TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2005 Volume 5, Issue 32

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO
8 10 23 36 47
Meganumber: 20
Jackpot: $40 Million

FANTASY 5
10 18 20 32 35

DAILY 3
Daytime: 4 3 8
Evening: 0 8 4

DAILY DERBY
1st: 07 Eureka !
2nd: 10 Solid Gold
3rd: 02 Lucky Star

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Michael Plentyhorse, 18, was charged with indecent exposure in Sioux Falls, S.D., in November, when he was discovered partially undressed, in a store, fooling around with a semi-nude female mannequin. (Said a police officer, "There was inappropriate activity between him and the mannequin. That's the only way I know how to put it.")

■ Registered sex-offender Sean Cobin, 20, was arrested in Milwaukee in November on suspicion of reckless endangerment for his role in pressuring a woman to drink concentrated drain cleaner, allegedly because he gets excited by making women vomit. (He was convicted in 2004 in a similar incident.)

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 354th day of 2005. There are 11 days left in the year.

On Dec. 20, 1803, the Louisiana Purchase was completed as ownership of the territory was formally transferred from France to the United States during ceremonies in New Orleans.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art. ... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival."

C.S. LEWIS
BRITISH AUTHOR (1898-1963)

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Empowering renters is their mission

BY RYAN HYATT AND FABIAN LEWKOWICZ
Daily Press Staff Writers

ST. ANNE'S CHURCH — Dozens of people looking to improve the quality of life for tenants gathered here on Saturday in an effort to raise awareness about a renter empowerment zone they are creating.

The zone, patterned off similar pilots around the country, will include an intensive outreach effort aimed at informing renters in Santa Monica about their rights, according to organizers.

The effort is being undertaken by a number of community groups, including L.A. Voice, St. Anne's Catholic Church, the Pico Neighborhood Association and Santa Monicans for Renters Rights.

A multi-block area of the city near St. Anne's Church has been

See EMPOWERMENT, page 6



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Parishioners of St. Anne's Church take part in the annual La Posada procession, a traditional Mexican Christmas event, in Santa Monica on Friday. The march took place in the Pico Neighborhood, where three dozen people protested against alleged abuses by area landlords.

Thinking outside the box



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

John Sutherland on Monday addresses a holiday package intended for his younger brother, a Navy reserve stationed in Kuwait. Lines were long most of the day at the post office on Fifth Street. Monday was the busiest mailing day of the year, according to the United States Postal Service. The postal service will deliver 20 billion cards, letters and packages this holiday season. The postal service estimates that 1.6 billion cards, letters and packages were sent on Monday, compared to a national daily average of 670 million. Wednesday is expected to be the busiest delivery day.

NATIONAL

Neither rain, nor time can stop this delivery

BY NAHAL TOOSI
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — In the year 2009, on the 25th of April, a man named Greg is supposed to get an e-mail. It will remind him that he is his own best friend and worst enemy, that he once dated a woman named Michelle, and that he planned to major in computer science.

"More importantly," the e-mail says, "are you wearing women's clothing?"

The e-mail was sent by Greg himself — through a Web site called FutureMe.org. It is one of the messages open to public view at the site, and Greg used only his first name.

FutureMe, co-founded by a Yale University graduate student and his San Francisco-based partner, is one of a handful of Web sites that let people send e-mails to themselves and others for delivery years in the future. They are technology's answer to time capsules, trad-

See FUTUREME, page 11



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HOROSCOPE

Early bedtime, Cancer

Santa Monica Daily Press



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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Pace yourself and take an overview. You will want to understand another's point of view. You'll gain insight by walking in another's shoes. Be willing to take the high road. Your imagination takes you down a new path. Tonight: Reach out to others.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ Deal with others directly, independently and individually. You'll discover just how much you can get done if you focus. Allow a partner to give you more support than in the past. Your effectiveness will be enhanced. Tonight: The later it gets, the more fun you'll have.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Others finally work with you instead of giving you flak. What a relief, as you experience new beginnings in key relationships and associates. Seize the moment, or you might regret it later. Tonight: Accept an invitation.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Pace yourself and take your time. You could be a bit overwhelmed by your holiday shopping or bills that lie ahead of you. Know when to toss your hands in the air and let others pitch in. Teamwork pushes you across the line. Tonight: Early bedtime.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ The time is right to let your imagination spin and take you in a new direction. The more input you get, the better the results will be. Ask others to brainstorm with you. Make the most of the moment. Tonight: Whatever you do, make it fun.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ You might want to think in terms of handling a situation differently. You need to keep basic priorities in mind. Think in terms of gain and growth. Convert your thinking and attitude, and life will change as a result. Tonight: Anchor in.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Reach out to others. Express a different style of handling matters. Others will respond to you big-time. Encourage others to express themselves more easily. Laugh and be easygoing. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ Think in terms of gains and listen to what others have to say. You have a gift with finances that others cannot change. Be happy and forthright in your choices. Take a strong hand in creating more of what you want. Tonight: Work late, possibly being one of Santa's elves.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ You are in prime shape right now. Your abilities to adapt and transform personally can be easily applied to a situation if you loosen up. Why not? Your intensity needs direction. Use it. Tonight: Don't stoop to a petty disagreement or behavior.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ Together you could relate more directly. One-on-one relating takes you down a new path. Someone could make a suggestion that forces you to step back and think. As a result, your thinking changes. Good for you! Tonight: With a favorite person.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Simply go along with others, be it in a meeting or with a partner. Your voice, though strong, might not have the impact you would like. Know when to hush up and listen. Your goals and friendships are subject to change. Tonight: Settle into an important talk.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★ You might feel as if you are overwhelmed with all that you have to do. Those in charge are likely to change their minds. Go with the flow and be willing to change your direction. Others respect you more than you know. Tonight: In the limelight.

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LOCAL

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

That's the spirit: Red Cross salutes volunteers

By Daily Press staff

The spirit of volunteerism will be alive at an awards ceremony honoring Santa Monica Red Cross contributors.

The 2006 Spirit Awards will be held at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica on Feb. 11.

The awards will recognize a commitment to service on behalf of the American Red Cross. This year's honorees include Kitty Dukakis, who is being honored for her humanitarian efforts on behalf of worldwide youth interaction and empowerment, as well as for her 2004 tsunami relief efforts.

A posthumous spirit award will go to Santa Monica Police Department officer and United States Marine Corp. reservist Major Ricardo "Rick" Crocker, who was killed in the Al-Anbar province in Iraq on May 26, 2005. Crocker was a volunteer for the Santa Monica chapter of the Red Cross, as well as an inspiration to all who knew and worked with him.

Spirit awards also will be given to Lion's Gate Entertainment and Activision, Inc. — local companies who contributed to and encouraged significant employee volunteer efforts benefiting American Red Cross Hurricanes Katrina and Rita relief efforts.

The gala event will include a reception and silent auction beginning at 6 p.m. with dinner and the awards ceremony beginning at 7:30 p.m. The mistress and master of ceremonies are Alley Mills and Orson Bean. Dance music will be provided by the Tom Nolan Band.

Excerpts from a documentary about volunteers working Hurricanes Katrina and Rita disaster relief will be previewed at the 2006 Spirit Awards. In addition, there will be a variety of music and comedic entertainment, as well as recognition of some of the 100 local individuals who journeyed to the South and volunteered for hurricane disaster relief efforts.

The event will mark the 125th anniversary of the founding of the American Red Cross and the launching of the Santa Monica chapter's community disaster response fund. Tickets are $150 each and are available at the American Red Cross, 1450 11th St. To order tickets, call (310) 394-3773 or fax (310) 451-3226 during normal business hours.

All proceeds will benefit the American Red Cross of Santa Monica which is a publicly supported, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides health and safety education, youth services, CPR and first-aid training, disaster awareness and disaster relief efforts.

Foer featured for 2006 Citywide Reads program

By Daily Press staff

Fiction fans are in for a treat beginning in April of 2006.

The featured book for the 2006 Santa Monica Citywide Reads is "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close," by Jonathan Safran Foer.

Sponsored by the city of Santa Monica and the Santa Monica Public Library, citywide reads is a community reading program that invites residents and visitors to read and discuss the novel in book clubs held around the city.

"Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close" follows 9-year-old Oskar's search to learn more about a key found in his deceased father's closet after Sept. 11, 2001.

Foer published his first novel, "Everything is Illuminated," in 2002. It won the Guardian Book Prize and the National Jewish Book Award.

It is available in audiobook, downloadable audiobook, and will be available in paperback in March 2006.

Santa Monica Citywide Reads takes place April 3 to May 6, and features free public book discussion groups led by volunteer facilitators held in coffeehouses, bookstores, libraries and other venues. The author will appear in Santa Monica on April 23 to present a reading. Related events, such as programs on the future of fiction and America post- 9/11, are being planned. For information about Citywide Reads, call the Santa Monica Public Library at (310) 458-8600.

SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS

DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	8:30am - 4:00pm	6	6

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
20"	12"-24"	8:30am - 4:00pm	35	6

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed, Obstacles

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
15"	48"-72"	8:30 am - 4 pm	150	19

CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	8:30 am - 10:00 pm	10	8

CONDITIONS: Machine Made, Hard Packed

MT. BALDY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	0"-1"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	0	0

CONDITIONS: N/A

SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	7:30 am - 9:30 pm	8	8

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed

SNOW VALLEY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs)	BASE DEPTH	LIFT HOURS	RUNS OPEN	LIFTS OPEN
0"	12"-12"	8:30 am - 4:00 pm	5	5

CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed

CONDITIONS WATER TEMP: 59°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (3-10 FT)

Today, we will see similar size surf around chest to head high with some overhead pluses. Things get big on Wednesday.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

NW remains Monday, Tuesday...

Big westerly swell hits coast Wednesday...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

TUESDAY				
LOW TIDE:	5:07AM	3.0FT	6:50PM	0.3FT
HIGH TIDE:	1:25AM	3.5FT	11:07PM	4.9FT
WEDNESDAY				
LOW TIDE:	6:20AM	3.1FT	7:30PM	0.7FT
HIGH TIDE:	2:16AM	3.6FT	11:52PM	4.3FT
THURSDAY				
LOW TIDE:	8:01AM	3.0FT	8:12PM	1.0FT
HIGH TIDE:	3:03AM	3.8FT	12:52AM	3.8FT
FRIDAY				
LOW TIDE:	9:47AM	2.6FT	8:54AM	1.4FT
HIGH TIDE:	3:42AM	4.1FT	2:20AM	3.3FT

SURF AND SNOW QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? EMAIL ALEX@SMDP.COM

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The Q Line

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'Tis the season to be merry. Except, looking around, people are running all over town crazed, stressed and in a hurry. This week, the Daily Press asks everyone to stop for a moment and think about what has made them happy this year. So this week's Q-Line question is, **"What are you grateful for?"**

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

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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The true crime in D.C.

Editor:

So, it keeps coming. Now we learn that Jr. is spying on us. Well, sorry Jr., that's against the law.

I don't care who this idiot thinks he is. He can declare himself king if he wants. I want my congress-people to investigate this man. And if he's done what I think he's done, I want him in prison.

This "thing" in the White House is a disgrace to our nation. He's an insect. And I want him out of office and out of my sight. Now.

The next American that dies in Iraq is the one that could have been saved by Democrats had they acted.

DM
Venice

Dog owners are full of it

Editor:

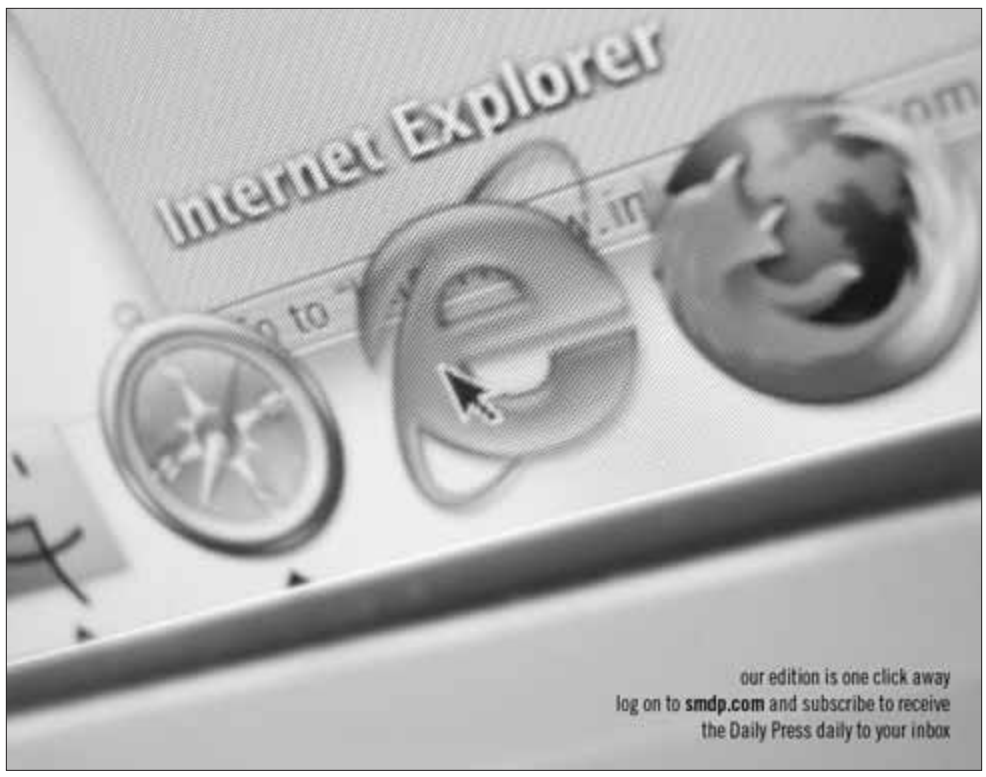
To all dog owners: Please be advised that it is your responsibility to clean after your dog. This is not optional. It is disgusting to leave dog waste around for others to step in. If you cannot do this, please seek other placement for your dog.

I would like to specifically address the very selfish and irresponsible person who does not clean up after your dog at the northeast corner of Lincoln Boulevard and Idaho Avenue. Please be advised that you will be taken to small claims court for reimbursement of my carpet cleaning costs should I ever find out who you are. Gee, guess what just happened to me this morning?

I would like to say thank you to the vast majority of dog owners who are responsible about cleaning up after their pets.

Warren Malfer
Santa Monica

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to editor@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.



GUEST COMMENTARY **BY LEONARD PEIKOFF**

Christmas should celebrate selfishness

Christmas in America is an exuberant display of human ingenuity, capitalist productivity, and the enjoyment of life. Yet all of these are castigated as "materialistic;" the real meaning of the holiday, we are told, is assorted Nativity tales and altruist injunctions that few take seriously.

In fact, Christmas as we celebrate it today is a 19th-century American invention. The freedom and prosperity of post-Civil War America created the happiest nation in history. Christmas — which was not a federal holiday until 1870 — became the leading American outlet for this feeling.

Historically, people have always celebrated the winter solstice as the time when the days begin to lengthen, indicating the earth's return to life. Ancient Romans feasted and reveled during the festival of Saturnalia. Early Christians condemned these Roman celebrations — they were waiting for the end of the world and had only scorn for earthly pleasures. By the fourth century, the pagans were worshipping the god of the sun on Dec. 25, and the Christians came to a decision: If you can't stop 'em, join 'em. They claimed — contrary to known fact — that the date was Jesus' birthday, and usurped the solstice holiday for their church.

Even after the Christians stole Christmas, they were ambivalent about it. The holiday was inherently a pro-life festival of earthly renewal, but the Christians preached renunciation, sacrifice and concern for the next world, not this one. As Cotton Mather, an 18th-century clergyman, put it: "Can you in your consciences think that our Holy Savior is honored by mirth? ... Shall it be said that at the birth of our Savior ... we take time ... to do actions that have much more of hell than of heaven in them?"

Then came the major developments of 19th-century capitalism: industrialization, urbanization, the triumph of science — all of it leading to easy transportation, efficient mail delivery, the widespread publishing of books and magazines, new inventions making life comfortable and exciting, and the rise of entrepreneurs who understood that the way to make a profit was to produce something good and sell it to a mass market.

For the first time, the giving of gifts became a major feature of Christmas. Early Christians denounced gift-giving as a Roman practice, and Puritans called it diabolical. But Americans were not to be deterred. The whole country took with glee to giving gifts on an unprecedented scale.

Santa Claus is a thoroughly American invention. There was a St. Nicholas long ago and a feeble holiday connected with him — on Dec. 5. In 1822, an American named Clement Clarke Moore wrote a poem about a visit from St. Nick. It was Moore and a few other New Yorkers who invented St. Nick's physical appearance and personality, that came up with the idea that Santa travels on Christmas Eve in a sleigh, comes down the chimney, stuffs toys in the kids' stockings, then goes back to the North Pole.

Of course, the Puritans denounced Santa as the Anti-Christ, because he pushed Jesus to the background. Furthermore, Santa implicitly rejected the whole Christian ethics. He did not denounce the rich and demand that they give everything to the poor. On the contrary, he gave gifts to rich and poor children alike. Nor is Santa a champion of Christian mercy or unconditional love. On the contrary, he is for justice — Santa gives only to good children, not to bad ones.

All the best customs of Christmas, from carols to trees to spectacular decorations, have their root in pagan ideas and practices. These customs were greatly amplified by American culture, as the product of reason, science, business, worldliness, and egoism, i.e., the pursuit of happiness.

America's tragedy is that its intellectual leaders have typically tried to replace happiness with guilt by insisting that the spiritual meaning of Christmas is religion and self-sacrifice for Tiny Tim or his equivalent. But the spiritual must start with recognizing reality. Life requires reason, selfishness, capitalism; that is what Christmas should celebrate — and really, underneath all the pretense, that is what it does celebrate. It is time to take the Christ out of Christmas, and turn the holiday into a guiltlessly egoistic, pro-reason, this-worldly, commercial celebration.

(Leonard Peikoff founded the Ayn Rand Institute in Irvine, Calif.)



FED UP WITH PICO VIOLENCE?
YOUR OPINION MATTERS

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COMMENTARY

Making merry just like kids on Christmas



ANY DAY IN LA

BY HEIDI MANTEUFFEL

Some people when they're done with finals want to drop the books, go out to a bar and throw back a few. My boyfriend wanted to go to the zoo to see baby tigers.

When I told a friend what I'd be doing this weekend, she asked me if my boyfriend was 4 years old. That would be a shame, considering dating a preschooler is outright illegal. I think it's actually wrong on many levels. Should you really date someone that eats sand from the sandbox?

But he is nearly six feet tall, and the birth year on his driver's license says 1979. I guess I will just have to believe he's adult as he makes "rar" sounds at the tiger cage. Wait, never mind, that's the little girl next to me.

The LA Zoo is biting cold the week before Christmas. Well, it's not cold like New York or Chicago where you can feel your skin cells dying every second you're outside. But it's cold enough that the chimps and sea turtles stationed themselves directly in front of their exhibit's heating lamps.

The hippos, which are not known to be the sweetest animal, were cuddling as close as they could in their tepid water. A couple lizards in the reptile house, not often exhibiting affection, were spooning quite nicely as well.

But the tigers wouldn't let the cold get to them. The twin baby tigers fooled around as the mom tried to exert some sort of dignity for the rest of the group. The male cub galloped about with a huge pine cone in his mouth. He showed it of to his mom and sister, taunting them nearly every moment he could.

While running with it, the pine cone fell into the tigers' pool. Observers could tell the cub was devastated as he watched the pine cone drift further away from the reach of his oversize cub paws. He'd dip his paw in twice, but I think it served more of a reminder that it was too cold for him to swim and retrieve it.

It was simultaneously funny and sad. For five minutes, the cub stared longingly at his first lost love. He kept waiting for it to drift in, which the pine cone had no intention of doing. Would you if you were finally free from a tiger's sharp bite?

The mom went over twice to the devastated, baby cub — once to console him, and once to tell him to get over it.

I'm glad the tiger cub didn't know that two exhibits away the brown bears were receiving multiple pine cones. Not only that, but theirs were drizzled in mustard and cheese.

One benefit to visiting the LA Zoo in December is that they let the animals celebrate Christmas. Well, they celebrate with the ones that won't completely maul them as they try to set it up. Getting mauled usually takes away some of the Christmas spirit.

On Saturday, the Christmas celebration was specifically for the brown bears. One zookeeper prepared a Christmas tree decorated with ornaments enticing to a bear, meaning they were smothered with mustard and cheese. Other workers threw in the pine cone mustard pops, while another stationed a box full of peanuts up the side of the pseudo cave.

The bears had a great time discovering their goodies, licking the inside of the candy coated (well, to a bear) plastic tube.

Not only that, but there was a station on the way out of the zoo where you could see reindeer and design your own reindeer antlers. Needless to say, my boyfriend and I rose at the opportunity to seek out the finest Crayola washable markers and create a wearable masterpiece.

The 8-year-old seated at our table gave us this glaring, sophisticated why-don't-you-grow-up look. I gave her my most grown up look back, which translated to mean, "why don't you mind your own beeswax?" You first.

I still can't believe that girl asked if my boyfriend is 4. I mean honestly, do we really hang around that many kids?

Yes, yes we do. For besides being one of the oldest at the LA Zoo on Saturday, Sunday must have been family photo day at Sears. Every kid and their mom literally was there taking photos when they weren't running around pulling up their dresses and playing with the blocks.

So, of course, Jonathan and I had to be there. But we were there for serious couple photos to be given to Jonathan's parents. So we tried to look our best and oldest. We knew that despite the events of this weekend, we were sophisticated grown-ups, and ignored the fact that the photographer made baby noises and shook a rattle to get us to smile.

(Heidi can be reached at anydayinla@gmail.com.)



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Empowerment group takes message to streets

EMPOWERMENT, from page 1

selected, where it's believed a large number of tenants, many of them Latino, are unaware of their rights as renters. The boundaries of the empowerment zone are to include those apartment units between Colorado Avenue and Pico Boulevard, and 14th Street and Cloverfield Boulevard.

Organizers said they will conduct door-to-door outreach starting in January with every renter within the zone. The visits will include fact-sharing and a survey during which organizers will collect data related to rental conditions — including the prevalence of mold — and advise renters on courses of action in cases where landlord neglect has led to needed repairs.

Approximately three dozen people gathered on Friday night at St. Anne's. The event began with a traditional Catholic prayer, then members sang songs to the accompaniment of a pair of guitar players. Following the music, participants lit candles. Two men carried a nativity scene on a platform and began a procession called, "La Posada," a ceremony depicting how the Biblical figures of Mary and Joseph went from home to home in search of shelter for Jesus Christ.

Carrying the nativity scene, the two men led the procession from the church.

Participants carried candles and sang as they marched two blocks to the apartment of Carmen and Alfredo Arechiga, St. Anne's parishioners who are currently petitioning their landlord for repairs they seek for their apartment, which they have been occupying since 1969.

"We need to stuff old clothing and newspapers into the wall to keep the rats out," said Carmen Arechiga.

According to Carmen Arechiga, the roof of her 19th Street apartment has holes in it. When it rains, the Arechigas place trash cans throughout the apartment to catch the water. There is mold throughout the apartment, she said. The walls are soggy and have holes in them, allowing entry to rats and mice.

Carmen Arechiga said that she and her husband have given their landlord a list of repairs that are needed. If there's no response after a week, Carmen Arechiga said she and her husband will go to the city seeking help and ask for a discount on rent.

On Monday, the Daily Press contacted the Arechigas for more comment. According to their daughter, Cynthia Vargas, they were unavailable to speak, visiting Mexico for the holidays.

Apparently, the Arechigas had requested their landlord fix their apartment on multiple occasions, Vargas said, but never did.





Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

(Left) Alfredo Arechiga points to mold on the walls, visible throughout his Santa Monica apartment. He and his wife, Carmen Arechiga, claim repeated requests to their landlord for improvements to their rent-controlled units go unanswered. (Right) Carmen Arechiga shows a hole in the wall of her Santa Monica apartment where rats might enter.

Denny Zane, co-chair of Santa Monicans for Renters Rights, said his group has served an advisory role to L.A. Voice and St. Anne's, which are spearheading the empowerment zone effort. According to Zane, L.A. Voice, which has organized approximately 12 rental empowerment zones in the county, approached St. Anne's about the project.

St. Anne's then contacted SMRR and the Pico Neighborhood Association for support.

"We are excited about the vision to inform and educate residents around the issues of housing, so that all residents exercise the right to live in homes that are clean and safe," Zane said.

Father Mike Gutierrez, pastor of St. Anne's Church, sees the concept of the renter empowerment zone as a timely example of his church's commitment to social justice.

"At this time of year, we are reminded that we have a mission," Gutierrez said. "We have a duty and responsibility to reach out to one another and bring forth the kingdom of God. This mission is central to our faith.

"By making sure that the rights of the most vulnerable in our community are protected, we are bringing forth the kingdom."

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STATE

STATE BRIEFS

Churches changing with the times

By The Associated Press

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — Churches are changing names in an effort to appeal to 21st century believers.

Temple Baptist in Redlands, for example, is now called Pathway Church, even though its theology, worship style or ministries haven't changed. The same is true for LifeSpring, a Riverside church associated with the Assembly of God denomination.

The congregations are part of a trend of churches adopting names they believe are more relevant to popular culture and reflect their mission in the community, especially high-growth areas.

Newcomers are less concerned about denominational ties than in finding a church with the character and programs they want, said Eddie Gibbs, professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena.

Herd the news: Ewes on the move

By The Associated Press

BARSTOW, Calif. — Fifteen ewes from a thriving herd of desert bighorn sheep in Mojave National Preserve may be moved to rebuild a dwindling herd 100 miles away in the China Lakes Naval Air Weapons Station area near Ridgecrest.

"We have a healthy population of bighorns in the preserve, but the herd at China Lake is small and consists of only 17 rams and two ewes," Old Dad Mountain preserve spokesman James Woolsey said.

California's Department of Fish and Game said the preserve's bighorn population numbers about 250. The department proposes capturing up to 15 ewes in the Old Dad Mountain area for relocation to Eagle Crags, to correct the imbalance between rams and ewes, officials said.

"If that ratio is as low as our data now suggests, we need to reverse the trend," said Vern Bleich, senior environmental scientist and project manager.

Drag strip expected to kick-start development

By The Associated Press

BANNING, Calif. — It appears a long-delayed $10 million drag strip is back on track.

The city approved a three-year deal to sell developer Banning Airport Associates LLC a 20-acre parcel near the airport for the quarter-mile drag strip and help acquire a $70 million automotive-themed business park.

Banning Airport Associates partnered with All American Racing, which initially pushed the project and won city approval in 2001.

All American President Andy Marocco will operate the track with his father, Ron Marocco, and Banning Airport Associates is expected to build a 33-acre business park across the street.

The drag strip, with grandstands for up to 10,000 people, is expected to reduce illegal street racing.

"This is going to bring jobs and kick start development around the airport," said City Manager Randy Anstine.

Campus dates are of wholesome variety

By The Associated Press

REDLANDS, Calif. — Students like the healthier, fresher food offerings at the University of Redlands.

"The food's pretty good here. They always have locally grown stuff, and it's always fresh. If you want to stay healthy, it's easy to do that," said Serena Standley, a 20-year-old junior.

The university has joined a burgeoning number of campuses nationwide trying to get students to eat healthier, fresher food bought from local farms.

Dates, cheese, spinach, beets, melons, oranges, honey, squash and carrots are among the foods bought from local farmers.

"I think there's certainly more awareness about eating proper nutrition," said Brett Martin of the university's food service contractor Bon Appetit.

Escalating energy and transportation prices and the popularity of high-end, natural-food supermarkets also are helping drive the trend.

Evergreens nevermore

By The Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. — A 30-year Christmastime tradition is about to end in the San Gabriel Valley.

Del Mar Boulevard's seven-acre Christmas tree farm operated by Charles Mautz, 65, and his wife Linda, 50, is enjoying its final holiday season of providing fresh-cut Christmas trees.

"It's been good, but everything comes to an end," Mautz said.

The West Covina couple raised more than 2,000 native Monterey pines on land west of Willard Elementary School. The farm occupies a north-south right of way owned by Southern California Edison, which erected towers on the land to support high-voltage transmission lines.

Edison is reclaiming the land and will lease it for higher rents, Edison spokesman Morton Walker said.

There's a sense of sadness among customers.



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SANTA MONI

A WEEKLY LOOK AT EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



DEAR DORIE

Allow the kiddies to be carefree

Dear Dorie,

We're scheduling all kinds of family holiday celebrations and activities this year and I'm concerned for my toddler. I love the ideas, but don't want to overdo it. I know this is a regular concern for everyone but are there any specific suggestions?

— Holiday Hopeful

Dear Hopeful,

I'm reading three other letters about holiday stress as we speak. The good news is that these parents, including yourself, are all concerned about the health and emotions of their little ones. The bad news is, let's face it, holidays stress people out. Each and every one of us has our own method of coping, but there are some basic guidelines to get you through the "magic" of the season.

First and foremost, keep tabs on yourself. Young children depend on the grown-ups in their life to determine appropriate feelings and reactions. Simply put, if you're stressed out, they will be stressed out. Eat and drink with good health in mind and, if you find yourself getting angry or tired, stop and regroup. Your children will as well.

In the midst of holiday festivities, schedule some downtime for yourself and your child. If you have more than one, schedule quiet time for all. It's refreshing to enjoy a quiet walk around the block to look at decorations and then return to a lively event. Even a quick book read to a little one in a quiet room can make all the difference in the temperament of the day.

Finally, forgive yourself and your child in advance for any temper tantrums, spilled cocoas, dropped food or sassy comments. These events, just like the others, are part of the holidays. Do your best to make sure they don't become the biggest part. Good luck.

— Dorie

(Submit your questions to "Dear Dorie" at meek@smmusd.org, or call (310) 452-6132).

Keep 'thanks' at forefront



How Much Is Enough?

By Jean Illsley Clarke Ph.D.

What Do You Want for Christmas?

"What do you want Santa to bring you for Christmas?" Within an hour, four different adults at a family gathering asked two-and-a-half-year-old Colton the ubiquitous December question. He looked at them with big eyes and sucked his thumb. The older children were asked, "Have you made your list?"

Participants in the Overindulgence Research Studies told us that thinking they were the center of the universe created problems for them as adults. Surely Colton's relatives had only goodwill when they asked the children about their wish lists, but let's think about the results. What is the message to the child? Christmas is about presents? What is the message about who gets presents? Me!

What if four people had asked Colton, "What are you giving your sister for Christmas?" What if they had asked the older children, "How many of the presents you give are you making this year?"

What if the question was

■ What activities are your family doing together to celebrate Christmas this year?

■ Have you participated in any Christmas programs this year?

■ What is your family doing to help people who are needy this year?

What if the Christmas gift you offer is

■ I'll help you make a present for someone."

■ I'll help you make wrapping paper for your gifts.

■ We can have a cookie making day. You can bring four friends and we'll send cookies home with everyone.

■ Bring your whole family. We'll make a gingerbread house.

■ A cross-country skiing outing or a trip to the water park.

■ A museum membership.

■ I will come the day after Christmas and take a picture of you with each gift from out-of-town. You can send the picture with your thank-you letter.

Thanking for gifts can be a great way to help children build their connections with the gift givers.

For little children

■ A thank-you on the phone. Parents can coach by doing a practice run before the call. "I'll pretend I'm Aunt Betty and you thank me for your new truck."

■ With crayons or markers little ones can draw a picture to be mailed to the gift giver.

■ A photograph of the child holding, wearing, or playing with a gift makes a great visual thank you.

Older children can write, print, or draw a thank-you.

One family has a story thank-you ritual. Each child tells a little story about Christmas day and the present. The story is sent via email, snail mail, or audio tape.

If children get "too many" presents, parents can counter the center-of-the-world position by helping the children focus on who sent each gift. This could be a one-gift-a-day activity until each giver has been the focus of a thank-you effort. Parents can use this opportunity to tell a little story about the giver, perhaps about a Christmas past.

Could the same things apply to Hanukah? To Kwanza?

To participate in a new study on overindulgence and relationships log onto our Web site at www.overindulgence.info.

(Jean Illsley Clarke Ph.D., Connie Dawson Ph.D., and David J. Bredehoft Ph.D. are co-authors of How Much is Enough? Everything You Need to Know to Steer Clear of Overindulgence and Raise Likeable, Responsible, and Respectful Children. Jean can be reached at jiconsults@aol.com. To read more about overindulgence go to www.overindulgence.info.)



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SPECIAL EVENTS

TODAY! DEC. 20, 2:30 p.m. – HOLIDAY MAGIC SHOW
Magician Tony Daniels will perform a fun magic show for ages 3 and up. FREE! Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Ave., 829-7081

DEC. 20 & 22 at 2:00 p.m. - ALL ABOUT SANTA at the SANTA MONICA PLAYHOUSE . $12.50 adults, $10.50 kids ages 12 & under. 394-9779 ext. 2 for reservations, www.santamonicaplayhouse.com. All ages.

SPIRIT of CHRISTMAS at the KODAK THEATRE
THRU Dec. 27, various times (no performances Dec. 19 & 25)
An all-singing and dancing holiday spectacle with almost 50 cast members features Santa Claus, chorus girls and a menagerie of North Pole critters. Kodak Theatre, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, $25 - $50, 213-480-3232. Use the code FAMILY to save 25% on four or more tickets.

DOWNTOWN ON ICE – THRU JAN. 16
Don't miss your chance to glide at this outdoor skating rink located at Pershing Square. $6 per session, $2 skate rental, 532 Olive St., 213-847-4970, www.laparks.org.
Mon. – Thurs., noon to 9:00 p.m.; Fri. – Sun., 10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

HOLIDAY LIGHT FESTIVAL – THRU DEC. 30
5:00 – 10:00 p.m. This annual tradition features 500,000 lights in festive displays showcasing LA locales. Shuttle service available on select weekends from LA Zoo. Crystal Springs Dr., Griffith Park, 888-LA-PARKS, FREE!

DEC. 25 – 1:30 p.m. – MARCH of the PENGUINS – FREE!
Screening at the Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., 440-4636.

ONGOING CALENDAR BELOW
Special Note – many story times and classes are on break for the holidays. Please note the new session dates on many listings and call to confirm class times and dates.

TUESDAY

Movies for Moms! 11:00 a.m., Loews Cineplex Broadway Theatre, 1441 3rd St. Promenade – for Moms and babies newborn – 1 year old. Doors open early for socializing and getting comfortable. Visit www.enjoytheshow.com/reelmoms for details.
Dec. 20 – King Kong starring Naomi Watts, Jack Black and Adrien Brody. Adventure, Rated "PG-13."

Storytelling
Main Library – Preschool and Toddler story times will be held at the new Main Library beginning in January.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
Cuentos Para Pequenos and Lap Time will begin again in January.
Twilight Story Time -7pm – an ongoing program for 3-5 year olds.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Family Story Time – 7:00 p.m., all ages. No stories Dec. 27.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.
Toddler Storytime, 10:00 and 10:30. Music, rhymes and stories for 2 to 3 year olds.
Registration underway for the next session beginning in Jan.
Tiny Tuesday Storytime at Storyopolis
For ages infant to 3. 11:00 a.m. 116 North Robertson, Plaza A, LA. 310-358-2500, www.storyopolis.com
Barnes and Noble at the Grove
Storytime for ages 2 – 6. 10:00 a.m. 189 Grove Drive, LA, 323-525-0270

Classes
YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – 12 to 36 months; Infant & Me Class – 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. and 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., 0 – 12 months; 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.
YMCA – Attachment Parenting Classes - 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., 1332 Sixth St., 393-2721 (ask for Shelana Philip-Guide or Audrey Meyer). This new class for mothers/dads and babies up to 12 months is presented by Karol Darsa, PsyD, a licensed psychologist with extensive experience working with children and families. Fees: Members – 1 class - $40, 5 class pass - $180; Non-members - $50, 5 class pass - $200.
BREAKTHROUGH PARENTING CLASSES – 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.
An advanced 10-week parent education course. Continuous enrollment. For info call Jayne A. Major, Ph.D., Breakthrough Parenting Services, Inc., 310-823-7846, jm@BPinAction.org.

Yoga & Exercise
Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA
10:00 – 11:00 a.m and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members $90 for 10 classes. (also Thursday nights 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., $15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.
Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)
Itsy Bitsy Yoga – Baby IBY (6 weeks to pre-crawling) – 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. With Khefri Riley at Ocean Oasis, 1333 Ocean Ave. Register at www.khefri.net or call 323-549-5383.
Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Breastfeeding Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981 - drop-in, first class free, $10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

MOMS Club of SM South Playgroups – 4:30 p.m., separate groups for children born in 2000 and 2001. Call or email Alison at 393-4481/riversalison@hotmail.com for more info. All moms welcome!

Storytelling
The Talking Stick Coffee Lounge – 1630 Ocean Park Blvd., 450-6052
10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4 at this neighborhood coffee shop.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
Next session Jan. 4 – Feb. 8.
Toddler Story Time – 9:30 a.m., for two year olds with adult.
Preschool Story Time – 10:30 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds with adult.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Next session Jan. 4 – Feb. 8. Baby Time - 10:15 & 11:15 a.m., ages 0-2.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. –392-3804.
Preschool Twilight Story Time – 7:00 p.m. Parents/children ages 3-5.
Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 2 pm – ages 2-5 – 310-475-4144
Border's, Westwood – 11a.m. – 310-475-3444.

Classes
YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 10:45 – 11:45 a.m., 7 to 36 months; 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.

Rhythm Child Parent & Me Rhythms, Santa Monica Studios, 3025 Olympic Blvd., 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. Children explore rhythms through drum play. For toddlers. $100 for 8 weeks. Call 204-5466 or visit www.rhythmchild.net for more info and session dates.
YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – walkers to 3 years; (Mon – Fri); 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.
Enchanted Lunchtime Theatre at Santa Monica Playhouse, 1211 4th St., 394-9779
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. For ages 3 – 5 with parents. This theatrical adventure includes story time, theatre games, crafts, play building and lunch. Reservations required 24 hours in advance, $19.50 includes lunch for child and lunch.

Yoga & Exercise
Kids' Yoga Circle, 1814 14th St., 260-2736 – Yoga and more for ages 4 – 7, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. 8 week session $125/Drop-in $18
Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, $15
Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Step Aerobics, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay $90 for 10 classes.
Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Breastfeeding Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981, drop-in, first class free, $10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Other
Puppetolio – 1:00 p.m., 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

THURSDAY

MOMS Club of SM South Playgroup – 3:30 p.m., for children born 3/03 – 12/03, Call or email Alison at 393-4481/riversalison@hotmail.com for more info. All moms welcome!

Storytelling
Babystyle, 1324 Montana Avenue, 434-9590
10:30 a.m. Free story time for moms and kids ages 0-4.
Main Library – Preschool and Toddler story-times will be held at the new Main Library beginning in January.
Fairview Branch Library – 2101 Ocean Park Blvd – 310-450-0443.
La Hora Del Cuento – 7:00 p.m. Spanish stories, songs and rhymes for all ages.
Montana Avenue Branch Library – 1704 Montana Ave – 310-829-7081.
Next session Jan. 5 – Feb. 9. Toddler Story Time – 10:15 a.m., for 2 year olds.
Preschool Story Time – 11:15 a.m.; for 3-5 year olds. No stories Dec. 29.
Ocean Park Branch Library – 2601 Main St. – 310-392-3804.
Lap Time will begin again in January.

Classes
YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m and 10:45 – 11:45 a.m., 12 to 36 months; Parent Support Group – 3:30 – 4:30 p.m., age 3 – 5 years; 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.
BREAKTHROUGH PARENTING CLASSES – 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.
An advanced 10-week parent education course. Continuous enrollment. For info call Jayne A. Major, Ph.D., Breakthrough Parenting Services, Inc., 310-823-7846, jm@BPinAction.org.

Yoga & Exercise
Kids' Yoga Circle, 1814 14th St., 260-2736 – Yoga and more for ages 8 – 11, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.; ages 12 – 15, 5:15 – 6:30 p.m. 8 week session $125/Drop-in $18

Prenatal Aqua Aerobics at the Santa Monica YMCA
7:30 – 8:30 p.m; Free for members, non-members $90 for 10 classes. (also Tuesdays at 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.) 393-2721. ext. 117 for more info.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:40 p.m., $15. Mommy and Me – 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.
Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Breastfeeding Groups
La Leche League of LA/Mar Vista – meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Community Room of the Westchester Municipal Bldg., 7166 W. Manchester Ave., corner of Lincoln and Manchester. Call 310-390-2529 for info.
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981 - drop-in, first class free, $10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 4-8 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

MOMS Club of SM South Playgroups
11:00 a.m. - playgroup for children born 10/04 – 5/05. Call or e-mail Alison at 393-4481, riversalison@hotmail.com for more info.
Parent's Night Out at Child's Play, 2299 Westwood Blvd., 6:00 – 11:00 p.m.
Kids get a night of supervised fun with pizza, games and more while parents go out. Ages 3-10, $9 per hour, $7 siblings, 3 hour minimum. Reservations required, 470-4997. ww.childsplayonline.net
Planetarium Show at SMC's John Drescher Planetarium, 7:00 p.m. - Night Sky Show, 8:00 p.m. – featured program. $5 adults, $4 children. Pico and 17th St., 434-3000.

Classes
YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – 12 – 36 mos.; 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.

Yoga & Exercise
Fitness for Moms – Babies Welcome! Indoor Cycling, 10:30 a.m. at the YMCA, 393-2721, ext. 117 for more info. Free for members, non-members pay $90 for 10 classes.
Yoga Works – 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45 p.m., $15.
Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Other
Baby Attuned - Fridays, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., A new program promoting sensitive parenting and developmental awareness. Eileen Escarce, PhD, MSN. (PSY 18819). Introductory fee: $15 per screening with feedback. 1137 2nd Ave, Suite 213. By appointment only 310-367-1155.

SATURDAY – CHRISTMAS EVE
CALL TO CONFIRM LISTINGS DUE TO HOLIDAYS.

Storytelling
Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – Kid's Story Time – 10am, 310-260-9110
Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion – 10:30am – ages 2-5, 310-475-4144.
Children's Book World, 10580 1/2 Pico Blvd, LA - 10:30 a.m., 310-559-BOOK.
Village Books, 1049 SwarthmoreAve, Pacific Palisades – 10:30 a.m., 454-4063.
826LA, 685 Venice Blvd, 2nd Floor, Venice – 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., ages 3-6, RSVP to info **@825LA.com** or 310-314-8418. (826LA is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting students with their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write).

Classes
YWCA – Toddler & Me every other Sat., 9:45 – 10:45 a.m., $15 per class; Parent Enrichment once per month , 11:00 a.m. – noon, $15 per class, $25 per couple.

Yoga & Exercise
Santa Monica Yoga – Pre- & Post-Natal Yoga, Saturdays – 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
1640 Ocean Park Blvd, 396-4040, www.santamonicayoga.com
Mommy Care – at the Dance Factory, 11606 San Vicente Blvd., Brentwood, 310-394-6711. Combined Pregnancy/Recovery Exercise Group – 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.(babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)
Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:00 a.m., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

Other
Puppetolio – 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested
Magicopolis – 2 and 8 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is $20 for evening, $15 for matinee. Call 310-451-2241 for info.
Precious Prints – Ceramic Heirlooms for a Lifetime
Second Saturday every month at The Pump Station, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Contact Kristan Ritchie at 310-802-8013 or visit www.preciousprintsstudios.com for more info.
Lakeshore Learning Stores "Free Crafts for Kids" – Saturdays, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 8888 Venice Blvd., 559-9630.
"A Faery Hunt" – 10:30 a.m., every Saturday at Franklin Canyon Park. An interactive children's show, searching for fairies and other enchanted creatures in the magical canyon and finding them! $10, call for reservations – 818-324-6802. www.faeryhunt.com. Meet in the parking lot of the Sooky Goldman Nature Center, 2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills.

SUNDAY – MERRY CHRISTMAS!

MONDAY –
CALL TO CONFIRM LISTINGS DUE TO HOLIDAYS.
MOMS Club of SM South Playgroups
Noon – 2:00 p.m.., for children born 1/02 – 2/03; 9:30 a.m. – for children born 1/04 – 9/04; call or email Alison at 393-4481/riversalison@hotmail.com for more info. All moms welcome!

Storytelling
Main Library – check back for details on Lap Time and Family Connections in Jan.
Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade – Toddler Story Time – 10am – 310-260-9110

Classes
YWCA – A Place for Parents –Toddler & Me Class - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. – 12 – 36 mos.; "Playtime – A combination play time and parent support time", 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., 2019 14th St. Call 452-3881for details and prices.

Breastfeeding Group
The Pump Station, 2415 Wilshire Blvd., 310-998-1981 - drop-in, first class free, $10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Yoga & Exercise
Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal – 12:15 – 1:45pm, $15
Itsy Bitsy Yoga – TOT IBY (crawling – 2/3 years) – 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. With Khefri Riley at TURNOUT Performing Arts Center, 12113 Santa Monica Bl., St. 201. Register at www.khefri.net or call 323-549-5383.
Yoga Garden, - Restorative yoga for pre/post-natal – 6:30 p.m., 310-450-0133. www.yoga-gardenstudios.com
Stroller Strides Fitness Class – 9:30 a.m. Mon. – Fri., Palisades Park, call 800-795-6708 or visit www.strollerstrides.com for more info.

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Split decision: Appeals court will remain intact

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In the face of Senate opposition, House Republicans dropped a plan to split the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

House Republicans who contend the nation's largest federal appeals court has gotten too big to be effective had sought to attach legislation breaking it in two to a deficit-trimming bill.

Senators led by Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., vowed to block the move if it made it to the Senate floor.

The measure was left out when the bill passed the House early Monday. A Senate vote could come later in the day.

The 9th Circuit covers nine states with about 54 million people, and has 28 judgeships. The circuit with the next-largest number of judgeships is the New Orleans-based 5th Circuit, with 17.

Opponents of splitting the 9th Circuit alleged political motives by Republicans annoyed by its rulings, including a 2002 opinion that declared the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional when recited in public schools.

The House legislation would have created a 9th Circuit covering California, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands, and a new 12th Circuit covering Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Arizona.

Splitting the court has long been a goal of some in the GOP. The Republican-led House passed a 9th Circuit split measure last year but it didn't get a Senate vote.

Hemingway heirs file lawsuit over name of Greensboro bar

By The Associated Press

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Was the name of a swanky bar in downtown Greensboro inspired by a literary giant or a pet bulldog? It may take a court decision to settle the dispute.

The owner of Hemingway's Downtown says he named the 6-month-old business after the English bulldog he had as a boy.

Heirs of Ernest Hemingway, the author of "The Old Man and the Sea" and "A Farewell to Arms," say that doesn't matter and have filed a lawsuit in U.S. Middle District Court claiming trademark infringement and unfair competition.

They want owner Jeff Schleuning to stop using a name for his bar they believe is synonymous with the famous author.

"Regardless of who the establishment was named after, it really would not matter," said John F. Morrow Jr., a Winston-Salem lawyer representing the plaintiffs. "The question is whether there is consumer confusion over the source of the name."

Schleuning said Friday he wasn't aware of the lawsuit. He noted that nothing about the bar evokes the author.

"We're actually the kind of bar he would despise coming to," Schleuning said. "From what I know of him, he liked little dive-type bars."

The bar debuted in June near a cluster of dance clubs and bars. It targets an older, upper-class clientele who pay a membership fee to sip specialty martinis and smoke cigars.

The plaintiffs claim they sent a letter in June asking Schleuning to stop using Hemingway's name.

According to the lawsuit, Hemingway Ltd. is a corporation owned by the author's heirs who own all trademark rights to his name, photograph, likeness, signature and persona.

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NATIONAL

Arctic Refuge drilling stirs uncertain debate

BY H. JOSEF HEBERT
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush calls it the most promising source of untapped oil in America and the key to greater energy independence. But how much oil is there in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?

Nobody really knows for certain.

As a Christmas week fight rages in Congress over whether to allow drilling along the narrow coastal strip of tundra 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, both sides are trying to use the refuge's oil estimates — as vague as they may be — to their advantage. Some of the rhetoric has little bearing on reality.

A drilling go-ahead was approved early Monday by the House, after it was included in a must-pass defense bill. But the issue remains uncertain in the Senate, where the defense measure is subject to a potential filibuster. Drilling supporters still are believed to fall short the 60 votes needed to overcome such a tactic.

"There is considerable uncertainty regarding both the size and quality of the oil resources that exist" in the refuge, according to an analysis by the Energy Information Administration, the government agency that tracks energy statistics.

Even more uncertain is how much of the oil will be worth going after. That will depend largely on the price of oil and the cost of development — including compliance with a slew of environmental restrictions likely to be imposed to protect the area's abundant wildlife.

A 1998 U.S. Geological Survey assessment still used today concluded it's almost certain there are at least 5.6 billion barrels of recoverable oil and possibly as much as 16 billion barrels (a 5 percent likelihood) beneath the refuge's 1.5 million-acre coastal plain.

The number most frequently cited is 10.4 billion barrels, the amount the report says is the "mean" — a statistical tool that simply says there's as good a chance to find less than that as there is to find more.

"There's no question there's a range of uncertainty involved that is quite large," says David Houseknecht, a government geologist involved in the 1998 study. Still, he calls it an "educated assessment" based on seismic studies conducted in the mid-1980s and an examination of adjacent geology where oil has been discovered.

The massive Prudhoe Bay oil field, which has produced 13 billion barrels since 1977 and has 3 billion left, sits 65 miles to the west and there are oil fields in Canada to the east.

"In many cases the oil is dripping out of those rocks," says Houseknecht.

But there has never been a well dug in the federal part of the refuge's coastal plain and only one well drilled in a smaller area within the refuge controlled by Alaska natives.

You've got mail, from yourself

FUTUREME, from page 1

ing on people's sense of curiosity, accountability and nostalgia.

"Messages into the future is something that people have always sought to do," said Paul Saffo, director of the Institute for the Future, a research group. "In a way, it's a statement of optimism."

Matt Sly came up with the concept for FutureMe.org about four years ago after recalling how, during his education, he had been given assignments to write letters to himself.

Sly, 29, who partnered with 31-year-old Jay Patrikios of San Francisco on the project, said the site has made maybe $58 through donations. He insists it is not a reminder service and that users should think in the long term.

FutureMe and other service providers try to make the delivery process fail-safe through partnerships or back up software, and they urge people to hang on to their e-mail address, but there's no ironclad guarantee that the message will ever arrive.

FutureMe lets people send messages for delivery as much as 30 years from now, though Sly's numbers show most users schedule their e-mails to be sent within three years.

"We want people to think about their future and what their goals and dreams and hopes and fears are," he said. "We're trying to facilitate some serious existential pondering."

He said a large number of the messages do one of two basic things: tell the future person what the past person was doing at the time, and ask the future person if he or she had met the aspirations of the past person.

"The tone of the past person is not always friendly," said Sly. "It's often like 'Get off your lazy butt."'

Recently, Forbes.com jumped on the idea, offering an "e-mail time capsule" promotion. More than 140,000 letters were collected over about six weeks. Nearly 20 percent are supposed to land in the sender's inbox in 20 years but others requested shorter time frames. Forbes.com is partnering with Yahoo! and Codefix Consulting on the project.

"A lot of people have kind of been freaked out by it," said David Ewalt, a Forbes.com writer who worked on the project. "It really makes you stop and think about your life in a way that you usually don't."

Another type of future message service can be found at sites such as myLastEmail.com or LastWishes.com, which promise to send messages to loved ones (or less-than-loved ones) after the writer's death.

Paul Hudson, co-founder of the International Time Capsule Society, said e-mail time capsules were new to him.

"Part of the value of time capsules are that they are thought processes in the present," said Hudson, a historian who teaches at Georgia Perimeter College. "You define yourself when you do a time capsule. It might be a good exercise in introspection."

But sometimes the past is best left behind, said Saffo, who personally finds the whole thing "sad and really weird."

"The lesson about all these things, it's the lesson from time capsules, is you have to be careful lest you set yourself up for enormous embarrassment in two decades," Saffo said. "Do you really want to be reminded that you thought ABBA was cool?"

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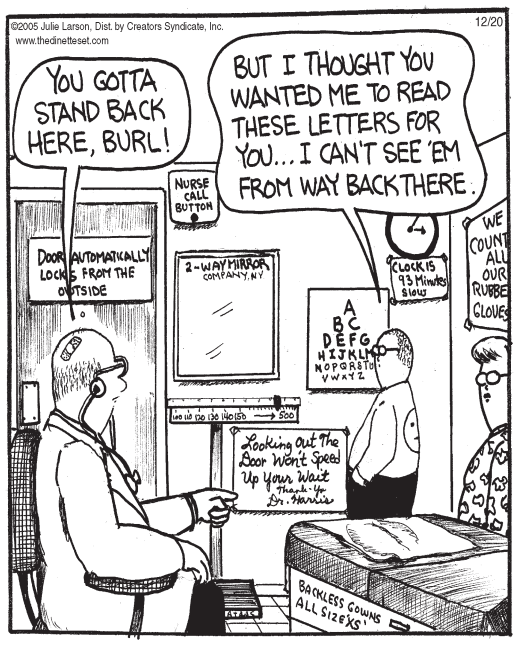
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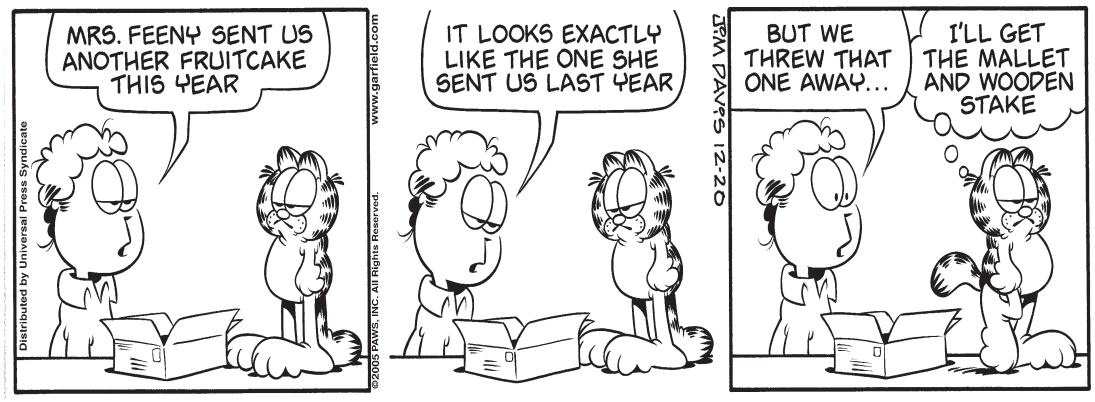
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1 Demarcate
6 Target for Tell
11 Martini extra
12 It's right on track
13 Underwear choice
15 Genesis woman
16 Letter after pi
17 Hamilton's bill
18 Horse races
20 Nest-egg choice
21 Supporter's answer
22 Dread
23 Furious person
26 Tureen accessory
27 Lambs' moms
28 Drops on the lawn
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34 Application
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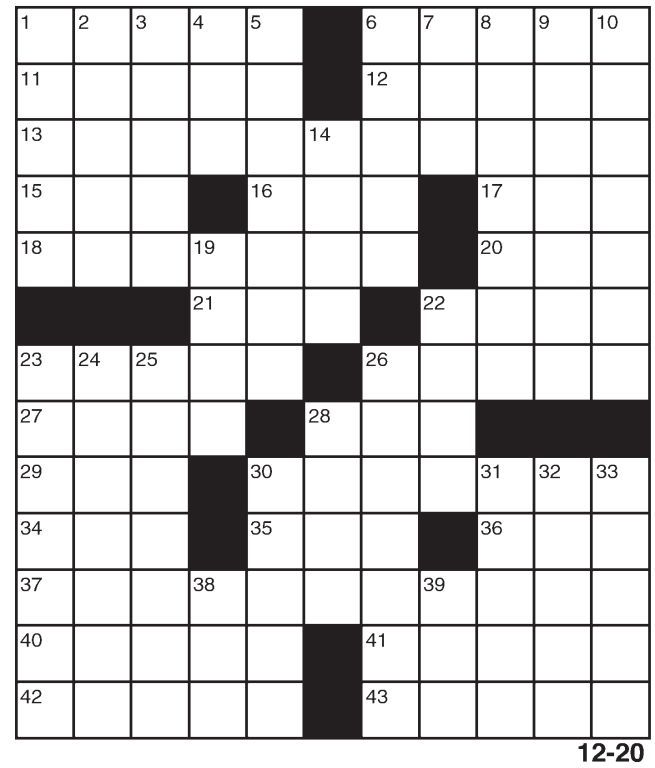
DOWN

1 Like ears and brains
2 "— Lucy"
3 Informal get-together
4 "— had it!"
5 Toto, for one
6 Friend of Aramis
7 Paid player
8 Reveled
9 Actual
10 Catch
14 Mets home
19 Tourney advances
22 Bambi, for one
23 Job seeker's pages
24 Impressive
25 Avenge oneself
26 Belt material
28 Colors
30 Cry of disbelief
31 Opera's Callas
32 Cast member
33 Takes ten
38 Tax agcy.
39 Bullfight "bravo!"

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES STATEMENT FILE NO. 05 2688539 FIRST FILING. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as Speech! Speech!, Speech! Speech! Writing Services, Speech! Speech! Writing and Consulting Services, 4422 Louise Avenue, Encino, CA 91316. The full name of registrant(s) is/are : Nazbanoo Pahlavi, 1158 26th St., #346, Santa Monica, CA 90403 This Business is being conducted by, an individual. Signed: Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious name or names listed herein.. /s/: Nazbanoo Pahlavi
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 11/07/05. 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 12/6/2005, 12/13/2005, 12/20/2005, 12/27/2005

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Weezer singer sees no end to his celibacy

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Weezer lead singer Rivers Cuomo is continuing his celibacy past his self-declared deadline.

The 35-year-old frontman earlier vowed to remain celibate for two years. Although that deadline expired six months ago, Cuomo still doesn't expect to jump back in the sack anytime soon.

"It's been two and a-half years now, actually," Cuomo tells Blender magazine in its new issue, on newsstands Tuesday. "The vow is over, but I wanted to keep cruising."

Though he's a lead singer for a popular rock band, the bespectacled Cuomo says it's not difficult to manage restraint.

"Abstinence doesn't require as much self-discipline anymore," he says. "We never had any serious groupies, anyway. Our generation got screwed."

Cuomo's vow makes Weezer's 2005 music video for "Beverly Hills" somewhat unusual; it was filmed at the Playboy mansion with dozens of Playboy models and Weezer fans.

Earlier this year, Weezer released their fifth album, "Make Believe."

Cuomo is also pursuing a degree in English literature from Harvard University, for which he has one semester left.

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Chinese director Chen Kaige joined his uncles in an emotional reunion at the premiere of his new fantasy epic, "The Promise."

Chen visited Taiwan in 1993 for a screening of his Oscar-nominated film, "Farewell My Concubine," and in 1996 to promote "Temptress Moon."

During his weekend stay, Chen met two uncles who fled from China to Taiwan in 1949 when Mao Zedong's communist forces defeated Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists and took over the Chinese mainland, the United Evening Express reported Monday.

One uncle, a Nationalist air force pilot, often heard a Chinese radio operator asking him to return to the mainland to reunite with his sister _ Chen's mother _ as he cruised the Taiwan Strait in a fighter jet, the report quoted Chen as saying.

His uncle would tell the operator to instead send his sister to Taiwan, he said.

Chen's uncles eventually spoke and met with his mother in the late 1990s when hostilities eased between the rival governments, according to the report.

LONDON — Woody Allen says he loves London's famously dreary weather and its residents' ever-expressive slang.

Allen was in the city Sunday for the British premiere of his new film, "Match Point," which swaps the director's beloved Manhattan settings for the gray streets of London.

"I let the cast improvise a lot, especially with the slang, where they would say `g and t' for gin and tonic. I wouldn't say that," said Allen. "I would say `dicey' when they would say `dodgy.' I learnt a lot."

"Match Point" charts the fortunes of an Irish tennis player, played by Jonathan Rhys-Meyers, at the hands of an upper-crust English family.

It is Allen's best-received film in years and has received Golden Globe nominations for best picture, best director, best screenplay and best supporting actress for Scarlett Johansson.

"The weather was absolutely superb for photography," Allen said. "Gray skies photograph beautifully, the light it casts is very soft.

"Filming in New York can be so hot in the summer but here it was perfect for my melancholy spirit."

HONOLULU — Michelle Rodriguez, one of the stars of ABC's hit drama "Lost," complained after her arrest for drunken driving earlier this month that police were taking away her freedom.

Rodriguez was pulled over by police on Dec. 1 after officers said they spotted her car weaving down Pali Highway in the Honolulu-bound lanes from Kailua.

Another "Lost" star, Cynthia Watros, was arrested 15 minutes later on the same highway when police said her car also was moving erratically.

Both actresses allegedly failed sobriety tests. Rodriguez had a blood alcohol level of 0.145, nearly twice the legal limit of 0.08, according to documents obtained by KITV-TV.

KITV quoted court and police documents that said Rodriguez was "very argumentative" and kept interrupting the officer who was explaining drunk driving sanctions to her.

"I don't (expletive) belong here! Why don't you just put a gun to my head and shoot me! You've already taken my freedom! You might as well take my life, too!" the TV station, in a Friday report, quoted Rodriguez as saying.

The officer who took Rodriguez in a police car to the Kailua substation quoted her as saying, "Just take my car and I'll walk all the way to the North Shore but don't leave me in the back of this car poppie."

Rodriguez' lawyer refused comment.

The 27-year-old actress plays police officer Ana Lucia on "Lost," which is filmed in Hawaii.

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