

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

SUPER LOTTO PLUS

38, 21, 6, 22, 35

Megamember: 20

Jackpot: \$42 million

FANTASY 5

29, 27, 1, 18, 3

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 6, 9, 1

Evening picks: 4, 1, 1

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 01, Gold Rush

2nd Place: 10, Solid Gold

3rd Place: 05, California Classic

Race Time: 1:49.04



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

In October, North Korea's official news agency reported that Japan had broken a promise to return five people to North Korea. The five are Japanese citizens who were kidnapped by North Korea in 1978 but released to see their families in October 2002. North Korea's position is that they were released only temporarily and must be returned to North Korea.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Reagan is proof that there is life after death."

— Mort Sahl



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Festival of Lighting



Nicky Five Aces/Special to the Daily Press

Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom reaches to light the city's largest Menorah — more than 20 feet tall — Saturday night on the Third Street Promenade. The festivities, which included a live band and dancing, were sponsored by Chabad of Santa Monica and Rabbi Avraham Leviansky in celebration of the Festival of Lights, Hannukah.

Feds launch 'Project Safe Neighborhoods' with area officials

Message to criminals: Use a gun and get sent to distant prison

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

SOUTH LA — Top law-enforcement officials and prosecutors are forging a new partnership to combat criminals with guns.

Called "Project Safe Neighborhoods," the group is made up of federal agents, officers from the Los Angeles Police Department and the LA Sheriff's Department, and state and federal prosecutors, among others.

The plan calls for heightened patrols and more aggressive prosecution on the federal level, where prison sentences are harsher and must be served in federal prisons, usually taking criminals out of the area.

U.S. Attorney's Office

spokesman Thom Mrozek said the federal government is providing well over \$1 million worth of grants for the program. In addition to police and prosecution, the grants are going to community-based organizations in LA that work with youth on violence prevention.

Santa Monica Police Department Chief James T. Butts Jr. said even though Santa Monica isn't eligible for federal funding because the amount of violence here is far lower, local officials also employ a coordinated approach.

"On a local level, we have the same level of involvement, but it's all been done with local funds and not grant funds," he said.

Butts said Project Safe Neighborhoods is the type of project officials once called "weed and seed," now an outdated term.

See PROJECT, page 6

Leaders have seven months to plan to end homelessness

Who will pay for it is the big question mark

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

Those who plan to end homelessness in Los Angeles County in the next decade hope it's not just a pipe dream filled with empty words and promises.

Called "Bring LA Home," a panel recently convened to devise a plan to end homelessness in Los Angeles County within the next 10 years. The plan is similar to those of dozens of other cities that are taking on the daunting task, which was spurred by the Bush Administration's goal to rid the nation of its homeless population.

"The administration is committed to hearing about the plan from

communities, and this is something we've never heard from the federal government," said Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom, who sits on the panel.

There are as many homeless people in all of Los Angeles County as there are residents in Santa Monica, an analysis of the county's homeless population suggests. Of the 80,000 people who live on the streets at any given time during the year, only 2 percent of them live in Santa Monica.

And the panel of about 70 people — from politicians to business leaders to homeless advocates — hopes to end the problem that has plagued this city for decades. It's considered the largest effort ever by community leaders to tackle a problem that some say is the

See HOMELESS, page 5

John Maceri: Service is a family tradition

Community profiles is a weekly series that will appear each Monday and delves into the people who live, work and play in Santa Monica.

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

As the head of the largest social-service agency in Santa Monica, John Maceri provides shelter and food for hundreds of abused, addicted and mentally ill homeless people each day.

Maceri, 46, who lives in Northridge, said the pressure can be intense, but the rewards make it worthwhile. The oldest of three children born and raised in the San Fernando Valley, Maceri said his commitment to community service dates back to his childhood.

"Having a life of service is to me the most important thing,"

Maceri said in a Thursday interview at the Ocean Park Community Center offices on 16th Street.

It's something of a family tradition for Maceri, whose great-grandmother adopted 17 children — and had three of her own. Maceri said his great-grandmother, who he knew as a young boy, had an enormous impact on his life and influenced him

to volunteer.

Now, as head of OPCC, Maceri oversees a \$5.1 million



See PROFILE, page 7



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★★-So-so ★-Difficult



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Reach out for others at a distance. What you learn could have you rethinking and regrouping plans or a relationship. Others would prefer that you take a leadership position in the next few days. Tonight: Pitch in.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Romance grows if you're in the mood. Someone really feels intensely about you, if you're single. You might want to think before you leap into action here. In fact, if you can detach and evaluate, you will be much happier. Tonight: Follow another's lead.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Others come to you. You have so much to share. You succeed when dealing with others on an individual level. Feelings flow from your home and heart. Others are highly responsive to your requests. It's their pleasure. Tonight: Where the people are.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Pace yourself in a more appropriate manner. Trust that others want to pitch in. You will, however, need to ask for the help. You could be quite pleased with what happens. Reorganize so others can play a bigger role. Tonight: Finish up last-minute details.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Your playfulness carries you through the day, but there are certain matters that need handling that might involve a little discipline and work. Expenditures could be out of control, but right now you might not be able to stop the trend. Tonight: Add more mischief.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Stay anchored and use your creativity in a way that helps complete some holiday to-dos. Prioritize, making family first. You might change plans at the last minute. Others are highly responsive to your ideas. Tonight: Be happy.

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Published Monday through Saturday

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1427 Third Street Promenade, Ste. #202 • Santa Monica, CA 90401 • www.smdp.com

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LOCAL



Tea parties benefit children

By Daily Press staff

The Fairmont Miramar Hotel in downtown Santa Monica has dedicated its efforts this month toward helping children with life-threatening medical conditions.

Under a program called "Make-A-Wish Tea Party for Wish Kids," Santa Monica's oldest hotel donates \$3 to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Greater Los Angeles from each afternoon tea menu served during the month of December. So far the program has raised \$300, according to Fairmont spokeswoman Tammy Lyn Phillips.

The tea party is a local program, exclusive to the Miramar Hotel, intended to raise awareness about the larger Fairmont chain's new relationship with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Phillips said.

Under an international program called "Fairmont Rooms from the Heart," the hotel donates \$10 per online booking made during the month of December to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. In addition to the holiday fundraising, Fairmont will contribute an annual donation of \$75,000 to the foundation — granting approximately 200 wishes each year and supporting a network of colleagues volunteering for the foundation.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation is the world's largest wish-granting charity, with 76 chapters in the United States and its territories and 27 international affiliates on five continents. With the help of donors and more than 25,000 volunteers, the foundation has granted more than



Photo courtesy

Sarra Garcia and her brother Shawn Garcia, enjoy an afternoon tea during the Make-A-Wish Holiday Tea Party at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel Santa Monica to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

110,000 wishes to children around the world since 1980. A "wish" might include a trip to a theme park, tickets to a sporting event or a meeting with a celebrity. Since 1983, the greater Los Angeles chapter has granted more than 4,500 wishes.

"The Royal Tea," "The Traditional Tea" and "Teddy Bear Tea" are available from \$15 to \$29 per person in the hotel's Koi Pond Lobby Lounge and Garden Terrace Monday through Friday, including Christmas day, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. by reservation only. Reservations are not required on Saturday and Sunday when afternoon tea is served from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Reservations for the tea party can be made by calling (310) 319-3111, and bookings for travel can be made at www.fairmont.com/heart. The hotel is located at 101 Wilshire Blvd.

E-mail newsletter in the making

By Daily Press staff

The Lili Claire Foundation will be launching its first newsletter in early 2004, and the best way to get it out into the world is e-mail. They're in the middle of a massive push to upgrade their web presence (www.liliclairefoundation.org) and update all of their records.

The Lili Claire Foundation is a non-profit organization that benefits people born with neurogenetic disorders such as Williams Syndrome, Down Syndrome and autism, and provide resources and assistance to the families who love them.

To offer the best possible quality of care and service expertise to those they serve, the foundation collaborates with renowned research and academic institutions to provide a blend of medical and scientific services that complement the holistic and comprehensive wellness resources.

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Photo courtesy

Keith Resnick (left), executive director of the Lili Claire Foundation based in Santa Monica, meets with Michael Schneider (right) of Fluidesign to discuss the organization's new HTML e-mail design for a newsletter, which will be launched next year.

healthcare, the foundation is able to provide programs and services that are designed to enhance all aspects of an individual's life — medical, psychosocial, educational and vocational — from infancy into adulthood.

surf report

The current swell fades further today as a steep, new NW swell begins to build. Watch those extreme tides!

OUTLOOK: A better angled WNW swell will build by Tuesday afternoon and into Wednesday.

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	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	N/A	N/A	1:18	-0.7	6:09	6.4	7:36	3.9
SUNDAY	12:25	1.7	2:05	-1.3	6:50	6.9	8:31	4.0
MONDAY	1:10	1.9	2:52	-1.7	7:32	7.2	9:24	4.0
TUESDAY	1:57	2.0	3:39	-1.8	8:17	7.3	10:15	4.0
WEDNESDAY	2:44	2.1	4:27	-1.7	9:03	7.1	11:08	4.0
THURSDAY	3:35	2.3	5:16	-1.4	9:50	6.8	N/A	N/A
FRIDAY	4:30	2.4	6:05	-0.9	12:02	4.0	(10:40)	6.2

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LETTERS

Wartime humor

Add me to the list of readers writing to advise Mr. Bloomberg, who was “just wondering” if Saddam might have been more successful hiding “amongst our large homeless population in Santa Monica.” (SMDP, Dec. 17, page 4).

Henry Rosenfeld
Santa Monica

Government needs to learn budgeting

How dare the politicians statewide, plus our own council members, perpetrate a lawsuit for funds that were never available.

The car tax was never fully implemented and was rescinded long before it should have been included in any city budget.

The hue and cry now is "we will have to cut funding for ..." to the most vulnerable of course. Schools, the elderly, the police and so on ad nauseam.

Does just one politician say, “Well, I think we should re-think our \$100,000 plus salaries or put a hold on installing speed bumps or coordinate street disruption or installing blinking lights in the streets for pedestrians?” While these issues are questionably laudable, they are not of prime importance.

Suppose there would be a hold on these non-essential items until the economy returned to a more stable position? This in fiscal responsibility is called "living within one's budget."

Betty Darling
Santa Monica



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Santa Monicans must open their hearts, minds



I took this daunting challenge because I care about my fellow human beings on the streets, and to be the protagonist to the antagonistic anti-homeless sentiment, which seems to prevail in all parts of this city.

who think and speak this anti-homeless dribble, as if you have ever been anywhere near living on the streets.

The funny thing is you who are so “educated” on homeless issues think I am some type of aberration on the streets. Well, to my knowledge, there are many people like myself on the streets. I am just more vocal about my homelessness than those who you might never consider are homeless unless they tell you they are. And outside of the severely mentally ill and chronically addicted, which some of you “gurus” who have so much knowledge on homelessness attribute to being the homeless norm, to my knowledge, homeless like me ARE the norm.

We who landed on the streets, for various reasons, most of which were circumstances beyond our control, are the ones you see everyday, yet are beyond your prying eyes because we look and act as normal as you do. Some of us like myself and others work, serve you your coffee, help you with your clothes shopping, even clean the streets and work for the city.

We might sit next to you in the movie theaters and drink with you at the local

pubs and bars, eat next to you at the restaurants or God forbid have a meaningful conversation with you on a street corner. You might have asked one of us for a cigarette or a light, or had one of us buy you a coffee or a drink or dinner and a movie and never suspect you were talking to a homeless man or woman.

You, who are so high and mightily educated on homelessness, are the same ones who would deny any of us food or clothing. You would deny us showers and housing. You would have us all sent to Santa Catalina Island and have it nuked.

You think of us with such narrow minds and even narrower hearts, you put the worse face on the homeless so you do not have to think of us as human beings, because if you did, you would have to look at homelessness in a different light and your little "social clubs" would not accept you. You would have to "eat crow" and be wrong when you have convinced everyone you know you are right about homelessness. You would have to admit that you have no idea of how it really feels to not be able to sleep in a warm bed or not have enough to eat or not have a job that pays

enough for you to live inside. You would have to admit you do not know what it is like to carry everything you own with you everywhere you went. To stand and wait for an hour to take a shower or bird bath in the local public bathrooms. You would have to be embarrassed in front of your friends and look like fools before the world, as Mr. Bauer did when Mr. Maceri told him last week the real truth about the Ocean Park Community Center and what they do for us and why. Or the way Ms. Emerson looked to the general population of Santa Monica in her response to my column about my divorce and how it affects being stood up on the streets.

Well, you who are such "multi-dimensional thinkers" have much to learn. You see, until I landed on the streets I used to think just like you about homelessness. When I became homeless I had a change of heart. What will it take to change yours?

(Charles Springer is a homeless freelance columnist and artist and is a RESIDENT of Santa Monica. He can be reached at Chaz 59@yahoo.com).

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LOCAL



Santa Monicans to be asked how to end homelessness

HOMELESS, from page 1

biggest one facing the country.

And although Santa Monica handles 2 percent of the county's homeless population, it's a huge impact on the community, residents say. And with the exception of Venice, there aren't many westside cities that share the burden of taking care of the homeless. That's one of the reasons Bloom is involved — to solve the problem with a regional approach and mandate that other communities help.

"It's an honor for me to be chosen, but we were selected because we are the city of Santa Monica," he said. "There's always been talk (of a regional approach) but now someone appears to be listening."

"I think it is a bi-partisan effort and it's going to require bi-partisan support," he added. "I just hope the commitment is upheld (from the federal government) and not just empty words."

The panel met for the first time last month. An 80-page report was presented that outlines the problem, gives an analysis of who is homeless and why, and how many services they use each year. Bloom gave an overview of the presentation to the city's social-service commission earlier this month.

Commission chair Linda Huizar said the plan is encouraging and she is confident Bloom and his colleagues won't let the issue fall by the wayside. The commission suggested that homeless service providers be added to the panel to offer more perspective on the issue. Huizar said she hopes the plan includes all communities in the county and not just the ones who are impacted the most.

"This community is dedicated to the homeless issue, but I think some of us are experiencing compassion fatigue because it doesn't seem to be helping," she said. "Santa Monica draws the people, but other cities on the westside don't have the problem."

There will be a series of about 20 community meetings held between now and February throughout LA County. The primary objective is to get residents' input on the process and give suggestions on how to end homelessness. Then, the panel will lay a solid foundation for addressing the issue.

"We want folks to come up with solutions," said Jose Quinonez, the strategic planner for Bring LA Home.

He said the regional-approach issue was discussed at the panel's November meeting, but nothing of substance came

out of it. Panel members agreed that downtown Los Angeles, the Antelope Valley and Santa Monica seem to take the brunt of homeless people wandering the streets.

"They kind of dipped their toe in the water on that issue, but they'll have to put their whole foot in before April," Quinonez said.

Quinonez said a community meeting will be held in Santa Monica at the beginning of the year. The specific date and place has not yet been determined.

A letter from Bring LA Home will be sent out to agencies throughout the county, including police departments, governments, homeless service providers, housing groups and many others. It will solicit their thoughts on how well the current programs are serving people and the costs associated with them. That information will be discussed at the panel's next meeting, scheduled for Feb. 5, Quinonez said.

When the draft plan is finished in April, it will be presented to various communities within the county. The final plan is supposed to be done in June.

What leaders of the effort don't know is how much it will cost or who will pay for it.

"Everyone asks that question. Without a crystal ball, it's hard to answer that," Quinonez said, adding it's a problem that has to be addressed on a national level. "Thirty or 40 years ago there were not this many homeless people, especially women and children. Something has changed to make this happen."

Quinonez said with all the services combined, as well as hospital and law enforcement costs, the county spends nearly \$1 billion a year on its homeless. That money could be better used by providing housing, he added.

"If the reluctance is to spend money then we must ask, 'How effective is the money being used today?'" Quinonez said. "The solution is not necessarily more money to tackle the problem. It's significantly cheaper to house them in a unit than it is to care for them by putting them in hospitals and letting them go through law-enforcement agencies."

He added that it was encouraging to hear an LA city councilman during a radio interview earlier this month say the plan won't work and is only rhetoric if there isn't a dedicated source of funding.

"At least it's better to have a plan in place before asking the federal government," Quinonez said.

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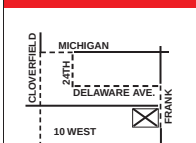


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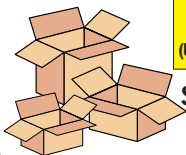


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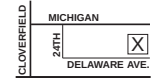
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LOCAL

SM company created ads for anti-violence project

PROJECT, from page 1

"The objective is, you take a neighborhood impacted by drugs and or violence, usually they come together, and you attempt to remove the most egregious violators and ensure they receive the longest possible sentence," Butts said. "And the seed portion is that you provide federal dollars to support community-based operations that work with youth to help them, to prevent their involvement in gun violence, in gang violence."

Butts, who created a community-based policing style that calls for a collaborative approach, said putting criminals in federal prisons sends a clear message to the offenders, and to their families and support networks.

"It supposedly has a greater psychological impact on not only you, but the people you run with, the people you're associated with," he said. "Now that you're in jail (far away), nobody can visit you."

Also a part of Project Safe Neighborhoods is a media campaign to raise awareness. In addition to press conferences with high-profile officials and an extensive public-relations effort, the group has tapped the resource of a Santa Monica business to create television commercials and a billboard design.

Doug Lay, head of production at V12, a commercial production and broadcast design company on Ocean Park Boulevard, said workers there spent several weeks creating a 30-second spot for Project Safe Neighborhoods.

The ad, which will be aired in both Spanish and English, features a close-up shot of people handling firearms, without any faces visible. The whole piece has a "MTV feel" that makes it look cool, Lay said. But at the end, this script appears on the screen: "So if you think it's cool to carry an illegal gun or commit a crime with one, you've been watching too much TV."

In addition to the ad, V12 created a billboard design that says, "No family, no freedom, no friends, no future" that will appear throughout South LA.

Lay said his staff of a dozen worked for weeks on the pro bono project and brought in dozens of freelancers to help out.

"We called in the favors that we could call in from people we've worked with in the film community," he said. "It was a full-scale production."

Asked why his company decided to do the ad for free, Lay said, "I think it's awareness more than anything. And it just, I think, helps people think about the community in a different way and to take the idea that guns used in that way is a serious thing ... there are a lot of (guns) out there."

A Thursday press conference to announce the group was held at the corner of 85th Street and Central Avenue, across the street from a restaurant where a gang-related shooting in August took the lives of two people.

U.S. Attorney and Santa Monica resi-

dent Debra Wang, LAPD Chief William Bratton, LASD Chief Michael Nagaoka, LA District Attorney Steve Cooley, LA City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, and officials from the FBI, DEA, ATF and LA County Probation Department attended the press conference.

"Fortunately, violent crimes have been on the downswing for over a decade," Yang said in a prepared statement. "Today, the overall crime rate is at a 32-year low. But there is still too much killing, too much violence, too many

**"We called in the favors
that we could call in from
people we've worked with
in the film community.**

**It was a full-scale
production."**

— DOUG LAY
Head of production, V12

criminals walking around with firearms."

Other agencies participating in Project Safe Neighborhoods are the IRS' Criminal Investigation department, the Small Business Administration's Office of Inspector General, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Inspector General, the Department of Agriculture's Office of Inspector General, the Bureau of Customs and Immigration Enforcement, and the Social Security Administration's Office of Inspector General.

LA Mayor James Hahn also supports the project.

At the center of Project Safe Neighborhoods is a coordinated effort to aggressively investigate gun offenses and then determine the best forum for prosecution. Although there are lengthy sentences associated with federal gun offenses — for example, carrying a gun during a violent crime carries a mandatory five-year federal prison term that runs consecutively to the sentence for the underlying crime — California has strong gun laws, as well as the "three-strikes" law for some criminals, according to the US Attorney's Office.

"Historically, the District Attorney's Office prosecutes 60,000 felonies a year and 240,000 misdemeanors," DA Steve Cooley said in a prepared statement. "Despite the incredible volume of cases, our office has done a solid job in aggressively prosecuting a wide variety of gun-related cases. We're grateful for the additional help, particularly in these stressful budgetary times and the loss of 10 percent of our prosecutors over the past two years."

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LOCAL



PROFILE, from page 1

budget, 70 percent of which is government funded and 30 percent of which comes from private sources. He said the most challenging and rewarding aspect of his job is continually raising money for OPCC, especially during an economic downturn when donors are few but needs are great.

OPCC recently acquired \$7 million from City Hall to open a 55-bed shelter at Michigan Avenue and Cloverfield Boulevard. That shelter, which is expected to be open in the next few years, coupled with the feeling among many local businesses and residents that Santa Monica is a magnet for homelessness, has made Maceri a target of much criticism.

Maceri said other cities need to step up their social-service offerings, but added he is proud of the work being done here. Still, he said he understands some apprehension about homelessness.

"We deal with hundreds of homeless people each day, and I realize not everybody is polite and charming," he said. "But there are real problems out there, and we are making a difference."

Here, the Daily Press sat down with Maceri to learn more about the man behind the agency.

Do you remember your first encounter with a homeless person? What was that like?

"It'd go back a long time. The first encounter that really sticks out in my mind was back when I was in my 20s. It was actually a woman and her two children who lived on the streets. It was the week before Christmas in 1983 or 1984.

"I was renting an apartment, and there was a market just down the street. I walked to the market one night, and there was this lady with these two beautiful babies sort of tucked under a juniper bush. ... She wasn't panhandling, she wasn't asking for anything. She was just trying to protect her kids in this little space she had carved out.

"I walked over and I gave her a \$20 bill, the only money I had with me. She started to cry. She said, 'Thank you' and put down her head. ... Her dignity had certainly been shattered, but she still had some pride. As desperately as she needed the money, she didn't want to take it. ... I'll never forget what she and those kids looked like."

What do you do when you're approached by panhandlers?

"I almost always say, 'No, thanks.' If I'm here in Santa Monica, I'll say, 'Are you familiar with the (OPCC) Access Center?' and direct people there. Because I live in the valley, if I'm there, I'll direct people to the access center there. And I always have with me, in my car, individual bottles of water and little hygiene packets with soap, toothpaste and shampoo that I give to people. Because we don't have a Promenade or a beach in the valley, homeless people will often camp out along the freeway. ...

"I think it's always important to be respectful to people. I always smile and say, 'No, thanks.' You never know what people's stories are. ... I think one thing that I've learned over the years is that it's better to give to an organization that

will treat the cause and not just the symptom. ...

"Over the years I have given people money. I don't do it often, but I have on occasion, understanding that giving a person a buck or two is not going to solve the problem. ... There are people who are professional panhandlers. They prey upon the general public's goodwill and desire to help people. That's not the vast majority, but there are some people that do this."

What's the most challenging aspect of your job, for you personally?

"Being put in a position of having to constantly defend the work that we're doing against people who are often misinformed, or against people who deliberately attack us. ... It's hard when you read things about yourself or your organization in the paper or in the columns that aren't true or aren't based in fact. ... The work is hard enough. We're working with people who have severe needs with very limited resources."

What about the work you do — what's the most challenging part?

"The thing I enjoy doing but is the most challenging is raising money constantly. The work is never done. The demand always outstrips the resources, so therefore we are always playing catch-up. ...

"Look what's going on just in the state right now with the uncertainty surrounding the budget. And then we have the added pressure of getting up every day and having to provide services for people who depend on us. ... That part of the job, it's always there. The need is always there because social service agencies are the safety net for what government isn't doing."

Is there one misconception common among people, among the community, that you find yourself frequently responding to?

"Why don't people just get a job?" That's the biggest misconception that I hear. If people just pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, there wouldn't be any problem. ...

"People don't seem to understand the complexity of what is involved in someone becoming homeless. I've met thousands of homeless people, and I've never met someone who was housed and woke up one morning and said, 'Gee, it'd sure be nice to become homeless today.' ...

"There are always circumstances, events, usually something catastrophic or serious that happens in people's lives. ... There's always some downward spiral that results in people becoming homeless ... and then from there it's usually a whole separate series of events that make it difficult for them to get back on their feet."

How has your understanding of the homeless situation evolved over the years, on a macro level?

"I've really come to understand the more global public-policy decisions that have contributed to creating homelessness in this country, not just in Santa Monica. ... I've really been able to connect the dots of poverty, affordable housing, chronic physical and mental illness, domestic violence, substance abuse, all of these things are intercon-

See PROFILE, page 8

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LOCAL □ NATIONAL



PROFILE, from page 7

nected ... (and) policy decisions often
create or make them worse ...

"Going back 20 years to the woman
with her two children, I knew in my
heart it wasn't right for her to be living
on the streets ... but 20 years later, I have
a much better understanding about how
she might have become homeless ... and
a recognition that there are some people
in our society that will always need
some support.

"If the federal government were to
put the same amount of resources as the
Iraqi war effort into affordable housing
and supportive services, we could end
chronic homelessness. ... It's a matter of
priorities. I know this is venturing into
politics and away from personal, but it's
one and the same for me. It's a lot of
what drew me into this work, and it's all
of what keeps me here. Our work is both
about empowering individuals and
changing systems, and both of those
happen very slowly."

What's next for John Maceri?

"I hope to be at OPCC for several
more years. There is a lot to be done,
and I still have a contribution to make by
being of service. I think forever is a long
time and at some point new leadership
will be needed here. Change is good, it's
healthy for the organization. ... I see
myself continuing to be an advocate for
the work that we do, for the people we
serve. I will continue to be open to new
ways to improve how we provide serv-
ices. ...

"The resources we have is not our
money ... it's the taxpayers'. ... We are

stewards. ... I think it's my responsi-
bility to be a good steward and be as effec-
tive as possible."

What's the best thing about work- ing at OPCC?

"Seeing people turn their lives
around. I think we all need that, those
success stories. The individuals who
were clients here, and I see them in the
community, and they're working,
they're housed. ...

"It's not my job to change people. We
provide the resources and the support to
help them change themselves. But see-
ing people out there, when they're
housed and they're stable, it's definitely
the best part of the job."

If you weren't the head of OPCC, what would you be doing?

"I think my dream job would proba-
bly be a tour guide in Italy. ... All over,
but especially in Tuscany."

Community profile: John Maceri

Maceri is executive director of Ocean
Park Community Center, a local
social-service agency that oversees a
\$5.1 million annual budget.

■ Salary: \$80,000

■ Born: Glendale, June 3, 1957

■ Educated: Biology major, Western
Washington University

■ Background: Came to OPCC in
1999 from the LA-based nonprofit
Homestead Hospice and Shelter. He
previously worked in office supplies
and stationary for 10 years

■ Residence: Northridge

■ Family: Two younger sisters

■ Hobbies: Walking, hiking, swimming,
cooking and traveling

Feds say senior citizens are used to run drugs

By The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Social Security, pen-
sions, life savings. It may not be cutting it
for some seniors, who are turning to other
ways of making money.

Federal officials say that some senior
citizens have been loading up recreational
vehicles with thousands of pounds of
marijuana before leaving Arizona on
cross-country trips.

And instead of an itinerary of must-see
national monuments, these retirees had
lists of contacts for rendezvous in a scheme
that federal officials say moved pot from
the Grand Canyon State to California,
Illinois, Indiana, New York and Wisconsin.

"These drug dealers were utilizing older
folks," said Steven Logan, assistant attorney
in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Phoenix.

"They figured if you were driving a
motor-home and you were old, then you
wouldn't be stopped."

And it apparently worked.

Authorities say 26-year-old ringleader
Michael Hernandez of Tucson, who was
convicted on federal drug charges in
Phoenix this week, once bragged that he
was moving 2,000 pounds of pot a month
using seniors and motor-homes.

Hernandez, who awaits sentencing, was
the latest of seven people convicted through-
out the United States on charges relating to the
drug-running plot that originated in Arizona.

While at least three seniors were
caught making trips, authorities said oth-
ers were involved and all were motivated
by money.

"That's the only reason," said Kish
Koritala, a federal agent assigned to the
Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task
Force, which conducted the investigation.

The scheme started to unravel in 2001,
when 63-year-old Barton Smith was
stopped in Holbrook. Police there asked
to search his car and found 126 pounds of
marijuana.

"At the time he was driving a Crown
Victoria. But the only reason he was driv-
ing the Crown Vic was because it was post-
911 and they were afraid police were stop-
ping large motor-homes," Koritala said.

It wasn't long before Smith started
telling authorities about the motor-homes
and his connection to Hernandez.

This turned out to be the second bust
Holbrook police tied to Hernandez.

In 2000, another man had been stopped
on Interstate 40 with a carload of marijua-
na. Koritala said the man identified
Hernandez and agreed to help police.

Agents used hidden cameras and
recorders to monitor Hernandez in meet-
ings with the transporters.

Federal agents said two other "senior
citizens" involved in the plot agreed to
testify and were not charged.

NATIONAL



Same issues lead to similar "brave" campaigns

BY LIZ SIDOTI

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — In his campaign commercials, John Kerry is tagged as the Democratic candidate with "the courage to do what's right."

Perhaps someone should have told that to rival Wesley Clark. The retired Army general's ads portray him as someone with "a quiet, real American courage" who "stood up for what he believed was right."

Candidates Joe Lieberman and Dick Gephardt probably should have taken note, too. Their ads also talk of them doing "what's right."

A rip-off? A coincidence? Or is it simply the business of image-making?

Media consultants working for the presidential candidates strive to create television ads that will stand out as campaign commercials clutter the TV airwaves. But being different is difficult in this primary season because the Democratic candidates are appealing to the same constituency, talking about the same issues and, in some cases, highlighting the same traits in themselves.

"They're going to sound alike in some ways, but they can't be complete copycats or the voters won't have any reason to pick one over the other," said William Benoit, a communications professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia who studies political ads. "There's also another danger — people will tune out."

Six of the nine candidates vying for the Democratic nomination have used campaign commercials to emphasize values, oppose President Bush's policies in Iraq in some form, advocate rolling back some or all of Bush's

tax cuts, and push for health care policies that would ensure more people have medical benefits.

It's possible that media consultants are stealing ideas from each other.

But it's more likely that polling done by each of the campaigns indicates that these are the issues most important to Democratic voters and, therefore, the themes that may resonate best when discussed in commercials.

As a result, media advisers must work to make their candidates stand out in the field.

"Campaigns are about differences. In a crowded race you have to figure out a way to distinguish one candidate from the others," said David Eichenbaum, a media adviser for former presidential candidate Bob Graham.

Typically, that means keying in on the message the candidate is sending overall to ensure it is woven throughout most of the ads a campaign will produce in an election year — and making sure that message is different from those of the candidate's competitors.

For example, in their ads, former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean always emphasizes that he never has served in Washington; Gephardt, a congressman from Missouri, usually features his long history supporting

labor groups; Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina often talks about making the country stronger through his comprehensive plan called Real Solutions for America; and Lieberman, a Connecticut senator, claims he is the candidate with integrity.

Still, candidates' ads often sound or look alike if they have the same messages as their rivals.

In some commercials, Kerry, a decorated Vietnam veteran and a senator from Massachusetts, and Clark, NATO's former supreme allied commander, have used their military backgrounds to try to set themselves apart as candidates who have the best foreign policy experience. They not only use similar language, such as the word "courage," but also combat photographs.

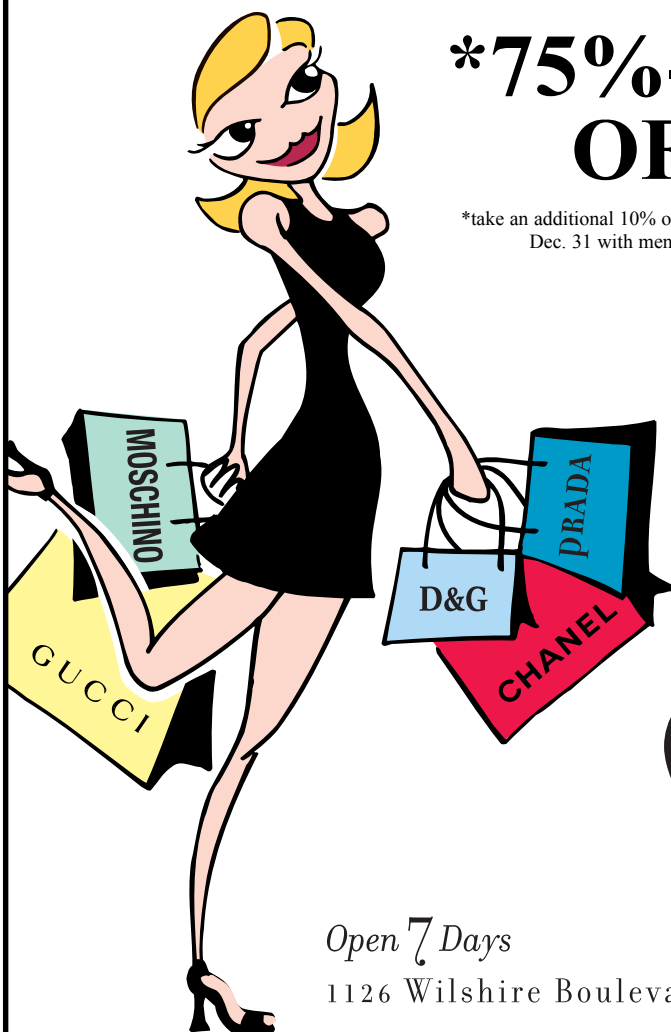
Hoping to appeal to working-class voters, Gephardt and Edwards recall their roots in some of their ads. "My mother was a secretary, and my dad delivered milk door to door. They struggled so I could go to college," says Gephardt. Edwards says: "My grandmother came from a family of sharecroppers. My father worked in a cotton mill all his life."

Media consultants say such overlap is part of the business.

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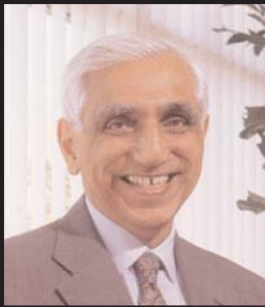
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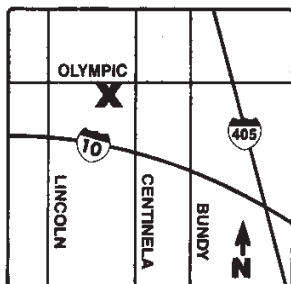
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NATIONAL

More Koreans illegally entering United States

By The Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Increasing numbers of South Koreans, often women who pay thousands of dollars to human smugglers, are illegally entering the United States along Eastern Washington's rugged border with Canada.

The Koreans can freely enter Canada without visas, investigators say. Once there, they make contacts to arrange transport across the border.

The women may agree to pay \$6,000 to \$10,000 each to be smuggled into the United States. And they are often forced to pay off that debt by working as prostitutes for organized crime rings in major U.S. cities, investigators say.

The human trafficking along Eastern Washington's 175-mile international border has increased in the past year.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, security has been substantially increased along the U.S. border in Western Washington, sending smugglers east.

"If you squeeze the balloon at one end, it's going to bulge at the other, and that's what we're seeing," Jim McDevitt, U.S. Attorney for Eastern Washington, told The Spokesman-Review in a story published Thursday.

"It's a concern, a huge concern," said McDevitt, who has called border security one of the most significant law enforcement problems in Eastern Washington.

In the fiscal year that just ended, 88 South Korean nationals were caught illegally entering the United States in Eastern Washington. That is a tenfold increase from the previous 12 months.

Authorities are unable to estimate how many others eluded capture.

Just last week, 10 Korean women and two drivers were seized, reportedly heading for Los Angeles. They now face federal charges or expulsion.

The latest arrests bring to 100 the number of Koreans illegally trying to enter the United States in Eastern Washington in the last 15 months, the Border Patrol said.

In July, a sport utility vehicle with 11 people aboard wrecked as it sped away from Border Patrol agents near Oroville. A 38-year-old Korean woman was killed.

The Korean driver, Byong Suk Kim, 32, pleaded guilty last week in U.S. District Court in Spokane to alien smuggling.

Kim was sentenced last month in Okanogan County Superior Court to 22 months in prison after pleading guilty to vehicular homicide in the death of passenger Song Hui Yim.

Once in Canada, the Korean women make contacts to be smuggled into the United States through ads in Korean-language newspapers published in Vancouver, British Columbia, investigators say.

Others make smuggling arrangements through "tour groups" before leaving Korea.

A favorite area is near the community of Molson, northeast of Oroville in Okanogan County, close to the border.

On Dec. 2 and Dec. 4, Border Patrol agents saw footprints in the snow indicating several groups had crossed from Canada, court documents said.

On Dec. 7, agents returned and caught 10 Korean women after they walked across the border near Molson, court records said.

"They didn't have much more than the clothes on their backs," said Kevin C. Smith, supervisory special agent with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Two men who allegedly had rented SUVs at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and driven to Okanogan County to pick up the women also were arrested.

The men, Won Jung and Seung Hyun Cho, both Korean nationals, were indicted Tuesday by a grand jury on charges of conspiracy and transportation of illegal aliens, Assistant U.S. Attorney Pam Byerly said.

One of the women they picked up near Molson had been ordered removed from the United States in September, after she was convicted of prostitution in Philadelphia, Smith said. She now faces formal deportation.

"The smugglers are taking advantage of Canada's immigration visa waiver program, which allows South Koreans to enter Canada with relative ease," Border Patrol spokesman Paul Jones said.

So far, nothing is stemming the tide, although Jones said agents are doing everything they can.

The Border Patrol expects the Spokane area to continue to see "a marked increase in organized alien smuggling activity," he said.

New bishop installed by the Catholic church

By The Associated Press

PHOENIX — The Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix installed a new bishop Saturday to replace Thomas O'Brien, whose tenure included allegations of abuse by priests and his arrest in a deadly hit-and-run accident.

Thomas Olmsted, the bishop of Wichita, Kan., becomes the new spiritual leader of more than 470,000 Catholics in Arizona. He will try to move beyond a scandal that has dogged the diocese for several months.

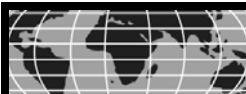
Olmsted told a crowd of 1,200 that honesty and determination should be used

in protecting children from sexual abuse.

The diocese was thrown into turmoil in June after prosecutors announced an immunity deal with O'Brien that spared the church leader indictment on obstruction charges for protecting priests accused of child molestation.

Already facing criticism for the deal, O'Brien resigned after he was charged with leaving the scene of a fatal accident involving a pedestrian.

O'Brien did not report the accident to police but told investigators later that he did not realize he had hit a person. His trial is expected to begin on Jan. 12.



WORLD BRIEFLY

United States switches strategies

By The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — In a significant switch in strategy, U.S. troops plan to set up bases to provide reconstruction aid in provinces plagued by Taliban attacks, the new U.S. commander in Afghanistan said in his first interview since taking charge.

Lt. Gen. David Barno told The Associated Press that the move will make the troubled south and east safer for aid workers and open the way for landmark Afghan elections next summer. He also predicted a sharp reaction from insurgents.

"They're 'going to realize that's the death knell to terrorist organizations in that part of the country,'" said Barno. "We'll be prepared for that."

A wave of violence this year has belied U.S. claims to have brought security to Afghanistan, two years after an American-led assault drove the Taliban from power for harboring al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden.

Attacks have forced the United Nations and other aid groups to withdraw from some regions, undermining aid delivery and confidence in the reconstruction efforts of the U.S.-backed government ahead of elections slated for June.

The United Nations has even accused the U.S. military of playing into the hands of Taliban agitators in its hunt for terror suspects, with two botched raids that killed 15 Afghan children earlier this month.

In a bid to deliver more aid to impoverished civilians, the United States and allies including Britain and New Zealand have set up nine joint civilian-military units charged with creating islands of stability across the country.

Doctors fear pandemic flu

By The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Some U.S. hospitals are already struggling to deal with the current flu outbreak. But that is nothing compared to what would happen if a powerful new flu strain exploded into a worldwide flu outbreak, known as a pandemic.

Patients would overwhelm hospitals, and the overflow would have to be housed elsewhere, such as schools — which would already be closed. Nurses, already in short supply, could not possibly get to everyone. And there would be even fewer doctors and nurses once they, too, started getting sick.

There would not be enough antiviral drugs or ventilators to take care of the elderly, who are most at risk of dying from flu.

"Pandemic flu is a special challenge ... it has a much greater potential for the disruption of the function of society," said Dr. Jeffrey Duchin. As chief of communicable disease control, epidemiology and immunization for Seattle-King County's public health department in Washington state, Duchin is one of the many health officials wrestling with the challenge.

"It's arguably the most significant biological disaster that could ever afflict a community," he said.

Many public health officials say the country needs to do much more to ready itself for such a disaster, and U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said last week that work is under way on a national preparedness plan.

HHS expects \$50 million from Congress for pandemic flu planning, including research into ways of speeding up flu vaccine manufacturing. The department will ask for \$100 million

more in fiscal year 2005.

A pandemic can happen if different flu strains swap genetic information and mutate into a new strain that people's bodies have no immunity against and that is easily spread from person to person.

Health experts say the world is overdue for such an event.

Libya abandons weapons

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, meeting in the dead of night in his capital with officers from the Central Intelligence Agency and British intelligence, appeared eager to do away with his weapons programs, U.S. officials said Saturday.

Those secret meetings over recent months led to Friday's surprise announcement that Libya would cease work on its programs to develop nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, including an effort to refine uranium for use in nuclear devices, the officials said.

The United States and Britain portrayed the announcement as a significant breakthrough in their efforts to curtail the spread of such weapons and keep them from a terrorist organization or hostile country.

It is clear, however, that Gadhafi has tried in recent years to ease tensions with the West, and this step was expected to further improve Libya's international standing.

Gadhafi initiated the talks and the subsequent onsite inspections in March after he agreed to settle the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, with cash payments and an admission of complicity. His overture for talks came days before the United States and Britain invaded Iraq.

President Bush said the ouster and capture of Saddam Hussein and U.S. efforts to check weapons pursuits by North Korea and Iran played a role in Gadhafi's decision. Gadhafi's son said Saturday his father went ahead after receiving assurances that the United States was not plotting against him. Libya also claimed it had acted on its own to serve as an inspiration for the rest of the world.

Spain shows support

By The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Reaffirming his support for the U.S.-led occupation, Spain's prime minister lunched in a desert canteen with Spanish soldiers in Iraq on Saturday in a surprise trip reminiscent of President Bush's Thanksgiving visit to Baghdad.

In Samarra, a town near Tikrit where rebel activity has been intense, U.S. forces destroyed a house suspected of being used by insurgents to shoot at passing military convoys. And residents in the western town of Rawah, near the Syrian border, said a large number of American soldiers had entered the town and were conducting house-to-house searches.

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar landed in Iraq at about 11 a.m. with a 16-member delegation to meet members of the 1,300-strong Spanish contingent in Iraq, based in the southern town of Diwaniyah. He left four hours later.

In brief comments to reporters, Aznar expressed support for Spanish troops and said he brought them greetings from King Juan Carlos. He said the soldiers were working for "the cause of freedom, democ-

racy and respect for international law."

Meanwhile, senior military officials in Washington said the Pentagon is sending an additional 2,000 troops to Iraq and extending the deployment of another unit.

Air Force drops charges

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Air Force has dropped three counts in an espionage case against a Syrian-born airman who worked as a translator at the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prison camp for terrorism suspects.

The lawyer for Senior Airman Ahmad I. al-Halabi, a supply clerk detailed to the prison, said Saturday that once those charges were removed, "simply the gut of the case was gone."

Dropped was the single count in the charge that accused al-Halabi of "aiding the enemy," a capital offense.

Also dropped were counts dealt with e-mailing information about Guantanamo detainees and committing espionage by transmitting information to unauthorized recipients.

Al-Halabi still faces 17 of the 30 charges filed against him following his arrest in July after nine months as an Arabic translator at the prison. They include other espionage counts, disobeying an order, making false official statements, mishandling classified documents and lying on a credit application.

Air Force Lt. Gen. William Welser III, commander of the 18th Air Force at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., convening authority for al-Halabi's general court-martial, gave no rationale for his decision to drop the charges Friday.

Donald G. Rehkopf Jr., al-Halabi's

civilian lawyer, said the impact of Welser's decision was significant because it went at "the very gut charge of how he was alleged to have done whatever it is they claim or think that he did."

Dean condemns mudslinging

By The Associated Press

MAQUOKETA, Iowa — Howard Dean appealed to fellow Democratic presidential candidates Saturday to stop the bitter attack politics that have come to dominate the race for the party's nomination. The race needs "a little character transplant," he said.

"It's not necessary to tear down the other opponents," said Dean, whose front-running campaign has come increasingly under fire from Democratic rivals.

In his latest swing through Iowa, where the nominating process starts with caucuses next month, Dean pushed hard at his claim to being an outsider running against Washington-based candidates with no record of accomplishment.

"There are five or six people running for president right now who have a chance at winning," Dean said. "I'm the only person who has done anything about trying to get health care."

Dean is bunched with Missouri Rep. Dick Gephardt in Iowa, but he has developed a wide lead in other early states such as New Hampshire. As his campaign has developed momentum, he's come under fire with regularity.

Dean argued that his 12 years as governor of Vermont give him experience unmatched by his rivals and a record that draws the sharpest contrast with President Bush.

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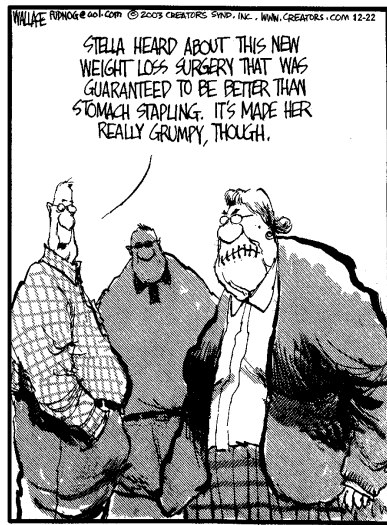
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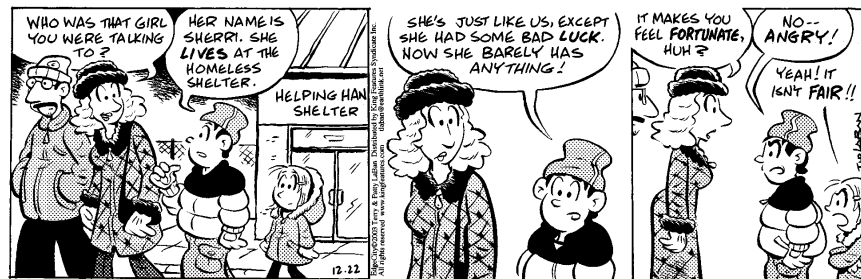
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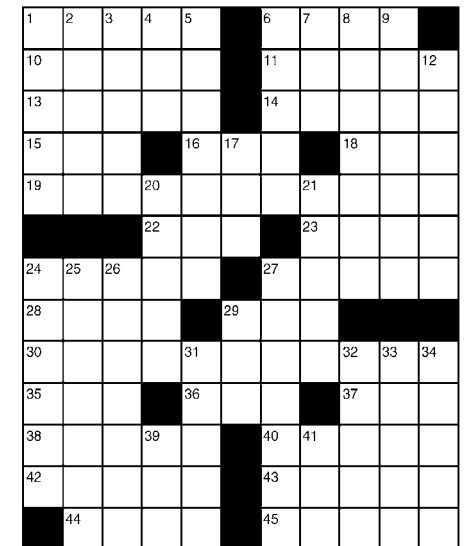
- 1 Musical Count
- 6 China setting
- 10 Arch writing
- 11 After-dinner sweets
- 13 One in a conical cap
- 14 Make suitable
- 15 Actor Wallach
- 16 Brown shade
- 18 Zodiac cat
- 19 Like typing, filling, etc.
- 22 Take advantage of
- 23 Formerly
- 24 Crooked
- 27 Ten-year-old, e.g.
- 28 Radius or tibia
- 29 Is, for two
- 30 Triple Crown winner of 1973
- 35 Common bill
- 36 Mover's truck
- 37 Actor Erwin
- 38 Kitchen appliance

- 40 Place for a new do
- 42 Plains grazers
- 43 Dancer Castle
- 44 Allows
- 45 Spud

DOWN

- 1 Awaits
- 2 As — (generally)
- 3 Kind of boom
- 4 Company abbr.
- 5 It may start with "E"
- 6 Iowa community
- 7 Comic Caesar
- 8 Queued up
- 9 Content
- 12 Hot
- 17 Had lunch
- 20 Monarch
- 21 Crew member
- 24 Soak up
- 25 Clipper target
- 26 Church fragrance
- 27 Subway, buses, etc.
- 29 One — time
- 31 Makes flat
- 32 Key
- 33 Make amends
- 34 Radio part
- 39 Obtained
- 41 Coach Parseghian

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Stock-trading scandal is dampening Stewart's holiday spirit

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Facing trial on a stock-trading scandal, Martha Stewart says her legal woes have curtailed her holiday plans.

"It's the saddest holiday ever. It's an unwelcome time for me, very unwelcome," she told CNN's "Larry King Live" in a taped interview scheduled to air Monday. "I generally have a Christmas party but this year I'm only having a small family party."

Stewart's criminal trial on securities fraud and conspiracy charges is scheduled to begin Jan. 12.

In excerpts provided to The Associated Press, Stewart, 62, denies any wrongdoing, but said the approaching trial has caused her a lot of pain.

"You have no idea how much worry and sadness and grief it causes," she says.

Despite the ordeal, Stewart says she hasn't allowed herself to get angry.

"You can't let that get to you because then, again, your functionality, your daily chores can't get done," she says. "And my legal team has inspired me to behave in an appropriate fashion."

LOS ANGELES — Bob Guiney, one of the stars of the popular ABC-TV reality series "The Bachelor," has been sued for breach of contract by the show's producers.

In a lawsuit filed Friday, Guiney and his record company, Wind-up Records, were sued for promoting his new CD, "3 Sides," and music video.

And Syndicated Productions Inc. — a division of Telepictures Productions — wants to stop Guiney from

making any more public appearances in connection with the CD.

The producers also are asking for unspecified monetary damages.

Stars of "The Bachelor" and "The Bachelorette" series sign contracts with exclusivity clauses prohibiting them from promoting any other products without permission, according to the lawsuit.

Guiney caught the public's eye in the first season of "The Bachelorette." After being rejected, he was picked to star in the fourth season of "The Bachelor."

Michael J. O'Connor, a lawyer for And Syndicated Productions, did not immediately return a call seeking comment. There was no immediate response Sunday to a call seeking comment from Wind-up Records.

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — "American Idol" runner-up Clay Aiken walked across a different kind of stage this weekend for a distinctive honor — his college degree.

Aiken, who vaulted from obscurity to pop music stardom, graduated from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte on Saturday, receiving a bachelor of arts degree in special education.

"American Idol" has made Aiken a multiplatinum recording sensation, but he was just another face in the crowd at the graduation ceremony. His name was not mentioned until he walked across the stage, the last of 593 degree recipients.

"One among you has received a bit more attention and he would like to speak to his class," Chancellor James Woodward told the audience.

"This has been an amazing year for me," Aiken said

upon getting his diploma. "This is more special to me than a lot of the things that have happened to me this year, because what happens here today says something to people. This is a day that makes for all of us a statement ... how important it is to persevere and continue to work and strive to succeed."

Aiken later announced several initiatives by the Bubel Aiken Foundation, a charitable organization started this summer to help disabled children. Aiken was a mentor to Mike Bubel, a teenager with autism, while studying at UNCC.

LOS ANGELES — The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has named a new Hollywood screening room in honor of optical effects pioneer Linwood Dunn, who worked on such classics as "Citizen Kane" and "King Kong."

"Linwood Dunn was a giant in the motion picture field, a gifted artist and scientist who made enormous contributions to our art form throughout most of the 20th century," Academy President Frank Pierson said.

The 286-seat screening room at the Pickford Center was first used Dec. 7 to showcase films in contention for Academy Awards. A formal dedication will be held after the Feb. 29 award ceremony.

Dunn, who died in 1998, received an Oscar in 1980, along with Cecil D. Love and the Acme Tool and Manufacturing Co., for the concept, engineering and development of the Acme-Dunn Optical Printer for motion picture special effects.

The device was used for visual effects until the 1990s, when digital compositing became available.



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