hangs the mistletoe, not dreaming you could be caught smooching under it. Someone you care about might be acting like Scrooge this year. Your call helps this person lighten up. Tonight: Share eggnog with friends.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ You offer much more than you are aware of. Just because someone is strutting his or her stuff like you is no reason to become insecure. A caring gesture toward a key person melts barriers. Listen to news openly. Tonight: Run some holiday errands.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ You could be overwhelming to someone you live with or within your family. You might find it hard to imagine that this person is so vulnerable. Make an effort to reveal more of your gentleness. Tonight: A simple gift expressing your affection could mean more than a big present.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ Take your time, especially in the a.m. You could have a tendency to take others' statements personally. They could sense an attitude from you. Let go and relax a little more. You also might need to be less defensive. Tonight: Quiet works.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Get together with friends and/or family for a fun few days. You cannot believe how others also seem to be in the mood for holiday fun. A female friend or loved one appreciates your invitation. Tonight: Where the action is.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ You might want to rethink a decision involving a respected family member, or maybe a boss. Being just a little more understanding and less judgmental might help. You have your own perspective about how different situations should look. Tonight: Doing what you must, or should.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★★ Try to break free from the traditional roles you often lock yourself into. Perhaps you long to approach a situation differently. Why not? You will never know what could happen until you take another path. Tonight: Let your spirit soar. Great music counts.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Listen to the drum beats, and you will be OK. Sometimes a partner or close friend might hesitate. Let it be known that you do want to know how he or she feels and where he or she is coming from. You could see a fast change of attitude. Tonight: Follow another's lead.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ You might want to defer to a partner or friend one more time. Though there could be a clash between you and this person, is it all that important? Only you can answer that question. Tonight: Just not alone.

Happy birthday

This year you open up to many different options professionally. On some level, this stretch could carry some discomfort at first. Complete issues and situations before jumping into any new ones. You could be a bit self-indulgent. If this issue is key, try to use a little more self-discipline. If you are single, someone could be drawn to your image more than to the real you. Be aware of what motivates others. If you are attached, the two of you could launch your own business. VIRGO can be judgmental.

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

Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



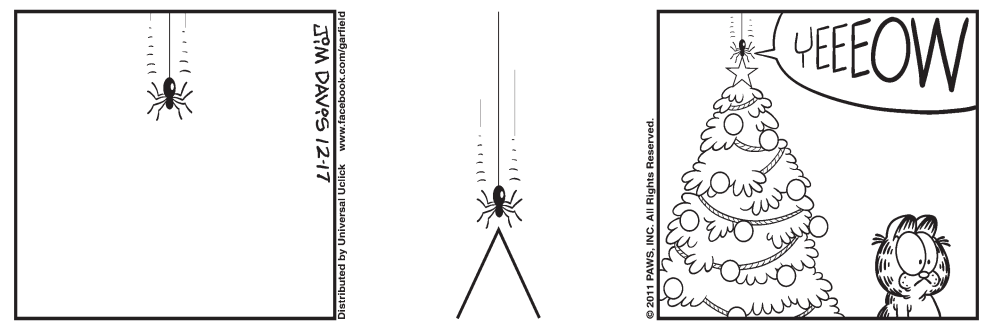
Strange Brew
By John Deering



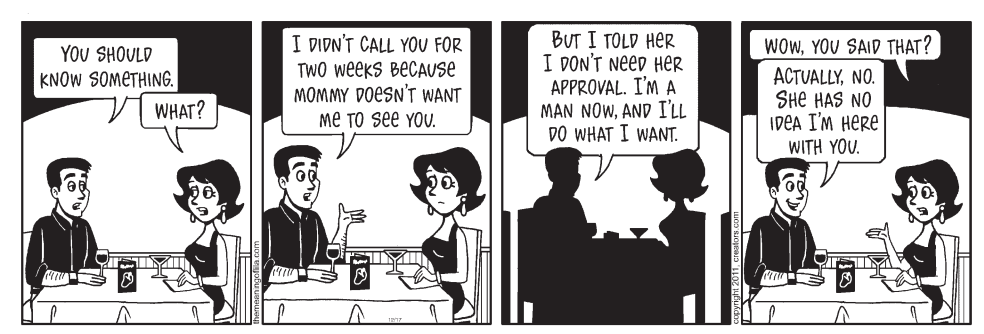
Dogs of C-Kennel
By Mick and Mason Mastroianni



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 ★★★★

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

King Features Syndicate

GETTING STARTED

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Feels for a switch
7 "Lights out" tune
11 Bring back
12 Dismounted
13 Draw out
14 Food in a shell
15 Insipid
16 Like some cigars
17 Alimony payers
18 Hair ointment
19 Take to the sky
21 Like '60s fashion
22 Cash cache, often
25 Spoil
26 To boot
27 Veneer patterns
29 Wine buy
33 Goblet parts
34 More confident
35 "The King and I" setting
36 Mississippi port
37 Part of A.D.
38 Soon
39 Young girl
40 Fiona, for one

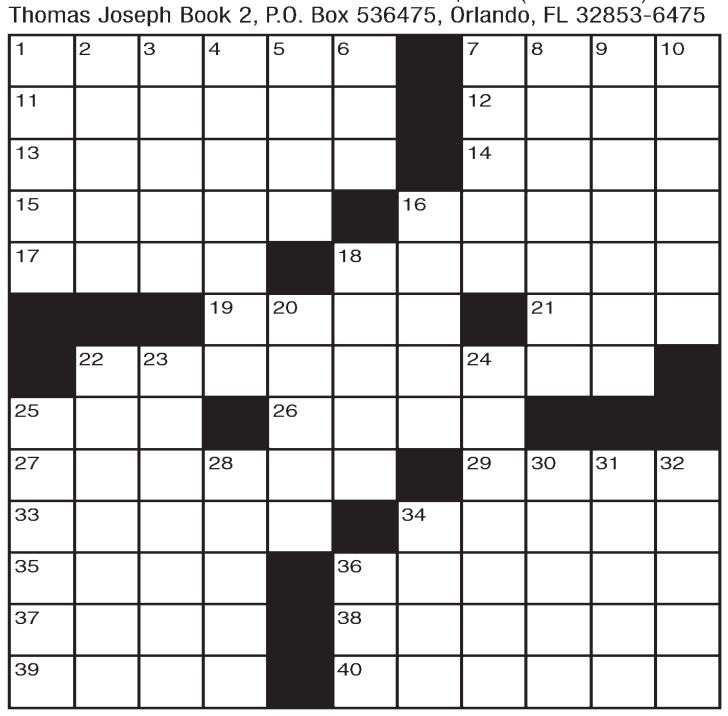
DOWN

1 Loon's cousin
2 Take it easy
3 Like lambs
4 "Three Musicians" artist
5 Wicked
6 Harden
7 Ryan's daughter
8 Mobile home?
9 Bullfighter with a lance
10 High
16 Centers
18 Sandbox toys
20 Authorizes
22 Tijuana bar
23 Site of Joan of Arc's victory
24 Funny
25 Prayer book
28 Bullets and such
30 Came up
31 Sides in an eternal battle
32 Stoltz and Roberts
34 Carol
36 Bookjacket item

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

Yesterday's answer

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12-17

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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.

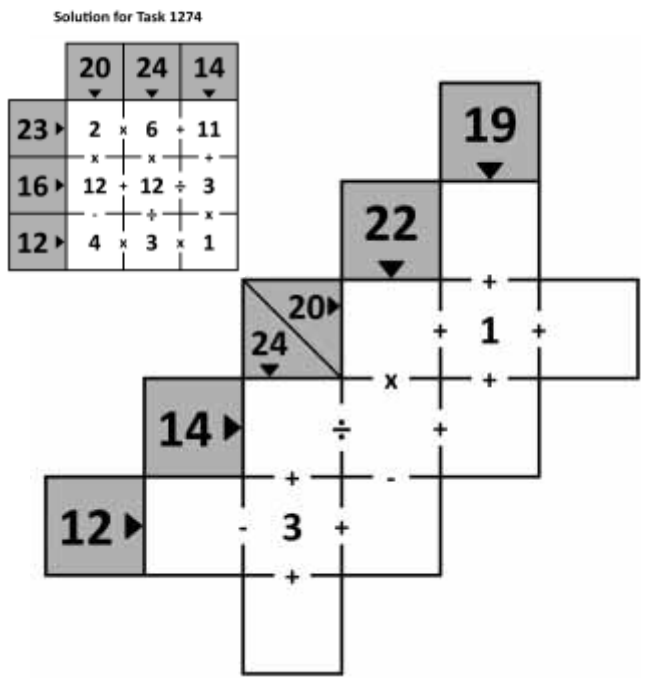
• Remember to multiply or divide before you add or subtract.

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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:

3, 7, 8, 8, 9, 9, 10, 10, 12

Solution for Task 1274



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MEGA MILLIONS: 5 6 22 26 41 Meganumber: 6 Jackpot: $135M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS: 7 27 33 42 44 Meganumber: 24 Jackpot: $16M

Fantasy 5: 4 5 8 18 32

DAILY 3: MIDDAY: 1 8 2 EVENING: 4 5 5

DAILY DERBY: 1st: 01 Gold Rush 2nd: 06 Whirl Win 3rd: 02 Lucky Star RACE TIME: 1:47.09

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

■ Dubai is a city of towering, architecturally brilliant skyscrapers, but since all were built only in the last several decades, the city's central sewer system has not been able to keep up. Consequently, reported NPR's "Fresh Air" in November, only a few are hooked up to the municipal system, and the remainder must hire fleets of tanker trucks to carry away the waste water. The trucks then must queue up, sometimes for 24 hours at a time, to dispose of it at treatment plants.

■ A lawyer's first rule of cross-examination is to never ask a question you don't already know the answer to, but criminal defendants who act as their own lawyers typically do not get that memo. Philome Cesar, charged with about 25 robberies in the Allentown, Pa., area, began questioning his alleged victims at his trial in November. Please describe, he asked the first, what the robber sounded like. Answered victim Daryl Evans, "He sounded like you." After Cesar asked a second victim the same question and received the same answer, he decided to stop cross-examining the victims. (He was convicted of 19 counts.)

■ In New Braunfels, Texas, in November (2005), Robert Villarreal, 34, was sentenced to 50 years in prison after he sold drugs to the same undercover officer for the third time in a 14-year period. He had actually argued "entrapment," claiming that for the first sale, in 1988, he was so young (age 18) that he shouldn't be expected to remember later what the officer looked like.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1960 1960 Munich Convair 340 crash: 20 passengers and crew on board as well as 32 people on the ground are killed.

1961 History of Goa: Operation Vijay – India seizes Goa from Portugal.

1967 Prime Minister of Australia Harold Holt disappears while swimming near Portsea, Victoria and is presumed drowned.

WORD UP!

abrade
\ uh-BREYD \ , verb;
1. To scrape off.
2. To wear off or down by scraping or rubbing.

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Plantiff: Kathleen Mazzuca-Johns, Defendant: CMNI General Construction, et al.
IT IS ORDERED that the service of the summons, citation, notice of hearing, or Cross-Complaint in this action be made upon defendant, respondent, or citee Cross-defendant, The paul L. Johns Living Trust by publication thereof in San Gabriel Valley Tribune -Newsgroup a newspaper of general circulation published at Los Angeles, County, California and that said publication be made at least once a week for four successive weeks.
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a copy of said summons, citation, notice of hearing, or Cross- Complaint and of said complaint or petition in this action be forthwith deposited in the United States Post Office, postage prepaid, directed to said defendant, respondent, or citee if his address is ascertained before expiration of the time prescribed for the publication of this summons., citation or notice of hearing. A declaration of this mailing, or of the fact that the address was not ascertained, must be filed at the expiration of the time prescribed for the publication.
DATED: Nov 10, 2011
YVONNE T. SANCHEZ, JUDGE

DBAS

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NUMBER: 2011128608 ORIGINAL FILING This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES on 11/04/2011 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as TATU VALKONEN PHOTOGRAPHY. The full name of registrant(s) is/are: Tatu Valkonen 3749 McLaughlin Ave. #23 Los Angeles, CA 90066. This Business is being conducted by: an Individual. The registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above. /s/:Tatu Valkonen. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 11/04/2011. NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411et seq.,Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish 12/03/2011, 12/10/2011, 12/17/2011, 12/24/2011.

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