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MIDDAY: 1 3 1
EVENING: 9 5 2



1st: 07 Eureka!
2nd: 01 Gold Rush
3rd: 12 Lucky Charms
RACE TIME: 1:45.47

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Karen Madden, 38, goes on trial in December in Harrisburg, Pa., after allegedly confessing to stealing \$550,000 worth of jewelry and handbags from the residence of her former boss, who is the chancellor of the state's college system. The chancellor, testifying at a July hearing on the charges, said Madden had called her recently and apologized but then went on to say, "I hope you and I can still be friends, and I would like to use you, can I use you as a reference, just for the work part?"

■ Britain's Home Office announced in November that it had agreed to a settlement in a lawsuit by 197 heroin-addicted prisoners that it was "assault" and a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights for them to have been almost immediately denied all drugs when they were arrested. For forcing the inmates to go "cold turkey," the government agreed to pay each the equivalent of about \$7,000.

TODAY IN HISTORY

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.

1790 The first successful cotton mill in the United States began operating at Pawtucket, R.I.

1860 South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union.

WORD UP!

impassive \im-PASS-iv, *adjective*:
1. Devoid of or unsusceptible to emotion.
2. Showing no sign of emotion or feeling; expressionless.

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Up to scratch

Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

Alicia Lopes goes about making 300 corn tortillas from scratch on Tuesday at Border Grill in downtown Santa Monica.

SM police get their swerve on

By Daily Press staff

SMPD HDQTRS. — One drunk driver was taken off the streets Friday after attempting to slip through a sobriety checkpoint set up by police along the 1200 block of Ocean Avenue.

In all, 1,244 cars passed through the Santa Monica Police Department checkpoint, 245 were screened and one was arrested for driving under the influence, according to SMPD Lt. Alex Padilla.

Another driver was cited for driv-

See SOBRIETY CHECKPOINT, page 8



File photo

CURBED: In attempts to curb holiday drinking and driving, the SMPD established a checkpoint on Ocean Avenue over the weekend, arresting one driver.



Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

Jenny Graham (foreground), 23, builds a Santa Claus out of sand during the Kohl Holiday Sandman Building Competition on Santa Monica Beach. In cities that seldom experience snow, displays of Christmas spirit can take on a myriad of manifestations.

Winter wonderland? Building snowmen, er, sandmen

BY CHELSEA J. CARTER
Associated Press Writer

SANTA MONICA — The sounds of holiday cheer — Christmas carols and holiday greetings — wafted across the sand as Estella Rodriguez got down to work.

She already had the picture in her head: A button nose and two eyes made out of coal. There were even

sticks for arms, and a red hat and scarf to complete the image.

Rodriguez, 41, laid out her tools — shovels, buckets and a spatula to smooth the rough edges. Around her, others did the same.

This was serious business — a holiday competition to build the best snowman, er, sandman.

See SANDMAN, page 6

In the money

Swindell named as finance director

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — The city has a new money manager.

Effective Jan. 12, Carol Swindell, a former administrative services manager for the City of Walnut Creek in northern California, will become the new finance director for City Hall. She replaces Steve Stark, who accepted a similar position in Pasadena in September.



SWINDELL

The 44-year-old Swindell will earn a salary of \$159,000.

"Santa Monica is lucky to find someone with the range of financial skills and public sector experience that Carol offers and these attributes will greatly enhance our city's fiscal position," said City Manager Lamont Ewell, who made the selection following an extensive, nationwide search by Teri Black & Co.

"Further, her management style is oriented to collaboration and customer service," Ewell added. "She is highly effective in training and motivating staff, and will ensure that the city organization is appropriately focused on sound financial practices, budget development and fiscal oversight so that the community is properly served."

Swindell served in Walnut Creek for two years, overseeing a \$97 million budget and supervising 30 employees. Prior to that, she had been director of financial services and chief financial officer for the City of Oceanside for three years, managing a \$250 million budget and supervising a staff of 60.

Swindell has been credited with implementing major changes to Walnut Creek's budget process, including changing from a 24-month budget to two 12-month

See MONEY MANAGER, page 7



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THE WESTSIDE TODAY

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Fitness Class (Mambo Mania)

1711 Stewart St., 7 a.m. — 8 a.m.

Winterlit Best Gift Ever gift drive

Third Street Promenade, 10 a.m. — 6 p.m.

Enchanted Lunchtime Theatre

1211 Fourth St., 11:30 a.m. — 1 p.m.

Kiwanis Club Weekly Meeting

1332 6th St., Santa Monica YMCA, 12 p.m. — 1:30 p.m.

Brentwood Country Mart — Holiday Events

225 26th St., Brentwood Country Mart, 12 p.m. — 2 p.m.

Santa Monica Fitness Group for Women

Santa Monica, 6:30 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

Dianetics & Scientology

Church of Scientology Santa Monica, 7 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 21, 2006

Weekly LeTip Business Networking Group

El Cholo Restaurant, 1:30 a.m. — 1 p.m.

Yappy Hour @ Tails of Santa Monica

Tails of Santa Monica, 6 p.m. — 8 p.m.

Salvation Army Youth Night

The Salvation Army, 6 p.m. — 8 p.m.

DivorceCare

Vineyard Christian Fellowship Westside — 7 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

Santa Monica High School Winter Choral Concert

Santa Monica High School, 7 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

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



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NATIONAL
Judge considers whether to allow smoking ban to take effect

BY KEN RITTER
Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — Health officials asked a judge Tuesday to reinstate a voter-approved ban on smoking in bars, stores and malls, while a coalition of some affected business owners urged the measure be tossed out as unconstitutional.

Clark County District Court Judge Douglas Herndon said he intends to rule Wednesday afternoon on the measure that would make smoking illegal in bars and restaurants, in slot machine sections of grocery and convenience stores, and at video arcades, shopping malls, schools and day-care centers.

“I have some more reading to do,” the judge said about the affidavits, written briefs and notes he collected during daylong oral arguments on the Clean Indoor Air Act. It would still allow smoking in the gambling areas of casinos.

Southern Nevada Health District lawyer Stephen Minagil urged Herndon to lift a restraining order he imposed Dec. 7, calling it clear that voters wanted to limit smoking indoors to prevent children, adults and workers from having to breathe secondhand smoke.

Minagil said the public’s interest in the decision was “substantial,” and waved copies of U.S. surgeon general reports. He said Dr. Donald Kwalick, the district’s chief health officer, should be credited with issuing

See SMOKING BAN, page 9

City Hall, offices cutting hours

By Daily Press staff

CITY HALL — Santa Monica City Hall and non-emergency city offices will operate on the following holiday schedule:

Friday, Dec. 22, 8 a.m. to noon for limited services; Friday, Dec. 29, from 8 a.m. to noon for all services; and on Christmas Day and New Year’s Day, offices will be closed all day.

City officials “wish all our residents and visitors the very best of the holiday season and a very happy new year.”



Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

GIVING NEW ‘LIFE’: Equipment operator for the City of Santa Monica, James Packard, waters one of the ‘Trees of Life’ on Monday at the Woodlawn Cemetery. After Christmas, the trees will be planted on the cemetery grounds as an everlasting memorial.

Healing holiday spirits

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

PICO BLVD. — In the mausoleum just next to the Library of Living Memories — a holding room for urns — a child wishes his deceased grandfather a happy holiday, a mother wishes her son a Merry Christmas and a brother wishes his sister everlasting peace.

They’re holiday greetings that families and friends have relayed via an ornament to loved ones who have passed away.

About 200 such tree ornaments, filled with messages calling out to the deceased, adorn a pair of six-foot dwarf pine trees, brightening and warming a dead silent and cold mausoleum.

Knowing the holidays can be a particularly difficult time, the Woodlawn Cemetery, which is owned and operated by City Hall, is offering solace to families that have recently suffered a devastating loss in their lives, providing free ornaments they can personalize and hang on the “Trees of Life.”

“One of the most important things for people who survived a loved one is that their loved one not be forgotten.”

SANDY NIRENBERG
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAMARILLO HOSPICE

The two pine trees will stand in the mausoleum through the end of the month, when they will be planted in an undetermined location on the cemetery’s grounds. The ornaments will remain on the trees even after they’re planted for families members to receive.

“It gives [families] the opportunity to share in the joy of Christmas or holidays and still remember loved ones without feeling disrespectful,” said Cemetery Administrator Virgil County on Monday.

“It’s a healing experience.”

Through the ornaments, grown children called out to their deceased parents and a grief-stricken woman reached out to her mother.

“Chad, we love you — Mom and Dad,” one ornament read.

It’s the first time the cemetery has held the Trees of Life program, an idea that County brought with him to Santa Monica when he was

See TREES OF LIFE, page 7

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Chocolate don't come cheap
Editor:

We, the English classes at Santa Monica High School, have recently been discussing modern slavery; yes, the slavery that is still occurring in various countries, including the U.S., today. Although slavery is being used worldwide, and for different reasons, there is one particular industry that needs our help, and raising awareness can make that possible.

The average American consumes 10 to 12 pounds of chocolate a year, and spends \$13 billion dollars; thus knowingly contributing to the slavery that occurs in the cocoa fields to make that chocolate. The fact that slaves and children are working under such horrible conditions becomes even more disturbing when Americans realize we coincide chocolate with the opposite: Happiness. Although the Harkin-Engel Protocol was placed to end slavery and forced child labor, many chocolate manufacturers have yet to enforce, or attempt, to do so.

Other companies, such as Starbucks, have changed their ways to make sure that every cup of coffee they distribute is made slave-free. Thus, leaving every customer satisfied and without a guilty conscience. It began with a simple voice, and is now an organization. This can be done with chocolate as well. Just "spreading the word" of the slavery due to chocolate consumption is not enough. Something needs to be done to ensure that chocolate can, too, be known as a slave-free good.

Teenagers, the manufacturers leading consumers, underestimate their ability to change the world. However, if enough teenagers become knowledgeable of the awful conditions, we can make a difference. And the community, and we've got an entire organization at hand; dedicated to stop the terrible conditions, stop the emotional and physical abuse, and most importantly, freeing the slaves. With your help, we can begin the change that needs to be made.

Although the cost of chocolate may be cheap, the cost of a life in slavery is not.

Jillian Long
Santa Monica

Consume with a conscience
Editor:

I am a junior at Santa Monica High School, and after learning about modern slavery through a documentary, I felt compelled to inform as many people possible on this issue.

While watching "Slavery: A Global Investigation" the documentary, made in 2001, I was in shock to discover that chocolate is a major in the 19th Century. Slavery today has not improved throughout time. Slaves live horrible lives, they are imprisoned, they are beaten, and they are not paid a single dime for their labor work. When I say that chocolate is the cause for slavery, I am referring to the cocoa beans derived from it. Most of the cases reported are not in the U.S. but that does not mean we are a nation do no enslave people. In the documentary, I found out that slavery is illegal in every country in the world.

After having read the narrative of Frederick Douglas in English class and after watching the documentary I am able to closely relate them to one another. The book is about a boy's life having been born into slavery. He speaks about his first experiences with slavery. This amazing since this narrative centers on slavery which was abolished by the 13th amendment in 1865 and still exists in the year 2006.

Basically, anything that contains chocolate may have been produced by slaves. The only guarantee that the chocolate you are consuming is safe is by buying organic chocolate which is an 100 percent slave-free product. So next time you consume any type of chocolate, I ask you to please think about the people who are enslaved and that are forced to produce it.

Liliana Palmer
Santa Monica

GOT NEWS?

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GUEST COMMENTARY BY DR. LEONARD PEIKOFF

Christmas should be a commercial celebration

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 (e.g., love thy neighbor) that no one takes 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. The result was the desire to celebrate, to revel in the goods and pleasures of life on earth. 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 4th 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 dia-

bolical. But Americans were not to be deterred. Thanks to capitalism, there was enough wealth to make gifts possible, a great productive apparatus to advertise them and make them available cheaply, and a country so content that men wanted to reach out to their friends and express their enjoyment of life. 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, came up with the idea that Santa travels on Christmas Eve in a sleigh pulled by reindeer, 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.

Dr. Leonard Peikoff is the founder of the Ayn Rand Institute (<http://www.aynrand.org/>).

MUSM:

miss you so much

BF:

boyfriend

OLL:

online love

POS:

parent over shoulder

WTGP:

want to go private?

LMIRL:

let's meet in real life

HDOP:

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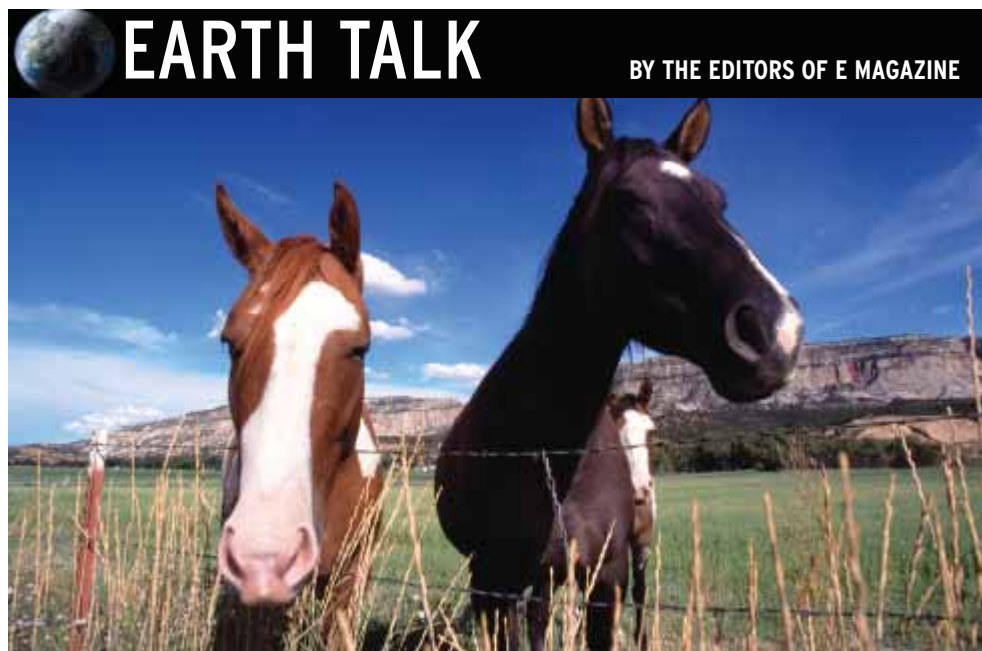


Photo courtesy

OUTLAWS: A bill was passed in September to ban the sale of horses for human consumption.

DEAR EARTHTALK: What is the status of horse slaughter in the U.S., which is done primarily to export the meat to Europe?

J. Worden, Monroe, CT

Much to the delight of horse lovers everywhere, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill (H.R. 503) in September 2006 outlawing the sale and transport of horses for slaughter for human consumption. A related bill, S. 1915, is currently under review by the Senate's Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, which will recommend whether or not to send it up for debate and a vote. Animal advocates are optimistic that the Senate will follow the House's lead and make the bill the law of the land in 2007.

Long a revered symbol of the American West, horses have enjoyed special status among domestic animals for many decades. The horse in North America was once considered just a form of livestock to be utilized for farm work or transportation, but today it stands as a status symbol for those wealthy enough to own and board one. TV and movie Westerns, along with the popularity of modern horseracing, have also changed their image from faceless beasts to individual pets with unique physical and personality traits.

According to the International Fund for Horses, about 65,000 horses — racehorses, workhorses, wild stags and family steeds — are slaughtered each year in the U.S. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) pegs the number closer to 100,000. Meanwhile, Agriculture Canada reports that about 62,000 horses are slaughtered annually in Canada, 40 percent of which are sent across the border from the U.S. Most of the meat processed is sold in Europe and Asia, while a small amount is used to feed zoo animals domestically.

HSUS says that conditions in the slaugh-

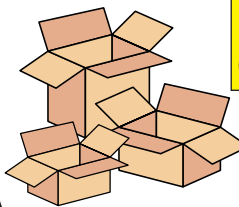
terhouse are stressful and frightening for the horses, and that the slaughtering process itself, which is similar to that for cows and pigs, causes unnecessary duress for the animals. Also at issue is the way horses are transported prior to slaughter. The Equine Protection Network is seeking to ban the use of double-deck trailers to transport live horses. The trailers are designed to move pigs and cattle, and don't provide horses with the headroom to stand comfortably. The U.S. Department of Agriculture created rules governing horse transport in 2002, but animal advocates say they failed to outlaw the trailers outright and still allow horses to be transported for up to 28 hours with no food, water or rest.

The National Horse Protection Coalition promotes a number of alternatives to slaughtering horses, including establishing retirement farms and developing programs to donate, sell or lease unwanted animals for therapeutic riding. Horses could also be sold privately, they say, under binding legal agreements that they not be sold for slaughter. The organization says that even humane euthanasia performed by a veterinarian is preferable to subjecting horses to the cruelties of transport and slaughter.

A few U.S. states — California, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Virginia — have taken it upon themselves to outlaw or regulate horse transport and slaughter, though limited enforcement budgets have hampered the effectiveness of most efforts. Meanwhile, animal advocates are hopeful that the U.S. Senate will come to the rescue with an outright ban and that Canada will eventually follow.

Want to talk environment? Send questions to earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php

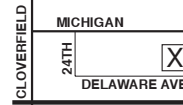
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The Q-Line

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Incidents of gang violence, parking attendants being held-up in city parking structures, school lockdowns, threatening transients, low-priority marijuana use ... with a new chief of police taking the reins last week, much will be made about his priorities for the SMPD. Despite crime statistics having dropped to a 50-year low during his predecessor's run as top cop, Chief Tim Jackman will have his hands full with resident requests. This week's Q-Line question asks:

What should Chief Jackman's priorities be in addressing crime in the City of Santa Monica. Where is more focus needed?

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your answers in next weekend's edition of the Daily Press. Please limit responses to a minute or less.



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SM's winter landscape is ruled by sand, surf

SANDMAN, from page 1

With temperatures hovering in the 70s, for Rodriguez and others this is a winter wonderland: sand, sun and surf.

While many across the country will play in the snow this holiday season, there are more than a handful of locations where people will only experience a white Christmas through decorations and window painting.

And for the people who live in the country's warmer regions, typical winter traditions — from building snowmen to making snow angels — are tackled with a mix of creativity, imagination and tradition.

Take for example, Santa's Enchanted Forest — a Christmas-style theme park and free carnival in Miami where shorts and T-shirts are often the order of the day. Or Oahu, Hawaii, where the season is celebrated at the Hawaii Fire Tribe Winter Solstice Gathering with chanting, dancing, drum-

ming, poetry, and body art.

In New Orleans, folks celebrate the arrival of Papa Noel with (what else?) Creole menus and outdoor musical performances. And while some wintry locations offer ice sculpture competitions, there is no shortage of winter sand-building competitions in warm coastal cities.

"This is how L.A. does it. We build sandmen not snowmen," a DJ on KIIS-FM said, kicking off the building frenzy recently at the famed Santa Monica Pier.

Competition was fierce at the Kohl's Holiday Sandman Building Competition where Rodriguez, a native Californian, battled it out with Matt and Jenny Graham, recent Southern California transplants who utilized the snowman-building skills they developed when they once lived in Salt Lake City.

Rodriguez has visited the snow — in the nearby mountain resort of Big Bear — but

"This is how L.A. does it. We build sandmen not snowmen."

DJ ON KIIS-FM SAID

said it takes different techniques to build a sandman.

With snow, "you roll, roll, roll," she said. "With sand, you pat, pat, pat."

Rodriguez marshaled her family to carry buckets of wet sand from the surf line to build the sandman's base. It took 90 minutes to gather a large enough mound of wet sand to build the sandman.

A short distance away, the Grahams opted to build their sandman close to the shoreline. Rather than give the sandman height and build it upright, they built their sandman — a Santa sandman with a bag of presents — laying down. He used dripping wet sand to curl Santa's beard.

"It is definitely different than snow. The

trick is keeping the sand damp," said Matt Graham, 25.

Rodriguez was awarded best sandman, edging out the Grahams, whose sandman was honored as most festive.

And what is an event on the beach in Southern California without the presence of celebrity competitors?

While Rodriguez and the Grahams worked on the sculptures, basketball player Jordan Farmar and baseball player Eric Gagne built their own sculptures.

Gagne opted to build a reclining snowman lounging in the sand and, of course, wearing Los Angeles Dodger blue. Gagne, a reliever, recently reached a preliminary agreement to play with the Texas Rangers. Farmar, who plays for the L.A. Lakers, opted to build an octopus with a gold and purple hat.

The judges gave Gagne the top celebrity honors, saying his creation — with the help of a professional sand sculptor — best represented the spirit of Southern California's winter.

Gagne, who is from Canada, said he had never celebrated a warm, sandy winter. "I think there should be snow everywhere at this time of year," he said. "But it's hard to complain about this."

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Swindell joins in time to prep new budget

MONEY MANAGER, from page 1

budgets to improve control, and adding performance measures, Ewell said.

At Oceanside, she was responsible for development of a multi-year strategic plan to improve service delivery, as well as its first financial trends analysis and long-term financial plan as a framework for budget development.

"Santa Monica is a beautiful, vibrant and progressive community and its city government is recognized as one of the best in the country," said Swindell. "I'm thrilled and honored to have been selected to become a member of the city team."

Swindell will oversee a city budget of \$458 million and a department with 53 employees.

From 1995 to 2001, Swindell was assistant manager for financial and management services for James City County, Virginia, where she was part of a team that developed a cash flow and investment model that increased the county's investment return by 5 percent, as well as achieving an AA3 bond rating upgrade from Moody's.

She served as director of finance for the City of Poquoson, Virginia, from 1988 to 1995, as internal auditor for The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Williamsburg, Virginia, from 1987 to 1988, and as an auditor for Cooper & Lybrand in Newport News, Virginia, from 1986 to 1987.

Swindell holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in business from the College of William and Mary in Virginia, and is a certified public accountant, internal auditor and

public finance officer.

STREAMING REVENUE

She will be coming aboard just as City Hall enters the first stages of preparing a new budget for the coming fiscal year. Among the challenges Swindell must face, aside from learning her way around town and finding a permanent residence, will be familiarizing herself with the city's many revenue streams.

"I think the city is in fairly good shape financially," Swindell said.

The daughter of a school teacher and former director of the library system in Hampton, Virginia, Swindell said she has always been interested in serving the public. Her father was in the Navy as was her husband.

"It's very gratifying to be part of shaping the community and helping it move forward," Swindell said. "I've always wanted to have a positive impact on the city where I live. There's just something so rewarding about that."

Swindell is married and has one daughter who lives in Huntington Beach and is planning to be married soon.

"It will be very nice to be close to her and her new husband," Swindell said.

After visiting Santa Monica over the weekend, Swindell said she can't wait until she can settle in and enjoy the many amenities Santa Monica has to offer.

"There are so many cultural opportunities, great restaurants," Swindell said. "I'm really looking forward to walking my dog along the boardwalk."

kevinh@smdp.com

Trees represent holiday wishes

TREES OF LIFE, from page 3

hired as the administrator in August.

For close to 20 years, Thousand Oaks-based Hospice of the Conejo, where County served on the board of directors, has held its own Trees of Life program at the Oaks Shopping Center, inviting people to decorate the tree with a star-shaped ornament of tribute. A second tree sits outdoors at the Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks, adorned with laminated stars.

Unlike Woodlawn Cemetery, which is situated at the corner of Pico Boulevard and 14th Street, the tradition at the hospice involves a tree-lighting ceremony.

At the end of the month, the stars will come off the trees and be stored at the hospice, waiting to be picked up.

"It's symbolic," said Sue Boyce, who sits on the board of directors and is chairwoman of a committee overseeing the Trees of Life. "Putting up a star is like having a picture of the person."

In Camarillo, a similar tradition has taken place for two decades. Two trees stand in Constitution Park near City Hall for the Camarillo Hospice's Trees of Life ceremony. But unlike Woodlawn Cemetery and Hospice of the Conejo, these trees are bare.

Camarillo sends a paper star ornament to anyone who makes a donation to the Tree of Life program. The two trees that stand in

Constitution Park are lit with each bulb representing a donation.

Hospice officials planned to hang ornaments this year, but were unable to during the tree-lighting ceremony on Dec. 2 because the city was engulfed in 70 mph wind.

"One of the most important things for people who survived a loved one is that their loved one not be forgotten," said Sandy Nirenberg, executive director of Camarillo Hospice, on Tuesday. "The lights represent a continuing presence of a loved one in their life and in their world."

Since the Woodlawn program is in its inception year, County opted to forego a tree-lighting ceremony. It's a tradition he hopes to adopt beginning next year. The Trees of Life have been popular so far in Woodlawn Cemetery, with even employees participating.

Phyllis Romleski, a cemetery business assistant, put up two ornaments as soon as the trees came out on Dec. 9.

One ornament was for her father, who died in 1990, and the other for her brother-in-law, who recently passed away. Her father's ornament read, "we love you Dad."

"It's a way for me to honor my dad and keep his memory alive," said Romleski on Monday.

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Emily Post's Holiday Tipping Guidelines for 2006

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Checkpoints attempt to curb holiday accidents

SOBRIETY CHECKPOINT, from page 1

ing without a license, two cars were towed and five other drivers received citations for miscellaneous vehicle code infractions, said Padilla.

The checkpoint, during which drivers were randomly selected to determine whether or not they'd been drinking alcohol, was part of the SMPD's efforts to curb drunk driving during the holidays. The checkpoints are funded through a grant from the state Office of Traffic Safety as part of the national "Drunk Driving. Over The Limit.

Under Arrest," campaign aimed at bringing awareness to the community about the dangers of driving while intoxicated during the holiday season.

The month of December is considered to be the deadliest when it comes to traffic accidents involving impaired drivers, according to Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Tuesday announced the award of \$3.7 million to 93 law enforcement agencies across the state to conduct sobriety checkpoints during the holidays and continuing into 2007.

"Public safety is my No. 1 priority,"

Schwarzenegger said. "Driving drunk or otherwise impaired is unacceptable and a serious threat to themselves and to those around them. I am committed to supporting our state's law enforcement with the tools necessary to detect and remove impaired drivers and keep our roadways safe."

In California in 2005, 1,574 people were killed and another 30,810 were injured in alcohol-related crashes, representing an increase of approximately 8 percent in alcohol-related fatalities over 2004.

news@smdp.com

Petitions gathered for Choice

Consumers choose big-box retail stores

By The Associated Press

LONG BEACH — Voters may be left to decide whether big-box retailers that sell groceries can open in the city after a petition drive forced the suspension of an ordinance banning the shops.

City Clerk Larry Herrera announced Monday that the required 21,000 registered voters had signed a petition to overturn the City Council's Sept. 19 vote to ban stores that measure more than 100,000 square feet and designate 10 percent or more of their space to groceries.

The council will decide in January whether to repeal the ordinance, call for a special election on the issue, or try to have the matter placed on the June 3, 2008, ballot.

The petitions were gathered by Long Beach Consumers for Choice, which was formed by Wal-Mart and includes chambers of commerce and builders' groups.

"It's great news," said Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce chief Randy Gordon. "We feel like the people have spoken."

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Vague points in smoking act spark trouble

SMOKING BAN, from page 3

guidelines to try to ease confusion about how the measure would be applied in some 6,000 businesses in and around Las Vegas.

"But he's not a constitutional scholar," Minagil conceded. "He's a medical doctor."

A trio of lawyers representing more than 220 businesses cited affidavits from top southern Nevada law enforcement officials, and told the judge that the act was so vague and so flawed that it was completely unenforceable.

"Vagueness is most important as a constitutional issue when someone can go to jail," said Donald Campbell, a lawyer for supermarkets and convenience stores. He noted that Question 5, approved 54 percent to 46 percent on Nov. 7, makes smoking tobacco a misdemeanor offense.

Pulling a pineapple, a bottle of olives, celery, lemon, lime and whipped cream from a paper bag, Campbell said that by trying to prohibit smoking in bars that serve meals the measure might prevent bartenders from garnishing drinks.

"This court would have to engage in judicial legislation" to let the law go into effect as written, Campbell said.

Nevada Tavern Association lawyer Kirk Lenhard urged Herndon to reject the initiative and let the state Legislature write a law that could pass constitutional muster.

Otherwise, Lenhard said, taverns offering identical services including food, drink and video poker gambling under "restricted" and "unrestricted" state gambling classifications would be treated differently under the smoking measure.

Herndon has expressed concern about whether he would be seen as overruling the will of the voters if he found the measure unconstitutional. His decision Wednesday will be whether to impose a preliminary injunction to prevent the act from taking effect until a full hearing is held and he can decide on the constitutional issues.

Either way, his decision was expected to have statewide effect and appeared headed for an appeal to the state Supreme Court. Herndon's decision to grant a restraining order and hear constitutional arguments prompted law enforcers in other parts of the state to suspend enforcement of the initiative, which was promoted by such health groups as the American Cancer Society, the American Lung Association and the American Heart Association.

The judge withheld an immediate decision whether to allow the powerful Nevada Resort Association to intervene in the case, and pointedly asked a lawyer representing the state's largest casinos and hotels why it appeared to switch positions to support of the measure.

Before the November election, the resort association argued before the Nevada Supreme Court that the measure was unconstitutional.

Lawyer Todd Bice said the association won assurances at that time that the measure would not affect smoking in hotel and motel rooms. It now wants to ensure that the court does not blur the line between bar-restaurants with restricted gambling licenses and large casinos with unrestricted licenses.

"Is this law a model of clarity and simplicity? No," Bice conceded.



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Company execs and Chandler family may bid on Tribune Co.

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The family that formerly owned the Los Angeles Times and a group of Tribune Co. executives led by CEO Dennis FitzSimons may make separate bids for the media company, it was reported Monday.

Members of the Chandler family, which sold Times Mirror to Tribune in 2000 for \$6.5 billion, have talked with billionaire Ron Burkle's investment firm about making a joint offer for some or all of Tribune's assets, the Los Angeles Times reported, citing two people who were familiar with the plans.

Meanwhile, some Tribune managers, including FitzSimons, were expected to enter a bid with the help of three private investment firms, according to the Times, which is the Tribune's largest newspaper.

A Chandler family spokeswoman declined comment on the report Monday.

William Osborn, the lead independent director of Tribune's board of directors who chairs a committee reviewing options for the company, said it is "committed to an open process that maximizes shareholder value."

"From the beginning, the special committee and management agreed that management would not participate as a principal in any of the strategic alternatives without the committee's authorization," Osborn said in a statement. "Management has remained independent and has not aligned itself with any participant in the process."

The Chicago-based company announced

in September it was willing to sell all or part of its assets following pressure from large shareholders including the Chandler family who were disappointed with Tribune's lagging stock price and slumping fortunes.

Tribune owns 11 papers, including its flagship Chicago Tribune, as well as 24 television stations and the Chicago Cubs baseball team.

Last month, Burkle and philanthropist Eli Broad teamed to make a bid for the entire Tribune Co. Music mogul David Geffen reportedly followed with a \$2 billion cash bid for the Los Angeles Times.

Tribune has said it expects to decide whether to sell the company whole or piecemeal by early next year. It remains unclear how the Chandlers and Burkle's company would proceed and whether Broad would be included in a new partnership.

Analyst Alan Mutter said interest by the Chandler and Tribune management shouldn't come as a surprise because there hasn't been a flood of interested buyers.

"In the absence of a successful auction, management could move forward with a bid to take the company private," Mutter told the newspaper. "And in light of that, it appears that the Chandlers and their financial partners are moving to create an opposing offer."

Analysts said selling the company piecemeal has serious tax consequences for Tribune because its newspapers have a low tax basis and individual sales would result in a large tax bill.

Schwarzenegger moves for revision of lethal injection procedure

BY DAVID KRAVETS

AP Legal Affairs Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Monday ordered his staff to begin revising the California's lethal injection procedure to allay concerns raised by a federal judge that condemned inmates are being subjected to unnecessary pain.

The Republican governor was responding to U.S. District Judge Jeremy Fogel's ruling on Friday that declared the state's execution protocol unconstitutional. Fogel noted that executioners were poorly trained, that they worked in dim, cramped quarters and that they failed to properly mix the lethal, three-drug cocktail used to kill condemned inmates.

"We're gonna comply with the judge," Schwarzenegger told reporters in Los Angeles at the California Hospital Medical Center.

Fogel ruled on a lawsuit by a condemned inmate whose execution the San Jose-based judge called off earlier this year amid fears that executioners may not be properly sedating the inmate before administering a paralyzing agent, then finally a heart-stopping drug. An inmate who remains conscious through the entire process may feel excruciating or unnecessary pain, in violation of the Constitution, Fogel ruled.

But while Fogel said the execution protocol was "broken," he noted that it could be "fixed."

Schwarzenegger said Monday that his administration would take "immediate action to resolve court concerns." He ordered his legal affairs secretary, Andrea Lynn Hoch and James Tilton, secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, to come up with a plan to address Fogel's decision.

"I am committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that the lethal injection process is constitutional so that the will of the people is followed and the death penalty is maintained in California," the governor said in a statement.

The Schwarzenegger administration said it was too early to say when the new plan would be ready for California to resume executions.

Fogel reached his decision after holding a four-day hearing in September that revealed prison guards were inadequately trained to participate in executions. One prison official who was part of the execution team had been sanctioned for smuggling drugs into San Quentin State Prison.

Drugs were not properly accounted for, at times they weren't properly mixed, unused drugs were not returned to the prison's pharmacy and executioners worked in the crowded chamber under dim lights, Fogel concluded.

California has been under a capital punishment moratorium since February when Fogel halted the execution of rapist and murderer Michael Morales.

In stopping Morales' execution, Fogel found substantial evidence that the last six men executed at San Quentin might have been conscious and still breathing when lethal drugs were administered — meaning they might have felt unnecessary pain.

Richard Steinken, one of Morales' lawyers, expressed reservations that lethal injection could ever be constitutional.

"Obviously, one of our goals in defending Mr. Morales is trying to keep him alive," Steinken said.

Morales, 47, of Stockton, raped, beat and stabbed Terri Winchell, 17, of Lodi, in 1981. Her body was found in a secluded vineyard.

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OBITUARY

Former World Series MVP dies after cancer battle

BY JOHN NADEL

AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES — Larry Sherry, MVP of the 1959 World Series as a reliever for the Los Angeles Dodgers, has died after a long battle with cancer. He was 71.

Sherry died early Sunday at his home in Mission Viejo, according to his brother, Norm, a former catcher who also played for the Dodgers.

Sherry's two children and several other family members spent Saturday at his home.

"We were all there that day — my brother, George; nieces and nephews, his son and daughter," Norm Sherry said Monday from his home in San Diego. "He had a caregiver there, and died shortly after his daughter left."

Sherry was 2-0 with two saves and an 0.71 ERA to lead the Dodgers past the Chicago White Sox in six games to win the World Series in their second year in Los Angeles. He was the winning pitcher in the fourth and sixth games.

"Larry Sherry was a local product who became a household name in Los Angeles with his World Series heroics in 1959," the Dodgers said in a statement. "He will always be associated with the Dodgers' first championship in Los Angeles, and our deepest sympathies go out to his brother, Norm, and the entire Sherry family."

Sherry had a 53-44 lifetime record with a 3.67 ERA in 400 relief appearances and 16 starts. He pitched for the Dodgers from 1958-63, and later played for the Detroit Tigers, Houston Astros and California Angels before retiring in 1968 after appearing in three games with the Angels. He had a career-high 20 saves for the Tigers in 1966.

Sherry, born July 25, 1935, in Los Angeles, was the youngest of four brothers. He lived in Mission Viejo for the past 36 years.

"He had a tough childhood," Norm Sherry recalled. "He was born clubfooted, doctors had to break his legs and reset them. He wore casts on both legs for the first year of his life. After that, he had to wear special shoes."

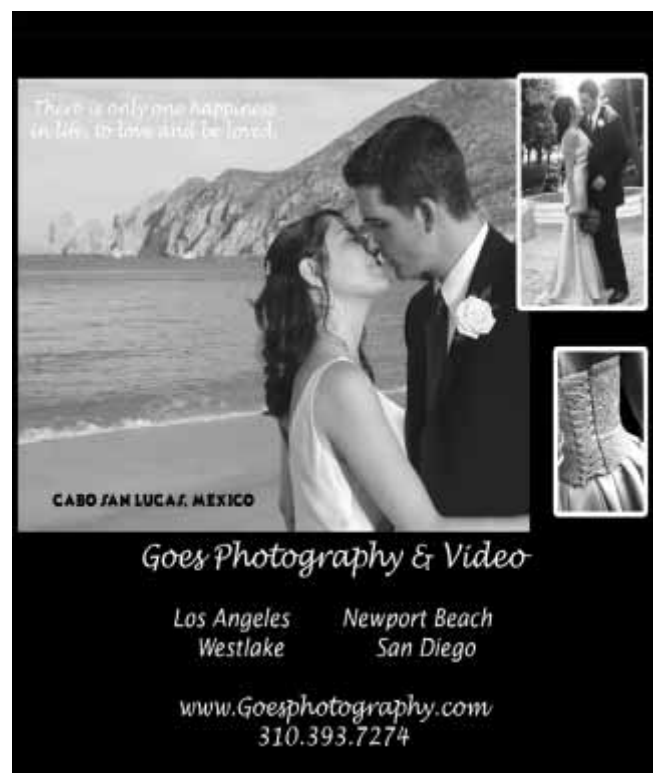
Following retirement, Sherry served as the pitching coach for the Angels and Pittsburgh Pirates and managed in the White Sox organization. Norm Sherry said his brother gave pitching lessons before becoming ill about 12 years ago.

"He was a tough competitor. He was all business when he put that uniform on," Norm Sherry said. "He had a way about him when he came in from the bullpen, he was a mean pitcher, he didn't give any ground to anybody."

"We had Don Drysdale, Stan Williams, Larry, Roger Craig, Ed Roebuck — all guys who if they didn't like the way you looked at them, they'd pitch you inside, good inside."

Norm Sherry, four years older than Larry, said his biggest thrill in baseball came in 1960, when he hit his first major league home run — a game-winner for the Dodgers against Philadelphia in the bottom of the 11th inning. What helped to make it so special was that Larry was the winning pitcher.

"We used to play in the alley way, high school, minor league ball one year," Norm said.



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Racer case concludes

Jury hears closing arguments in Thompson murder case

BY LINDA DEUTSCH

AP Special Correspondent

PASADENA — A prosecutor fell to his knees in front of a jury Monday and held his hands up to imitate a pose an eyewitness described of racing legend Mickey Thompson's wife pleading with a killer for her life moments before she and her husband were gunned down more than 18 1/2 years ago.

Deputy District Attorney Alan Jackson told jurors in his closing argument that Michael Goodwin, Thompson's former partner, is guilty of the murders even though he was not present at the scene and did not pull the triggers.

Goodwin, 61, was a partner with Thompson in the motocross business until their association dissolved into bitter legal battles that left Goodwin owing Thompson a judgment of more than \$700,000.

Arguing for acquittal, defense attorney Elena Saris told jurors that the prosecution had created "a Hollywood version of events" that could not be supported by evidence.

"What really happened we don't know," she said. "The killers were never found. The reason they want you to convict is that someone has to pay. It's a terrible crime. There's a rip in the fabric of society when someone is murdered. But this is not about closing a case by having a Hollywood unsolved mystery ending."

Saris said the prosecution presented only a theory, not evidence.

She said she knew witnesses had described Goodwin as brash, loud and a braggart and quoted him repeatedly as making threats against Thompson. But, standing with her hands on Goodwin's shoulders, she said, "Regardless of whether you like this man — they've told you what a jerk he is — the law protects people who are unpopular."

"We're putting our faith in you to do right by Mr. Goodwin, to do justice."

Jackson spent much of his argument explaining the laws of

aiding and abetting and of premeditation.

He said the murders were planned by Goodwin, that his own words in multiple threats to Thompson and to others proved that he was planning to have his opponent executed.

"This case is about a man whose ego was so fragile ... he could not face the possibility of failing. In 1988, Michael Goodwin was used to winning at all costs. But he could not win at any cost against Mickey Thompson," Jackson said.

"Michael Goodwin was being financially crippled by Mickey Thompson and he wasn't used to it," Jackson said.

The prosecutor said Goodwin's anger and frustration over losing lawsuits to Thompson culminated in the March 16, 1988, murders carried out by two unknown killers on bicycles who rode into the gated Los Angeles suburb of Bradbury where the couple lived and shot them outside their house.

"Mickey Thompson was executed at 6:05 a.m. but not before he had to watch his wife die," Jackson said.

He said the defense contention that the killings resulted from a botched robbery defied logic.

Jackson said jurors should not be troubled by the fact that Goodwin was not present because two eyewitnesses came forward to say they saw him casing the area from a car three days before the killings.

"We don't have to show that he even knew the killers as long as it was a concerted act," he said. "... It is as if Mike Goodwin pulled the trigger and shot that white-hot bullet through Trudy's head and shot the other bullet through Mickey Thompson's head. It was well-timed, well-coordinated and almost perfectly executed. The killers got away. These people were obviously working together."

In the defense argument, Saris said there was no evidence to support the claim that Goodwin hired killers or that he planned the crime. "There is no evidence connecting Michael Goodwin with these murders because Michael Goodwin was not involved with these murders," she said.

Saris reminded jurors that according to the judge's instructions regarding circumstantial evidence, if there are two ways a piece of evidence can be interpreted, one pointing toward guilt and one pointing toward innocence, they must accept the one pointing toward innocence.

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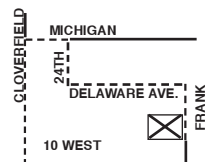


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TO LAXPolygamist church trust
rich in land, but cash-poor

By The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — A polygamist church trust is rich in land, but cash-poor and unable to pay an accountant or lawyers appointed to manage it.

The \$110 million financial arm of the Fundamental Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints holds 95 percent of the property in Hildale, Utah, and Colorado City, Ariz., where most members live.

Land and homes in Bountiful, British Columbia are also part of the trust.

"The fiduciary didn't pay our last bill because he didn't have enough cash," attorney Jeffrey Shields said.

He estimates his law firm is owed about \$500,000 for work done for accountant Bruce Wisan and the trust over the past six months. Wisan said his firm is owed about \$100,000.

All other bills have been paid, however, and the trust isn't approaching bankruptcy, he said.

"Right now, I'm able to cover three to four months of ongoing bills," Wisan said.

"I've talked to a bank about a possible bridge loan, but I'd like to not do that. One bank has already turned me down because it is such an unusual situation."

He said he hopes to sell some trust property to generate income.

Wisan was appointed guardian in 2005, after state attorneys said leaders of the FLDS church, including president Warren Jeffs, had mismanaged trust assets. A judge has removed them as managers.

Jeffs, 51, is in jail awaiting an April trial on charges of rape as an accomplice in Washington County.

His church has an estimated 10,000 members and practices polygamy and arranged marriages. The mainstream Mormon church renounced polygamy in 1890 and disavows any connection to the FLDS.

Judge Denise Lindberg recently signed off on a plan to allow trust beneficiaries to own their own homes, whether they are current or former FLDS members.

A hearing on paying legal fees is scheduled for Jan. 22.

Polygamist sentenced to prison time
for sex offenses with underage girl

By The Associated Press

KINGMAN, Ariz. — A Colorado City polygamist convicted of sex offenses linked to his marriage to an underage girl has been sentenced to nine months in prison.

David Bateman, 49, was convicted Oct. 25 of sexual conduct with a minor and conspiracy after a trial in Mohave County Superior Court.

Prosecutors said Bateman fathered a child with the 17-year-old girl, who he had taken as a polygamous wife.

The alleged victim, now 22, told Judge James Chavez before Bateman was sentenced Monday that she was not a victim. Midge Steed described Bateman as a "loving husband."

Mohave County Attorney Matt Smith said Arizona law rather than young women determines what constitutes a victim.

Bateman is a member of the Fundamental Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, a polygamous sect based on the Arizona-Utah border.

Bateman faced up to two years in prison.

Also Monday, another of the eight men originally charged in Mohave County with

sex offenses related to plural marriages with teenage girls pleaded no contest to child abuse.

Vergel Jessop, 47, had also been charged with sexual conduct with a minor and conspiracy but pleaded to the lesser charge. He will be sentenced to three years of probation on Jan. 16 under terms of a plea agreement, with no additional jail time. He must also register as a sex offender, according to court officials.

Bateman and one other man have been convicted at trial, one man was acquitted and one case was dismissed by the state because the defense proved the alleged victim and the defendant lived outside Mohave County.

With Jessop's plea, only three other men still face trials, expected early next year.

The leader of the FLDS, Warren Jeffs, faces trial in Utah on two counts of rape as an accomplice. He is accused of forcing a 14-year-old girl to marry and have sex with an older cousin.

Jeffs, 51, has pleaded not guilty. He is being held without bail pending a trial set for April.

Jeffs was on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list when he was arrested Aug. 28 in a traffic stop north of Las Vegas.

Santa Monica Close-up
A Photo Essay a Day

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Climbers search narrows to rugged section of mountain

BY JOSEPH B. FRAZIER

Associated Press Writer

HOOD RIVER, Ore. — The search for two climbers still missing on Mount Hood narrowed Tuesday to a small rugged section of ridge and glacier on the dangerous north side, but searchers say it has had up to 10 feet of snow since the two men, and another found dead, were reported missing.

The body of Kelly James, 48, of Dallas, Texas, was removed by helicopter Monday from the 11,239-foot summit after rescue workers winched it up from a snow cave about 300 feet down the steep north side.

Hood River County Sheriff Joe Wampler said James had an "obvious" arm injury. Wampler said the other climbers had likely left their injured companion in the cave to find help, but had to dig a shallow cave of their own on a steep slope as the bad weather worsened.

Wampler said the search for Brian Hall, 47, also of Dallas, and Jerry "Nikko" Cooke, 36, of New York City will continue for now as a rescue effort, not a recovery operation. But more bad weather is expected at midweek and Wampler said the chances for survival are less if the two were without shelter.

"If they did not get in a hole somewhere, we might be beyond survivability periods," Wampler said. "You can last a long time in a hole. So we are looking for a hole."

Blizzard conditions severely curtailed early search efforts but weather improved over the weekend, when helicopter crews spotted a Y-shaped climbing harness anchored to the side of the mountain.

Search crews on Sunday found a snow cave and equipment but no climbers. They searched for a second cave and found the one containing James' body.

Wampler said he is increasingly leaning toward the likelihood of a climbing accident.

The place below the second cave is called "the gullies," with a 60-degree slope and a treacherous 2,500-foot drop-off. About 13 climbers have died in the area in the past 40 years, Wampler said.

James made a cell phone call from the cave on Dec. 10, telling his family the party was in trouble and the others had gone for help.

Wampler said it appears the three got to the summit Dec. 8 after an exhausting and technically difficult climb and had planned to descend the gentler south side to Timberline Lodge that night.

He said they apparently missed the descent point known as the Pearly Gates and decided to dig in and spend the night a few hundred feet over the steep north side.

"At some point they were standing there clipped into something, probably because it was so windy there. I mean this is a really steep, dangerous place on the mountain," Wampler said.

The "something" was the Y-shaped harness fastened to the mountain wall by an ice anchor that the men had used to stay in place in their shallow caves. It was spotted by Spec. Tim Handforth, flight engineer on the Pendleton-based Oregon National Guard Chinook helicopter that was using the clear weather to seek traces of the three.

Handforth said he was attracted to the straight line of the harness, a line out of place on the rugged mountainside. It set rescue crews on the spot, near to where James' phone call had been traced.

Rescuers said they found a soaked cell phone with James, whose identity was confirmed later Monday by jewelry, tattoos and scars.

Well-equipped survivors have survived for

many days in snow caves. The three, all seasoned climbers, were traveling light for a quick climb and may not have carried much extra food, rescue workers said.

Capt. Mike Ross of the Air Force Reserve's Portland-based 304th Search and Rescue Squadron said the effort topped any he knew of on Mount Hood.

He said survival odds drop with time "but some people beat the odds."

Company to sell Steamboat Springs resort for \$265M

BY SANDY SHORE

AP Business Writer

DENVER — American Skiing Co. said Tuesday it has entered into an agreement to sell Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp., one of the nation's largest ski areas, for \$265 million in cash to Canadian resort operator Intrawest Corp.

The move, which is subject to regulatory approval, would bolster Intrawest's resort holdings in Colorado to three while helping American Skiing's bottom line.

"At the end of the day it's a transaction that is the right thing to do for American Skiing Co. and creates a tremendous amount of value for us," B.J. Fair, president and chief executive officer of American Skiing, told The Associated Press.

In a statement, Intrawest President Alex Wasilov said the acquisition fits with the company's strategy to expand through acquisitions.

The sale will include the resort at Steamboat Springs about 110 miles northwest of Denver, some real estate assets, a hotel and the company's interest in the Walton Pond Apartments. The privately held Intrawest also agreed to assume \$4 million in debt. The deal is expected to close by March.

American Skiing President and Chief Executive Officer B.J. Fair said proceeds from the sale would be used to reduce outstanding debt and to focus on developing other properties.

American Skiing, which also owns resorts at Killington, Vt., and Sugarloaf/USA in Maine, announced plans to sell the Steamboat Springs resort in July, citing favorable market conditions.

In October 2005, privately held Starwood Capital Groups purchased a controlling interest in California's Mammoth Mountain Ski Area for \$365 million.

Based in Park City, Utah, American Skiing purchased the Steamboat Springs and California's Heavenly ski resorts for \$288.3 million in 1997.

In 2002, American Skiing agreed to sell the Colorado resort to an investor group for about \$91 million but backed out of that agreement and later sold Heavenly to Vail Resorts Inc.

Fair said there was a fair amount of interest in Steamboat Springs this time but declined to identify other parties, citing confidentiality agreements.

American Skiing also owns Killington, Pico and Mount Snow resorts in Vermont; Sunday River and Sugarloaf/USA in Maine and the Canyons in Utah, among other properties.

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Paying for property while protecting profits

DAYS ON THE MARKET

BY JODI SUMMERS

When last we met, you read about identifying fixer properties with the greatest profit potential, and we noted how, using Internal Revenue Code 121, you can fix and flip your primary residence every 24 months, without limit, as per your accountant's advice. This week, we'd like to enlighten you to ways to pay for these properties with the least out of pocket expense.

A major advantage of becoming a "serial home seller" is that you qualify for owner-occupant mortgage financing from conventional lenders. An experienced loan agent

will know an array of exotic loans that might suit your 24-month hold plus sell objective. Your loan officer will have the skinny on adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs), which have lower payments in the early years than fixed-rate mortgages (FRMs). Among different types of ARMs, those with a short initial rate period have lower initial rates and payments than those with longer initial rate periods, but carry greater risk of future rate and payment increases.

In the U.S. 40-year mortgages recently became popular in the sub-prime category, loans for consumers with blemished credit.

"We've seen 45-year mortgages being offered," reveals Mark Douglass, a senior director at Fitch Ratings, which analyzes risk for investors. "It's rather early to say whether [the 45-year loan] will become as popular as the 40-year ... [but] there's good reason to believe that the 45s will catch on,

to some extent."

Stretching out the amortization means a smaller monthly payment. A 30-year, \$100,000 mortgage, for instance, at 6.5 percent, carries a monthly tab of about \$632. The amount drops to \$585 on a 40-year mortgage, \$573 at 45 years.

"One of the things that the 40s or 45s or 50s have going for them is that you don't have the same kind of payment shock that you have with an option adjustable rate mortgage or an interest-only loan," validates Douglass.

Interest-only and adjustable-rate mortgages are both well suited for 24-month holds. Many FRM and ARM programs now offer an interest-only (IO) option on which the borrower need only pay interest for up to 10 years. But lenders charge a higher rate (or points) for the option, and payments in the later years are larger.

Another option is 100 percent financing. This is available only if you meet the following criteria —

- (1) A FICO (Fair, Isaac Corp.) credit score of 700 or higher, and
- (2) good income.

"Given the prices of various mortgages in the market, your selection of a mortgage type (including an IO option) should be governed by: 1) Your time horizon — how long you expect to have the mortgage, and how certain you are about it; 2) Your preference (if any) for low required payments in the early years of the loan; and 3) Your tolerance for the risk of higher interest rates and payments in the future," observes Jack Guttentag, Professor of Finance Emeritus at the Wharton School of the University of

Pennsylvania.

A loan for the rich is a pledged-asset mortgage. Offered by big brokerage houses, these loans allow affluent borrowers to leverage their investment portfolios as a guarantee for a loan.

Clients "want to be able to buy a home without having to liquidate assets and alter their investment strategy," said Richard Musci, chief lending products officer at Charles Schwab Bank, which recently began offering 100 percent financing to clients with portfolios of \$250,000 or more.

A Delayed-Payment Mortgage is structured as such: For the initial six months, pay nothing. For the next 9 1/2 years, pay only the interest. Then, for the final 20 years, the loan is fully amortized — payments are based on the entire loan balance — until maturity.

Pay-Option Loans allow borrowers four different choices every month.

To finance the cost of the improvements, a home equity credit line is usually the least expensive and easiest to obtain.

Thanks to Internal Revenue Code 121, fix-up profits home profits can be tax-free when the principal residence is sold. You can fix and flip your primary residence every 24 months, without limit.

And you thought your friends who were always getting new cars were cool.

Jodi Summers is Director of the Investment Division at Boardwalk Realty. For your real estate needs, e-mail Jodi Summers at jodis@boardwalkrealty.com, or call (310) 309-4219. Visit her Web sites at www.SocalInvestmentRealEstate.com or www.santamonicalandmarks.com.

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THE HOA ADVISOR

BY MICHAEL CHULAK

Contractors get compensation

I am a licensed real estate agent working for a large franchised brokerage firm. I was recently seriously injured in connection with my work, which I reported to my broker. I was advised that the company does not carry workers' compensation insurance because it considers its agents to be independent contractors. Do I have any recourse?

Yes. Although independent contractors are generally excluded from coverage under workers' compensation laws, the State Department of Industrial Relations and Employment Development Department have taken the position that real estate agents are to be treated as employees for workers' compensation insurance purposes. You should contact an employment lawyer to secure your rights. Your employer can still be held liable.

I work for a title insurance company as a title agent. I am aware that my employer is not permitted by law to compensate real estate agents for referring business to us. Can I, as an individual, provide compensation to real estate agents in order to obtain business?

No. An employee of a title insurance company who pays compensation or other consideration (directly or indirectly) to a real estate licensee, or a real estate licensee who receives such compensation or other consideration from an employee of a title insurance company (as an inducement to receive business) is guilty of commercial bribery pursuant to section 641.4 of the California Penal Code.

Commercial bribery is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for not more than one year, or by a fine of \$10,000 for each unlawful transaction, or by both.

Our homeowner association is holding several unpaid small claims court judgments resulting from the non-payment of assessments. How can we collect the amounts owing?

There is insufficient space available to describe all of the collection alternatives available to you.

Assuming you have a management company, it should be able to assist you by holding a debtor's examination and then selecting one or more courses of collection action. This is a service that high level management companies generally offer their clients. Some alternatives include:

Garnishing wages, Seizing accounts receivable, Seizing rental income, Seizing bank and/or savings accounts, Seizing securities and Seizing other non-exempt personal property.

Regardless of the course(s) of collection action taken, an abstract of judgment should always be recorded in the county or counties where the debtor is most likely to own or acquire real property. The recordation of an abstract of judgment will cause the judgment to "attach itself" to any real property owned or later acquired by the debtor. It is effective for ten years and can be renewed.

Michael T. Chulak is the founder of Michael T. Chulak & Associates, a Law Corporation, based in Agoura Hills. Questions can be sent by e-mail to info@MTCLaw.com. Answers are general in nature. An attorney should always be consulted when legal advice is needed.

Reinvesting proceeds



IN YOUR SPACE

BY CHRISTINA S. PORTER

A 1031 exchange — also known as a “Starker” exchange or a tax-deferred exchange — permits investment property owners to sell a property and defer tax payments by reinvesting the proceeds into a “like-kind” investment property or properties. A 1031 exchange is enabled by Section 1031 in the Internal Revenue Code.

To qualify for a 1031 exchange, investors are not allowed access to proceeds from the sale of the relinquished property. However, if carefully planned and done with the right “intent,” it is possible to have access to the equity and avoid the IRS deeming the sale a “taxable event.”

Allowable access to the funds can be accomplished by refinancing prior to the sale of the relinquished property or after the purchase of the replacement property.

How the IRS decides when refinancing is appropriate is a gray area. The best guidance can be found by reviewing past IRS decisions. According to case law, the amount of time between the refinance and the sale of the property (the closer the refinance to the close of escrow, the higher the chance of the exchange being disallowed) along with the intent of the exchanger and who's lending the money (family members are not acceptable “lenders”) are key factors indicating the appropriateness of investors' intent.

Should the IRS choose to audit a refinanced exchange, investors with a good “non tax” reason usually win. When the purpose of the refinance is to avoid payment of taxes or if the refinance appears to be just another “step” in a series of transactions designed to avoid the payment of taxes,

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Brooklyn	NY	7%	3,200	\$1,300,000
Chicago	IL	15%	3,000	\$1,850,000
Paris	TN	10%	54,654	\$3,000,000
Burbank	CA	7%	166,216	\$27,963,000
Tenant in Common/Alternatives (No Management)				
Type	State	Minimum Investment	Year1/Year 5 Cash On Cash	
Retail Center	IN	\$175,000	7.4%/11.2%	
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Critical coastline call

Bush backs law to upgrade tsunami warning system

BY MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Bush is expected to sign a bill to upgrade and modernize the nation's tsunami warning system, nearly two years after an Indian Ocean tsunami killed some 230,000 people in a dozen countries.

A White House spokesman said Bush is likely to sign the measure this week. The legislation, approved by Congress earlier this month, will bolster a tsunami detection and warning system in the Pacific Ocean, as well as expand it to any area in the Atlantic and Caribbean considered at risk by federal officials.

"The Indian Ocean tragedy reminded us of the need to have the best early warning and evacuation plan in place," said Rep. David Wu, D-Ore.

The bill authorizes \$135 million over five years to increase the number of deep-ocean buoys used to detect potentially devastating waves; requires certification of detection and monitoring equipment; and establishes a federal-state coordinating committee for tsunami detection.

Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, said the bill will provide important warning, outreach and education programs to help communities at risk of a tsunami. A 1964 earthquake in Alaska and a tsunami that followed killed 131 people. The 9.2 magnitude quake was the strongest ever recorded in North America.

"Alaskans, more than most Americans, know firsthand the destruction tsunamis can cause. Just moving a quarter mile from the beach can save lives if people know to do it," Stevens said.

Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., said better and more reliable tsunami detection is critical for millions of people who live and work along the Pacific Coast.

The 680-mile long Cascadia subduction zone lies off the coasts of Washington and Oregon and is similar in size and geologic character to the fault responsible for the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The last major Cascadia quake occurred 300 years ago and hit the West Coast with an estimated 30-foot high ocean surge.

The U.S. Geological Survey estimates a 10 percent to 14 percent chance of another major Cascadia quake within the next 50 years. A tsunami generated in the subduction zone or in Puget Sound would allow for less than 20 minutes warning, making tsunami education and efficient evacuation plans essential, Cantwell said.

"Alaskans, more than most Americans, know firsthand the destruction tsunamis can cause. Just moving a quarter mile from the beach can save lives if people know to do it."

SEN. TED STEVENS
R-ALASKA

The Bush administration plans a network of 38 high-tech buoys attached to pressure recorders on the ocean floor. Twenty-five buoys would be added to the six now in the Pacific, including two as back-ups to existing ones off the coast of Alaska.

The new legislation would build on that plan and require the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to help assess the vulnerability of coastal areas, as well as increase tsunami education in local communities.

Wildlife Service rejects environmental groups efforts for protections

BY SANDRA CHEREB

Associated Press Writer

RENO, Nev. — For the second time in three years, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Tuesday rejected efforts by environmental groups to impose Endangered Species Act protections for a population of sage grouse found along the Nevada-California line.

The petitions for the Mono Basin sage grouse did not contain "substantial scientific or commercial information" to continue with an in-depth analysis to determine if such protections are warranted, the agency said in an initial finding published in Tuesday's Federal Register.

Environmental groups responded swiftly, saying lawsuits would follow.

"They have just bought themselves a one-way ticket back to court," said Kieran Suckling, policy director for the Center of Biological Diversity in Tucson, Ariz.

Still, conservation groups were encouraged by the agency's acknowledgment that the population found along the Sierra range is genetically unique from greater sage grouse populations around the West.

"There is substantial information indicating that Mono Basin area sage grouse are genetically distinct from other greater sage grouse populations," the published finding said, though one Fish and Wildlife official in Reno said the comment is misleading.

"We believe it may be, upon further analysis," said Laurie Sada, assistant field supervisor in Reno.

"There is some information that they're genetically distinct," Sada said. "But no one has yet described where the boundaries of that uniqueness are or the extent of that uniqueness."

The bird's range encompasses areas of Carson City, Lyon, Mineral, Esmeralda and Douglas counties in Nevada and Alpine, Inyo and Mono counties in California.

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White House says more troops may go to Iraq

BY ROBERT BURNS

AP Military Writer

WASHINGTON — The White House said Tuesday that increasing U.S. troops in Iraq is an option under consideration and denied that there are differences with the Joint Chiefs of Staff over that idea.

White House press secretary Tony Snow emphasized that no decisions have been made about changing U.S. policy in Iraq.

"There's an assumption that people have been given marching orders, and at this point, the president is asking folks to take a look at a number of things," Snow said.

"I think people are trying to create a fight between the president and the Joint Chiefs when one does not exist," Snow said at a White House briefing. He would not disclose if Bush was leaning one way or the other about increasing troops in Iraq or a new direction in U.S. policy. According to some accounts, the White House is pushing the idea of a surge in troops and the Joint Chiefs oppose it.

The White House has said Bush will announce his decisions in January.

Asked again about whether there were conflicting opinions between the White House and the Joint Chiefs on how to proceed, Snow said: "What I'm saying is this budding narrative of the president locking horns with the joint chiefs is tonally inaccurate."

Robert Gates, the new defense secretary, wasted no time on Monday spelling out the stakes he sees in Iraq.

In his first public remarks as Pentagon chief, Gates warned that failure in Iraq would be a "calamity" that would haunt the United States for years. He said he would go there soon to consult with commanders.

"I think people are trying to create a fight between the president and the Joint Chiefs when one does not exist."

TONY SNOW
WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

Underscoring eroding security in Iraq, a Pentagon report — issued just hours after Gates was sworn in as the nation's 22nd secretary of defense — said the number of insurgent and sectarian attacks had risen to the highest level in years. It said civil war remains a possibility and urged the Iraqi government to act with urgency to prevent collapse.

Gates sketched out an agenda of reversing the downward spiral in Iraq, attending to resurgent violence in Afghanistan and pushing for the military modernization that was a priority of his predecessor, Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Iraq, he said, comes first.

Refuges open gates to traditional style of Christmas tree cutting

BY JEANNETTE J. LEE

Associated Press Writer

KENAI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, Alaska — "Timber!"

Seven-year-old Zack Selinger scrambled to his feet as the white spruce he had felled with a hand saw tipped gently into his father's arms.

"We should have brought a snowmachine," he said, as his dad, Jeff, began hauling the family Christmas tree over the tussocks of a frozen swamp in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

"That's the easy way out, bud," said Jeff, as the two tramped through the lightly falling snow. "We gotta do it the old-fashioned way."

For most Americans, the old-fashioned way means picking out a well-manicured conifer at a country Christmas tree farm instead of a grocery store parking lot or big box store. But the Selingers live near one of a few wildlife refuges in the country that allow the cutting of wild evergreens at Christmas for free. Each year, they simply head into the forest.

Managers say the annual harvests epitomize the refuges' mission of dovetailing public land use with habitat preservation. Many of the nation's 564 federal refuges also allow hunting, fishing and chopping trees for firewood.

The Kenai refuge is preserving a local family tradition that does little damage, if any, to the wild community of moose, bear and salmon streams, according to park ranger Candace Ward.

"You have an activity that not very many people are doing, so taking one tree is not a big

deal," said Ward who staffs the visitors center 150 miles south of Anchorage.

At least two refuges cut down the trees anyway as part of their forest management programs, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which oversees the refuges.

Two-day evergreen harvests held for the past five years in Minnesota's Rydell National Wildlife Refuge are part of a program to raze 60,000 non-native spruce trees and bring back the original sugar maple and American basswood. Unlike spruce, the indigenous forest forms a protective canopy for neotropical birds migrating from Central and South America.

Refuge managers aim to rid the refuge of the last 25,000 Colorado Blue and Black Hill spruce trees, which homesteaders had planted to shield crops from the wind. Families took home 600 spruce this year, including some 25-footers, said refuge manager Dave Bennett.

"Ultimately, we could have done all of it ourselves, but this is a good way to partner with the public," Bennett said.

In Maine, Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge integrates the harvest with a 150-350 acre clear-cutting program intended to stagger the ages of trees. Residents from nearby Calais, population 4,000, have come to the refuge for at least 25 years to comb the stands of indigenous balsam fir.

"We want a diverse age group of vegetation throughout the habitat to maximize it for various bird species," said Robert Peyton, deputy refuge manager. The annual clear-cut benefits one of Moosehorn's flagship species, the American woodcock, which prefers dense stands of early-growth forest.

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Gates takes on stakes

UP TO THE TEST: Defense secretary ready to take on Iraq

BY ROBERT BURNS
AP Military Writer

WASHINGTON — Robert Gates, the new defense secretary, wasted no time spelling out the stakes he sees in Iraq. In his first public remarks as Pentagon chief, Gates warned Monday that failure in Iraq would be a “calamity” that would haunt the United States for years. He said he would go there soon to consult with commanders.

Underscoring eroding security in Iraq, a Pentagon report — issued just hours after Gates was sworn in as the nation’s 22nd secretary of defense — said the number of insurgent and sectarian attacks had risen to the highest level in years. It said civil war remains a possibility and urged the Iraqi government to act with urgency to prevent collapse.

Gates sketched out an agenda of reversing the downward spiral in Iraq, attending to resurgent violence in Afghanistan and pushing for the military modernization that was a priority of his predecessor, Donald H. Rumsfeld. Iraq, he said, comes first.

“All of us want to find a way to bring America’s sons and daughters home again,” Gates told a few hundred people in a Pentagon auditorium, including President Bush, Cabinet secretaries, members of Congress, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Gates’ wife and mother. Rumsfeld, who handed off his authority earlier Monday in a private event, did not attend.

“As the president has made clear,” Gates said, “we simply cannot afford to fail in the Middle East. Failure in Iraq at this juncture would be a calamity that would haunt our nation, impair our credibility and endanger Americans for decades to come.”

Gates has not tipped his hand on the kinds of changes in Iraq strategy he thinks may be needed. He said that since his Senate confirmation in early December he has held in-depth discussions with Bush on Iraq policy.

More broadly, Gates has said he will keep an open mind about other issues at the Pentagon, including proposals by the heads of the Army and Marine Corps to increase the size of their services to cope with the strains of war. Last week, Gen. Peter Schoomaker, the Army’s top commander, warned that his force “will break” without thousands more active duty troops and greater use of the reserves.

Retired Army Brig. Gen. Kevin Ryan, a senior fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, said in an interview Monday that he feels certain Gates will have the latitude within the administration to push for a bigger Army and Marine Corps. “The question is going to be how high” to go, Ryan said.

At the Pentagon ceremony, Bush said he is confident Gates, 63, will bring a fresh perspective to the Iraq problem.

“He knows the stakes in the war on terror,” Bush said. “He recognizes this is a long struggle against an enemy unlike any our nation has fought before. He understands that defeating

the terrorists and the radicals and the extremists in Iraq and the Middle East is essential to leading toward peace.”

Bush made no mention of his plan for changing Iraq strategy, which he has said will be unveiled next month.

Amid growing speculation that Bush will choose to send tens of thousands more U.S. troops to Baghdad in a reinvigorated attempt to quell the sectarian violence, a leading Democrat in Congress cautioned against that move.

“Everything I’ve heard and everything I know to be true lead me to believe that this increase at best won’t change a thing, and at worst could exacerbate the situation even further,” said Rep. Ike Skelton, the Missouri Democrat who will become chairman of the House Armed Services Committee in January.

“As the president has made clear we simply cannot afford to fail in the Middle East. Failure in Iraq at this juncture would be a calamity that would haunt our nation, impair our credibility and endanger Americans for decades to come.”

ROBERT GATES
DEFENSE SECRETARY

U.S. commanders moved several thousand more U.S. troops into Baghdad last summer in a bid to tamp down the violence. The move worked briefly, but the violence rebounded quickly, according to the Pentagon report sent to Congress on Monday.

The Pentagon report said attacks on U.S. and Iraqi troops and Iraqi civilians jumped sharply in recent months to the highest level since Iraq regained its sovereignty in June 2004. From mid-August to mid-November, the weekly average number of attacks increased 22 percent from the previous three months. The worst violence was in Baghdad and in the western province of Anbar, long the focus of activity by Sunni insurgents, the report said.

A bar chart in the Pentagon’s report gave no exact numbers but indicated the weekly average had approached 1,000 in the latest period, compared with about 800 per week from the May-to-August period. Statistics provided separately by the Pentagon said weekly attacks had averaged 959 in the latest period.

U.S., North Korea meet over financial restrictions on sidelines of nuclear talks

BY MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press Writer

BEIJING — U.S. and North Korean financial experts met Tuesday over Washington’s campaign to isolate the communist country from the international banking system, the key stumbling block in negotiations over Pyongyang’s nuclear program.

The meeting came on the sidelines of renewed multinational nuclear negotiations, which North Korea had refused to attend for 13 months in anger over Washington’s black-listing of a Macau bank where Pyongyang deposited \$24 million.

The U.S. alleged the bank was complicit in the North’s counterfeiting of \$100 bills and money laundering to sell weapons of mass destruction. American officials have sought to rally other countries to bar any North Korean accounts, saying all the country’s transactions are suspect.

The North and U.S. delegations also held their first one-on-one meeting over the nuclear standoff Tuesday afternoon, the Chinese press center said.

All six nations involved in the nuclear negotiations — the two Koreas, Russia, China, Japan and the U.S. — met for two hours Tuesday morning at a Chinese state guesthouse in the second day of talks. Negotiators focused on the logistics of implementing a pledge made by the North in September 2005 to abandon its nuclear weapons program in exchange for security guarantees and economic aid.

During its long boycott of talks, North Korea test-fired a new long-range missile in July and then set off an underground atomic blast Oct. 9. The country agreed to return to negotiations because the U.S. said it could discuss the financial issue in separate meetings.

Representing the U.S. at the financial talks was Daniel Glaser, the Treasury Department’s deputy assistant secretary for terrorist financing and financial crimes. The North Korean delegation was led by O Kwang Chol, president of the North’s Foreign Trade Bank of Korea. The talks were held at the U.S. Embassy, an embassy official said on condition of anonymity because of policy.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said at a regular news briefing that Beijing hopes the two sides can “solve the issue properly.”

“We wish to see them make positive achievements that we believe will facilitate the process of the (nuclear) talks,” he said.

It is unlikely, however, that the U.S. would bow to the North’s demands to remove the restrictions because Washington views them as a legal defense against criminal activity.

The isolated regime staked out a tough position as the six-nation talks opened Monday, demanding a long list of previously stated preconditions for its disarmament, including the lifting the U.S. financial restrictions and all U.N. sanctions.

North Korea also insisted it be treated as a full-fledged nuclear power, meaning the arms reductions should be mutual. But the United States has said time was running out for Pyongyang to dismantle its nuclear arsenal and threatened more sanctions.

U.S. envoy Christopher Hill told reporters Tuesday morning that “not too much progress” had been made toward implementing the North’s 2005 agreement to disarm.

A South Korean official said some countries proposed forming working-level groups to implement the deal and “there have been many opinions on the issue.”

“But no consensus has been reached and the issue is still in discussion,” the officials said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the diplomacy.

The meetings “were held in a much more serious atmosphere,” he said. “The countries “could better understand each other’s position.”

Pyongyang has insisted that the talks be transformed into negotiations over mutual arms reductions in which it would be accorded equal footing with the United States. If its demands aren’t met, the North said it would increase its nuclear arsenal.

“It is extremely regrettable that North Korea claims to be a nuclear weapons state,” Japan’s chief Cabinet spokesman Yasuhisa Shiozaki said Tuesday in Tokyo. “While the comments were expected, nonetheless, the discussions should be more positive to bring about progress.”

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FOOTBALL

Health is one reason why L.T. is having jaw-dropping season

BY BERNIE WILSON
AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO — LaDainian Tomlinson said his jaw is fine.

So is the rest of the running back’s body, which is why he’s having, well, such a jaw-dropping season.

Tomlinson got popped on the side of the face late in the San Diego Chargers’ 20-9 win over the Kansas City Chiefs on Sunday night. By that time, Tomlinson had set even more records and the streaking Chargers were that much closer to securing home-field advantage throughout the AFC play-offs.

Tomlinson reported no serious damage after having X-rays on his left temporo-mandibular joint (TMJ), which connects the jaw to the skull.

“It’s nothing that’s significant,” Tomlinson said Monday, the day after he had another sensational game, this one highlighted by an 85-yard scoring run, the longest of his six-year career. He ran for a season-best 199 yards and two more touchdowns.

Tomlinson, the front-runner for NFL MVP, said this isn’t his first encounter with TMJ pain.

“I’ve dealt with it before. And I’m going to continue to play,” he said. “I wouldn’t make a big deal about it.”

While first-year starting quarterback Philip Rivers hit a speed bump with a sub-par performance against the Chiefs,

Tomlinson has yet to be knocked off stride in leading the AFC West champion Chargers (12-2) on an eight-game winning streak. The Chargers tied franchise records for wins in a season, last accomplished with a 12-4 mark in 2004, and for their winning streak.

With 31 touchdowns and 186 points — both NFL single-season records — as well as 1,626 yards, Tomlinson is showing how critical it is to avoid major injuries.

Late last season he was bothered by a rib injury and went four straight games without a touchdown or 100-yard game.

Two seasons ago, he had a groin injury and went five straight games without cracking 100 yards.

Those streaks were so un-L.T., compared to this year.

Running behind fullback Lorenzo Neal and a line that coach Marty Schottenheimer calls “snarly,” Tomlinson has extended his streak of 100-yard games to eight. His eight consecutive multi-touchdown games gave him sole possession of the record he had shared with John Riggins.

“I feel strong and I don’t feel like I’ve played 14 games, to be honest with you,” Tomlinson said.

“Only the last couple of years have there been the little injuries. The previous three seasons before that, it was the same. I didn’t have a real significant injury. So it’s about like it was my first three years.”

Tomlinson is closing in on his career-best of 1,683 yards set in 2002, his second season.

FOOTBALL

Wragge takes long road to starting job with Niners as playoff chase continues

BY GREG BEACHAM
AP Sports Writer

SANTA CLARA — Tony Wragge nearly resigned himself to a career as a 330-pound tight end for the Los Angeles Avengers last year.

Instead, he’ll be snapping the ball to Alex Smith on Sunday as the San Francisco 49ers chase an unlikely playoff berth with an even more unlikely starting center.

Wragge’s determination to play football led him from his native Nebraska to college in Las Cruces, N.M., and then from five NFL training camps to offseasons in Germany and the Arena League.

Wragge never regretted a single detour, but the one-time Avenger is clearly thrilled to step into injured center Eric Heitmann’s spot with the 49ers (6-8).

“The whole process I’ve been through, I know it’s been building up to this moment,” Wragge said Monday when the 49ers returned from a long weekend after a 24-14 upset victory in Seattle last Thursday to keep alive their postseason hopes.

“I don’t get nervous any more. That’s not my deal. It’s my job. If you’re nervous, why are you doing it? I just don’t want to let these guys down. I want to perform at that level, and I don’t want to miss a beat.”

Wragge stepped in to play three solid quarters in Seattle after Heitmann broke his leg, and the 49ers’ coaches clearly trust him already.

Coach Mike Nolan expects Wragge — an undrafted free agent in 2002 who only earned his first regular NFL job this season — to start

Sunday against Arizona instead of David Baas, the 33rd overall pick in the 2005 draft.

“Tony has played well when he’s been in there,” Nolan said. “There’s absolutely no disappointment in David Baas, but Tony has had more game experience in the middle.”

Wragge got that experience the hard way.

After leaving New Mexico State, he spent the final two months of his rookie season with the Arizona Cardinals, who had cut him in training camp. He even started one game at left guard, but got demoted to the Cards’ practice squad in 2003.

After a year out of football, he had fun last year with the Arena League’s Avengers as a pass-blocker who also caught a touchdown pass. Wragge tried out for the 49ers last season with plans to rejoin Los Angeles if it didn’t work out, and he made the final roster — only to be cut 48 hours later when San Francisco signed fullback Chris Hetherington.

But the 49ers told Wragge to wait by the phone, and he rejoined the club in late November for the season’s final five weeks. Although the 26-year-old had a wife and child at home, he knew his chances with San Francisco would be improved by a year with NFL Europe’s Rhein Fire.

He easily secured a roster spot as a backup this fall, and started two games at left guard earlier in the season while Larry Allen was injured. He has consistently been ahead of Baas, who started the final five games at right guard last season, but has played just two offensive snaps this year despite his hefty paychecks as the first pick of the second round.



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Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 10 / 13

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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	A+
Nicholas Beach at San Nicholas Canyon Creek mouth	A+	A+
El Pescador State Beach, between Lachusa and Los Aliso creeks	A+	A+
Encinal Canyon at El Matador State Beach	A+	A+
Broad Beach at Trancas Creek mouth	A+	A+
Zuma Beach at Zuma Creek mouth	A+	A+
Walnut Creek, projection of Wildlife Rd. (private)	A+	A+
Paradise Cove Pier at Ramirez Canyon Creek mouth	F	F
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach	A+	A+
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth	A	F
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach	A	A+
Puerto State Beach at creek mouth	A+	A+
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerto Beach, at 24572 Malibu Rd.	F	F
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence	A+	A+
Surfrider Beach (beach location)- daily	A	F
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east	A+	A+
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon	A+	ns
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero)	A+	A+
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs	F	A+
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon	ns	A+
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth	A	A+
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach	F	ns
Will Rogers State Beach at 17200 PCH (1/4 mile east of Sunset drain)	A+	A+

LEGEND

DRY -- each location is graded on an A – F scale based on bacterial pollution levels present in the surf zone
WET -- grades for days of recorded rainfall and the following 3 days
ns -- no sample taken



Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California coastal waters safe and healthy for people and marine life.
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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)	F	F
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain	F	A+
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain	D	D
Santa Monica Municipal Pier	F	A+
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain	A	F
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms)	A	A+
Ocean Park Beach at Ashland Ave. drain	A	A+
Venice City Beach, at the Rose Ave. storm drain	A+	A+
Venice Beach at Brooks Ave. drain	A	A+
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain	A+	B
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south	A+	A+
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St.	A+	A+
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower	C	A
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth	A	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain	A+	D
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach	A+	F
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of D&W jetty)	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain	A+	D
Dockweiler Beach- opposite Hyperion Treatment Plant	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at Grand Ave. drain	A+	A+

Happy at home, Virgo

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)

★★★ New beginnings occur for those who are willing to look past the obvious and live in the here and now. You might opt to plan a major change in attitude or direction. You can do it. Responsibilities fall on your shoulders. Tonight: Handle what you must.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ A partnership might be metamorphasizing right in front of you, whether you like it or not. Take your time with someone and understand what might be occurring. You have, or develop, a way of seeing the big picture. Tonight: Read between the lines.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Others have their own ideas. As could be predicted, some might please you while others do not. You have a way or style that draws many. A changed relationship or new partnership could be lingering on the horizon. Tonight: Go along with another's suggestion.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ Be adept and direct with your dealings. Your way of handling someone could change or become very different as you seem to gain a new view of what you can do. Accepting your limitations will be step number one. Tonight: Sort through the many options.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Ever playful, you pop out the door, and something happens. New changes and opportunities are possible if you are creative and open. Transformation occurs when you are open to others' creative process. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Anchor in. Consider your options carefully. A new beginning within your personal life becomes more than possible. You also might opt to change. You are coming from a very different perspective. Be open. Tonight: Happy at home.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ The words you choose and the manner in which you present yourself could make all the difference. Buff up on your communication skills. A new car or computer might be in the realm of possibilities. Tonight: Happy at home.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ You might not realize how lucky you are as a new financial matter comes up. Think and evaluate, but don't hesitate or take too long. Brainstorm away. Others give you good feedback. Listen and debate. Tonight: Out and about.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ You come from a steadfast position with a smile and a lot of happiness. A new beginning in your life becomes possible. For some it might be a new hairdo, for others a new attitude or even a decision to pioneer in a new direction. Tonight: Treat yourself well.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Much that goes on might be in your head or behind the scenes. A personal decision could come forward that actually might change your life and choices. Be honest with yourself about your capabilities. Your creativity might fill in some gaps! Tonight: As you like.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Use the morning hours for immediate conversations and key decisions. You will still have the support of others in the p.m., but the morning works better. A new friendship or perhaps a goal becomes a reality in the near future. Tonight: Take some time to yourself.

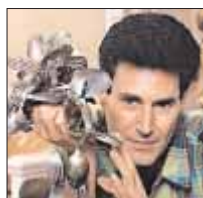
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Take a stand and move forward. Accepting responsibility is step number one. Handling it well is step number two. Because of your abilities, you will gain many people's respect. Be ready to become commander of the ship! Tonight: Where your friends are.

Born Today

Magician Uri Geller (1946)
Actress Jenny Agutter (1952)
Singer, musician Billy Bragg (1957)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>
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Happy Birthday!

You express an unusually creative and dynamic side. Your reputation as an endless resource for solutions and ideas spreads. Your charisma draws others more than ever. Allow people to say "no" to you! With all your magnetism, denying a request could be difficult. Encourage others to be authentic if you don't want complications later on down the road. Sometimes you might be very self-involved because of all your creative energy. If you are single, you will meet many people who will want to be with you. Take your time. The right person will show up close to fall 2007.

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Bringin' it on Williams takes his show to Iraq for holiday special

MONTEL WILLIAMS joined U.S. troops in Iraq for a two-part holiday edition of his syndicated talk show. Williams, 50, visited the North Arabian Gulf and spent time with sailors aboard the

U.S.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower earlier this month. "During a season when it is all too easy to become immersed in our own hectic schedules, we wanted to take a moment to acknowl-

edge the military men and women who are away from their families protecting our freedom," he said in a statement. "It is our hope that this program serves as a reminder,

to all of us, of their sacrifices and their importance." The shows will air Thursday and Friday. Williams joined the Marine Corps in 1974, and later graduated from the

U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. He worked as a special-duty intelligence officer before beginning "The Montel Williams Show" in 1991.

AP

DOWN WITH THE POUNDS

The scales of "American Idol" may have tipped in **RUBEN STUDDARD's** favor in 2003, but there are other scales he would like to tip a bit less. After shedding almost 100 pounds, the Birmingham native and "American Idol" winner says he wants to help other residents of Alabama to lose weight.

He's asking the 25 percent of the state's residents who are obese to lose 10 pounds in eight weeks – a total of 10 million pounds. Since committing to a weight-loss program this summer, Studdard has lost nearly 100 pounds, according to a news release announcing the program.

"I'm not where I want to be, but I'm on the right track, and I'm excited about encouraging other Alabamians to begin their own weight-loss journeys," said the 28-year-old singer, whose third album, "The Return," was released in October by J Records.

AP

Clinton's camera stolen, to his horror

GEORGE CLINTON is seeking the public's help in nabbing the thief who stole a video camera and other valuables during a music video shoot. Footage of "Bounce 2

This" is contained in the camera that was stolen more than a week ago, said publicist Karen Sundell. The theft was recorded by a surveillance camera on the Los

Angeles-area set, she said. Clinton, 65, didn't immediately report the theft because he was shooting scenes for an upcoming horror movie, Sundell said.

The thief apparently blended in with other people at the video shoot, publicist Sandy Friedman said Tuesday.

AP

Kitaen leaves the 'Party' for drug rehab

TAWNY KITAEN, who starred in the 1984 Tom Hanks comedy, "Bachelor Party," has entered a drug rehabilitation program after pleading guilty to possessing 15 grams of cocaine. The 45-year-old actress

will be allowed to change her plea to not guilty after completing the program, under terms of a plea agreement, officials said. The plea change will remove the conviction from her record.

Kitaen was charged with felony possession after sheriff's deputies said they found cocaine in her apartment in May. She was arrested in 2002 on charges she abused then-husband, for-

mer Angels pitcher Chuck Finley. She agreed to anger management and conflict resolution counseling in exchange for the dismissal of two misdemeanor counts of spousal abuse.

AP

Visual-effects guru nabs Sawyer Award

Visual-effects pioneer **RAY FEENEY** will receive an Oscar for his contributions to film. The Gordon E. Sawyer Award, which honors technological advances that benefit the movie industry, was established by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1981. "Ray has helped develop and implement many of the

groundbreaking technologies that have become industry-standard techniques used in the creation of visual effects for motion pictures," Academy President Sid Ganis said in a statement Monday. Feeney will receive the Oscar at the Scientific and Technical Awards dinner Feb. 10 at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel. He

is the 20th recipient of the prize. Feeney, a graduate of the California Institute of Technology, received his first recognition from the Academy – a Scientific and Engineering Award – in 1988. He won a second award in 1991 and two more in 1994. In 2001, the Board of Governors awarded Feeney

the John A. Bonner Medal of Commendation. He is a founding member and director of the Visual Effects Society and a fellow of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers. The 79th annual Academy Awards will be presented Feb. 25 at Hollywood's Kodak Theatre.

AP



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MOVIEGUIDE

AERO THEATRE

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Thursday
It's a Wonderful Life
7:30

Friday
White Christmas
7:30

AMC LOEWS BROADWAY 4

1441 3rd Street
(310) 458-6232

Babel (R)
1:10, 4:10, 7:15, 10:20

The Departed (R)
12:30, 4:00, 7:30, 10:45

The Good German (R)
12:00, 1:30, 2:30, 4:15, 5:00, 7:00, 7:45, 9:45, 10:30

AMC 7 SANTA MONICA

1310 3rd Street
(310) 289-4262

Apocalypto (R)
1:10, 4:20, 7:30, 10:35

Blood Diamond (R)
12:50, 4:10, 7:20, 10:30

Deja Vu (PG-13)
1:50, 5:00, 7:50, 10:40

The Holiday (PG-13)
1:40, 4:40, 7:40, 10:45

The Pursuit of Happyness (PG-13)
1:00, 2:30, 4:00, 5:20, 7:00, 8:10, 9:50, 10:50

Unaccompanied Minors (PG)
2:10, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

LANDMARK NUWILSHIRE

1314 Wilshire Blvd
(310) 281-8228

Bobby (R)
1:00, 4:05, 7:10, 9:55

Shut Up & Sing (R)
1:15, 7:00

Stranger Than Fiction (PG-13)
4:15, 9:45

LAEMMLE'S MONICA FOURPLEX

1332 2nd Street
(310) 394-9741

Breaking and Entering (R)
1:10, 4:00, 7:00, 9:50

The History Boys (R)
1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50

Little Children (R)
1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:15

The Queen (PG-13)
1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 9:40

MANN'S CRITERION THEATRE

1313 3rd Street
(310) 395-1599

Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan (R)
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

Casino Royale (PG-13)
12:30, 4:00, 7:20, 10:30

Charlotte's Web (G)
11:30am, 2:00, 4:30, 7:10, 9:40

Eragon (PG)
11:00am, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20

Eragon (PG)
12:50, 3:40, 6:30, 9:20

Happy Feet (PG)
11:10am, 1:40, 4:10, 7:00, 9:30

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 Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest).

Difficulty
GOLD

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

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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.

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WE DO?

YOU HANG OUT WITH THE GUYS, AND I HANG OUT WITH THE GIRLS...

BUT IF WE HAD OTHER COUPLE FRIENDS, WE COULD SPEND MORE TIME TOGETHER

DON'T EVER USE THE "IF IT AIN'T BROKEN, WHY FIX IT?" ARGUMENT WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND

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READY TO GO?

YUP.

HOW DO I LOOK?

GORGEOUS.

AND ME?

TOO SEXY FOR WORDS.

GEORGE CLOONEY MOVIE NIGHT?

WHAT ELSE?

12/19

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By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose

12-20

RAVENS

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adrian@rascalscartoon.com

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SLEAZY POLITICIAN...

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By Adrian Raeside

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JPM DAVIS 12-20

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By Jim Davis

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By Brian Anderson



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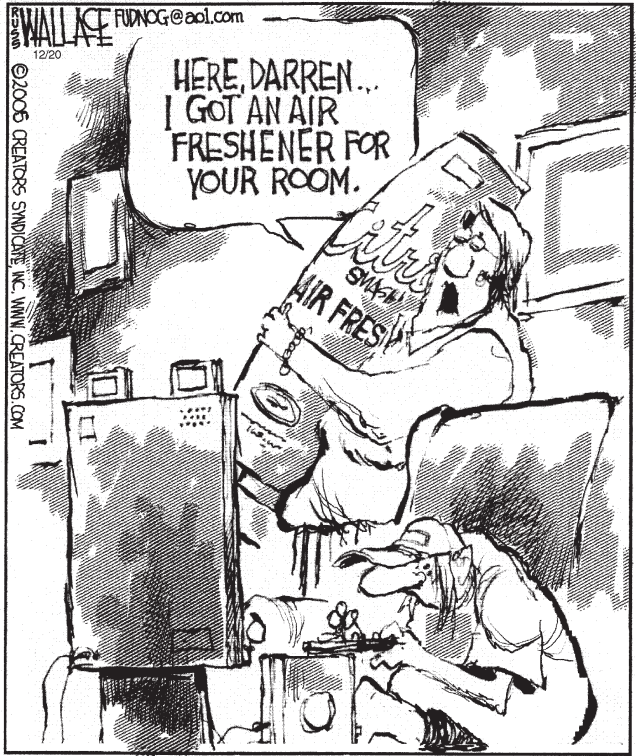
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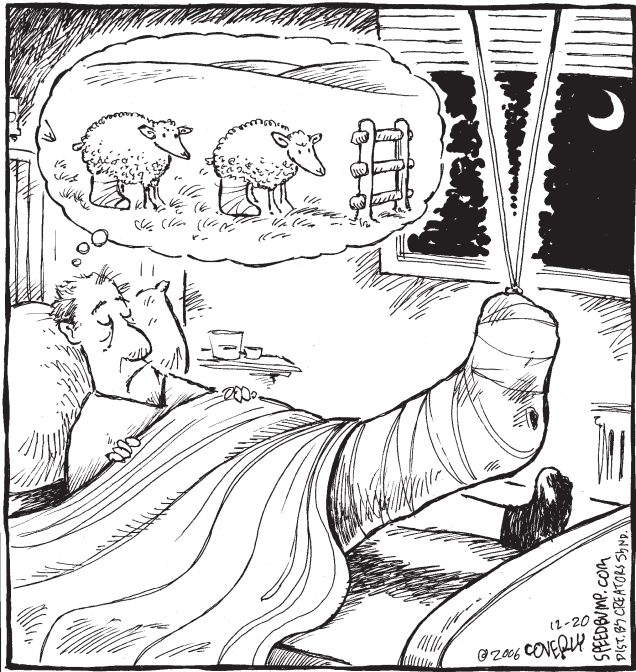
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 - 6 Fortune
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 - 12 Hayek of "Frida"
 - 13 Washer cycle
 - 14 Plan part
 - 15 Bach creation
 - 16 Historic period
 - 17 Actor Morrow
 - 18 Melancholy
 - 19 Celebrate
 - 22 Cribbage markers
 - 23 Herring's kin
 - 26 "Stop!"
 - 29 Masseur's place
 - 32 "— the season ..."
 - 33 British brew
 - 34 Pinnacle
 - 36 Makes a bow
 - 37 Less common
 - 38 Aramis' creator
 - 39 Fathom and foot

- 40 Past plump
- 41 Lawn pest
- 42 Flings

DOWN

- 1 Fez feature
- 2 Traveling
- 3 Taking a sabbatical
- 4 Like old lettuce
- 5 Mermaid's home
- 6 Beef cut
- 7 Arm bones
- 8 — Rica
- 9 Massage
- 11 Spring blooms
- 15 Plop down
- 17 Boomed team
- 20 Chick holder
- 21 Greek letter
- 24 Occasionally
- 25 Toward the sunrise, perhaps
- 27 Big shot

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

Yesterday's answer

- 28 Goes by
- 29 Play the banjo
- 30 Recital sight
- 31 Rainy month
- 35 Head, to Henri
- 36 Sousa-phone's cousin
- 38 Saw-bones

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

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

12-20



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Marie Jewel Somerton

Marie Jewel Somerton, (Marie Julienne Lepine) age 82, passed away on Friday, December 8, 2006 in Bellingham, Washington. Jewel was born in Vancouver, British Columbia on March 19, 1924 to Mary Rosa Patterson and James Gedyme Lepine. Jewel grew up in Vancouver with her grandparents, the Pattersons. After graduating from Lord Bing High School, she married Harold Somerton, and lived at Seton Lake and Lytton during which time Wendy and George were born in 1946 and 1947. In 1950, they emigrated to Santa Monica, California. Jewel and Harold started a prosperous painting contracting business, Alta Decorators. Four more children followed, Jeff, Norma, Catherine, and Heather. Jewel was a loving mother. She was our "Apron Mom," and gave every ounce of herself to her family. In the late 1960's, Jewel and Harold built their summer retreat at Little Shuswap Lake in British Columbia, Canada, at which they enjoyed countless summers of family fun. In the mid 1970's, Jewel worked as school receptionist at Carlthorp School in Santa Monica where she was much loved by students and staff until retirement. Jewel and Harold retired and moved to Santa Barbara in the mid 1980's. Upon Harold's death in 1993, and Jewel's subsequent diagnosis of Alzheimer's, our Mom was lovingly cared for by her daughters in Santa Barbara, Heather and Norma, and then moved to Bellingham in 2003 to be cared for by Catherine and Wendy, until her passing.

Miscellaneous

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I will watch your cat, water your plants, and take in your mail while you are away. Call Kirsten. References available (310)729-7258

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taught by established artist. Paint Sculpt and draw in a garden setting. Classes start February 1st, 2007. Your artwork and bio placed on www.campbellart.com free with sign up. Call 310-804-0335 for schedule and pricing.

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Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF SHIRLEY JOCELYN TORGERSON

Case No. SP007012

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of SHIRLEY JOCELYN TORGERSON

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by Tom Prentice in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that Tom Prentice be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on Feb. 16, 2007 at 9:15 AM in Dept. No. F located at 1725 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within four months from the date of first issuance of letters as provided in Probate Code section 9100. The time for filing claims will not expire before four months from the hearing date noticed above.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for petitioner:
JOSEPH E DEERING ESQ
SBNS2317
DEERING WALTHER & SANDS
 2530 WILSHIRE BLVD
 THIRD FL
 SANTA MONICA CA 90403-4643
 Santa Monica Daily Press
 CN767270 TORGERSON Dec 20,21,27, 2006

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR MARINE ENVIRONMENT MONITORING AND ANALYSIS SERVICES

The Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors (Department) is seeking one or more qualified and experienced contractors to perform, analyze and report on sampling and testing of the water, fish and other animal life and sediment within the Marina del Rey Small Craft Harbor.

Proposals must be in the form described in the RFP. Selection of a contractor(s) will be based on the qualifications of the firms submitting proposals as well as their prices for performing the work. A Proposers' Conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday

Notices

January 9, 2007, 2006 at the Chace Park Community Building, 13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey. The deadline for submitting proposals will be 5:00 p.m., January 23, 2007.

Contractors submitting proposals must have a minimum of five (5) years' experience in conducting marine water, fish and sediment sampling, testing and analysis projects. The contractor should also have a thorough knowledge of State and Federal environmental regulations and guidelines, as well as related marine water, fish and sediment testing protocols.

To receive a copy of the RFP, either telephone (310) 577-5736, send an e-mail with "MARINE ENVIRONMENT MONITORING AND ANALYSIS SERVICES" in the subject line to sorellana@bh.lacounty.gov visit http://lacounty.info/doing_business/main_db.htm, or write:

Department of Beaches and Harbors
 Marine Environment Monitoring and Analysis Services RFP
 13837 Fiji Way
 Marina del Rey, CA 90292
 Fax: (310) 821-8155

The County reserves the right to cancel the RFP and to modify any and all terms and conditions of the RFP, including minimum requirements. For further information, call Susy Orellana at (310) 577-5736.

Santa Monica Daily Press
 CN767403 T19541-12 Dec 20, 2006

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: WILLIAM JAY POLIN CASE NO. BP102016

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of WILLIAM JAY POLIN.

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by JEFFREY ROSE in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that JEFFREY ROSE be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on 01/16/07 at 8:30AM in Dept. 5 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within four months from the date of first issuance of letters as provided in Probate Code section 9100. The time for filing claims will not expire before four months from the hearing date noticed above.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code Section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner
 JOHN A. ALTSCHUL
 LAW OFFICE OF JOHN A. ALTSCHUL
 1180 S. BEVERLY DRIVE, #411
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'04 Toyota Corolla Sedan
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Pristine!
(VC223308)
Hyundai Santa Monica
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Vehicles for sale



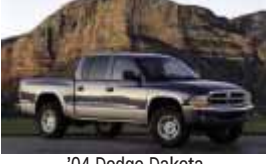
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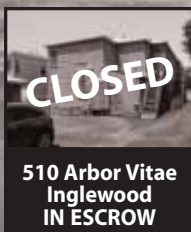
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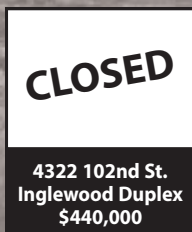
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