

Santa Monica Daily Press

Since 2001: A news odyssey

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ At the county jail in Dubuque, Iowa, in November, Michael Kelley Jr., 29 and accused of attempted murder, was swapping stories with inmate Jamie Brimeyer, 34, when he asked about Brimeyer's facial scar. As Brimeyer described being stabbed in the cheek by an unknown assailant in 2005, Kelley realized that he was the one who had stabbed him and recalled the incident so well that he corrected some of Brimeyer's recollections. Brimeyer later reported Kelley, who is now also charged with assault with a dangerous weapon.

■ (from the Morning Sentinel, Waterville, Maine, Nov. 10) "6 p.m., a woman said she suspected someone had sabotaged her washing machine. A police investigation concluded that an imbalanced laundry load had caused the shaking."

■ (from The Star Press, Muncie, Ind., Nov. 4) "(A man) reported the burglary around 10 p.m. Thursday after he returned from the hospital and found his 36-inch Samsung TV missing. It (had been) replaced with an RCA TV that was missing a power cord. ... Decorative items were placed around the new TV, apparently in an attempt to fool (him)."

■ "I've always had the desire to play (the cello) naked," said Ms. Jesse Hale, a music major at Austin Peay State University (Clarksville, Tenn.) and member of the CJ Boyd Sextet of nude cellists who play their experimental, chant-like songs in concert around the country. Hale, who says she's been playing naked since sixth grade, explained to Austin Peay's newspaper in September that cellists "make full body contact with (their) instrument," and their legs even "wrap" around it so that "(i)t just feels natural."

■ England's Liverpool Magistrates Court granted police a temporary "sexual offenses prevention order" in October against Akinwale Arobieke, 45, who had been jailed for pestering people with requests to feel their muscles. Arobieke is prohibited from touching, feeling or measuring muscles or asking people to do squat exercises.

TODAY IN HISTORY

2004 more than 200,000 people, mostly in southern Asia, were killed by a tsunami triggered by the world's most powerful earthquake in 40 years beneath the Indian Ocean.

1776 the British suffered a major defeat in the Battle of Trenton during the Revolutionary War.

1799 former President George Washington was eulogized by Col. Henry Lee as "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

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Feeling petrified

A group of onlookers check out the 'Mummy of Herakleides,' a Romano-Egyptian from about A.D. 150, at the Getty Villa on the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu over the weekend.

Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

Uniting through the pain

BY MELODY HANATANI

Daily Press Staff Writer

SANTA MONICA PIER — It's a day that Keith Ranga will never forget.

Two years ago on Christmas Day, Ranga was celebrating the holidays with his family when news broke of one of the worst natural disasters in history. A major earthquake had

erupted, creating tsunami waves that were as high as 20 meters in some places, smashing homes, ruining communities and ultimately killing about 280,000 people.

Ranga, a Sri Lanka native who now lives in Pasadena, was frantic. He could not contact his family back home and sat by the television, watching the news constantly update

the death toll. Luckily, Ranga's family lives about 10 miles from the beach and was able to avoid the tsunami's destructive path.

An estimated 30,000 people died and 850,000 were displaced in Sri Lanka.

Today, Ranga, who is the head of

See TSUNAMI CEREMONY, page 7

The newcomer to the holiday scene

BY MELODY HANATANI

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITYWIDE — Christmas may be over, but the holiday festivities continue as Kwanzaa — a holiday celebrating African-American heritage — begins today and continues until the first of the year.

Kwanzaa, a relative newcomer to the December holiday scene, is a non-religious spiritual celebration of African American culture that was started 40 years ago by Dr. Ron Karenga, a professor of Black Studies at California State

University at Long Beach.

The holiday means "first fruits of the harvest" in Swahili.

Kwanzaa is guided by seven principles, each of which serves as the theme for one day out of the week-long celebration. It begins today with the principle of "Umoja," which means unity, and continues Wednesday with the theme of "Kujichagulia," or self-determination, and "Ujima" (Thursday — collective work and responsibility);

See KWANZAA, page 8



Photo courtesy

GUIDED: Kwanzaa follows seven principles, one serves as a theme per day.

We're in the money

Latest economic forecast says SM is sitting pretty

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — While money may not grow on trees, City Hall is definitely raking in the dough, with a checking account balance of \$28.4 million, according to an independent review of the city's finances.

Thanks to lower than expected facilities and equipment maintenance and replacement costs, plus a 27.9 percent increase in tax revenue, the general fund balance — which pays for essential services such as police, fire, libraries and parks and recreation — is \$2.5 million more than projected earlier this year.

And if that isn't enough, City Hall's total net assets increased by \$40.2 million during the current fiscal year and its bond rating was the highest possible, with an Aaa from Moody's, an AAA from Standard & Poor's and from Fitch, the foremost providers of independent credit ratings.

In short, City Hall is sitting pretty, which is good, economists said, considering somewhat rough times may lie ahead for many municipalities. Home sales could come to a screeching halt. In addition, a possible strike by television writers could put a damper on consumer spending, particularly in Santa Monica, where 43 percent of residents make their living in a creative field.

There is also uncertainty surrounding the local Utility User Tax, or UTT, a 10-percent tax on electricity, natural gas, cable and water/wastewater services. Current legal challenges involving the telecommunications industry and

See MONEY FORECAST, page 6



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Calendar

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For more information, call (310) 515-4840.

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Fitness Class (Mambo Mania)

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For more information, call (310) 515-4840.

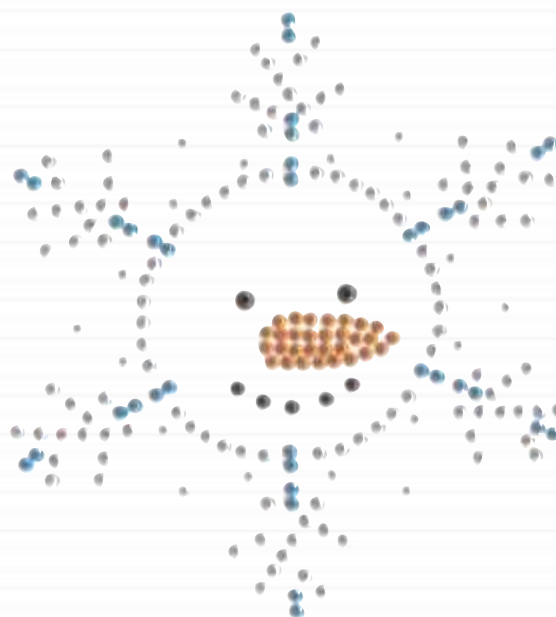
Santa Monica Fitness Group for Women

Santa Monica, 6:30 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

Kiwanis Club Weekly Meeting

1332 Sixth St., noon — 1:30 p.m.

The Santa Monica Kiwanis Club weekly luncheon with guest speakers.



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.



Vegas spirits inventor stakes claim to ‘Liqueur’

BY RYAN NAKASHIMA
AP Business Writer

LAS VEGAS — Alcohol fuels this city’s all-night clubbing scene and greases the gears of gambling, so it’s perhaps not surprising that a Las Vegas man has added his own cocktail ingredient to the mix — “Redcliff: America’s Liqueur.”

Entrepreneur Frank Arcella, a former Seagram executive who made millions creating Corazon tequila, has tried to fill what he saw as a cavernous gap in the industry:

The French have Grand Marnier, the Irish Baileys. Amaretto and Sambuca are from Italy, Kahlua is from Mexico, and Jagermeister is German. In America, there was nothing quite the same, he said.

“That’s the category of premium, proprietary liqueurs that I wanted to pursue,” said Arcella, 62.

Along with a friend who is a drink chemist and his daughter-in-law, Arcella spent two years in a small room tasting some 500 different versions of a distilled liquid he wanted to capture the taste of an American tradition: cola.

In the end, he settled on a 15-item mix that includes cinnamon, lime, eight-year-old Virgin Islands rum, vermouth, vodka, bourbon bean vanilla, anise and hazelnut.

It’s a spirit that hangs its hat as much on its birthplace in the rugged Southwest as on the party atmosphere of a college bar.

The hip-flask-shaped bottle pours out a caramel-colored snifter that beverage magazine Patterson’s spirits editor Anthony Dias Blue ranked 90 out of 100 in an individual tasting this year. That put it in the “outstanding” range, he said.

“It was well-integrated, balanced and had a nice display of herbs and spice and a little bit of cola and not too sweet,” Blue said. “I really quite liked it.”

But strong reviews don’t always equate to sales.

Arcella has carted samples around the country for the past year and now has distribution in 13 states. While many liqueur brands ship more than 1 million cases a year (including Southern Comfort, which Arcella doesn’t consider a premium), so far Redcliff’s highest order from a single retailer was about 20 cases.



Lifting weights in Gold’s
Personal trainer and bodybuilder title-holder Bee Smith (left) puts her client Andrea Nash, 29, a competitive figure model, through a set of dumbbell curls at Gold’s Gym in Venice over the weekend. Nash has been training with Smith for more than a year.

Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

Making a cameo for the homeless

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Daily Press Staff Writer

WEST HOLLYWOOD — Mike Hennessey is looking to change the world, one aluminum can, plastic bottle or glass container at a time.

The actor has just launched a non-profit called EXTRA Cans for the Needy (ECFTN), a program designed by a group of movie and television extras who are collecting all recyclables on every set and delivering them to the homeless.

“It’s more than just recycling to save the environment,” Hennessey said. “It’s about

recycling a life.”

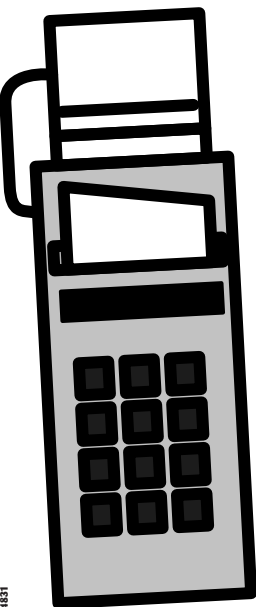
The initiative isn’t limited to just extras on movie sets. Hennessey is encouraging everyone to participate and take some “extra” time each day to collect any empty cans they have at home, school or at the office and drop them off at local shelters or hand them out to those living on the streets.

Hennessey is envisioning a program where there are gold bins stationed outside grocery stores and public buildings where homeless people can be free to take empties and recycle them for cash without having to rummage through dirty garbage and recycling bins.

The idea, which Hennessey came up with in October after spending a day on the set of E.R., is similar to the “Take a Penny, Leave a Penny” idea used in many convenience stores. It is the goal of ECFTN to turn this into a contest for school children and teens to see who can collect the most cans and bottles for the needy. Eventually, Hennessey would like to see schools, churches, temples, AIDS and other health foundations utilize this as a means of fundraising.

Hennessey said he started picking up

See RECYCLING PLAN, page 8



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The eyesores continue

Editor:
To answer Mark Shepherd’s question (“Disturbing SM developments,” Dec. 22, page 4), there is an uglier building than the low income housing at the corner of Broadway and 15th, (it is) the low income housing at Santa Monica and 26th Street.

We went to the community meetings and told them it looked like a Crocker Bank Building from the ’60s. Thank you very much for your input, we were told. Like all our questions about the appropriateness of the location for 40 plus families and the fact that it would increase density in the neighborhood by 200 percent or so, the response we got was another low income building snuck in on us just a few blocks east on Santa Monica Boulevard. No way of telling how ugly it will be. I am holding my breath while we talk – no one listens or cares, they do what they do.

Dorothea Warren
Santa Monica

Failure to connect

Editor:
I direct the Applied Mathematics program at UCLA and am a Santa Monica resident with significant need for consistent high quality Internet access from home.
I am following up on the article in the Santa Monica Daily Press today regarding complaints with Time Warner Cable (“Cable causing friction,” Dec. 22, page1). I live on 17th Street and have TWC’s high speed Internet service, which was switched over from Adelphia.
I have had intermittent problems with service interruption during business hours, typically for several hours at a time. This has been happening at least once a week for the last month or so since the switch over.
I conduct a significant fraction of my work for UCLA from my house, as well as run a small business out of my home office and the service interruptions have been a problem for me.

I am ready to switch to FiOS service as soon as it is available on my street. Cost of the service is not an issue for me as it is covered by my business. I need consistent and high quality service in order to function.
Frankly, before the switch, Adelphia was not much better. I had trouble with them too. However the problems seem to be a bit worse now with TWC, in that they are consistently having service interruptions of the Internet for several hours during business hours. I have called their help number and get a recording saying that there is a service interruption in my area. I am asked to press a button to receive an automated phone call when service is restored. This is the same message Adelphia used to use. So far TWC has never called me to report service is back up, even when it is up. Adelphia never did much better – in fact they used to call to say service was up when it was not yet up. So I’m not sure which is worse ... failure to call or calling and reporting something fixed when it is not fixed.
For \$45 a month, one should be able to get consistent quality service without long interruptions during business hours. Neither Adelphia nor TWC has been able to deliver this. I am hopeful that the new FiOS service will be more stable.

Also for the record, I had TWC Internet service in North Carolina up until 2003 when I moved to California. I did not have the problems there that I am having here in California.
I would be grateful if the city could “lean” on these people to improve their service. Also I would be grateful if you could get FiOS rolled out quickly so that there is an alternative to cable modem for high speed service. DSL was never an option for me because of the slower download speed.

Andrea Bertozzi
Santa Monica

GUEST COMMENTARY BY ELAN JOURNO

Western ‘diplomacy’ has strengthened North Korea

When North Korea detonated a nuclear bomb in October, it erased all doubts about the threat it poses to not only South Korea and Japan, but also to the United States. To end this nuclear stand-off without bloodshed, many people are urging that we pursue negotiations with North Korea and engage in diplomacy. Pitched as levelheaded and practical, this approach would culminate in a supposedly win-win deal: the North promises to halt its nuclear program in exchange for a combination of economic and diplomatic concessions from the West.

But such a deal, like all previous ones, would reward the North for its aggression and strengthen it into a worse menace. North Korea has become a significant threat precisely because we have appeased it for years with boatloads of oil, food and money.
Some 20 years ago, North Korea’s nuclear ambitions became glaringly obvious. Ignoring this, the West pretended that this hostile dictatorship would honor a treaty banning nuclear weapons. To get its signature took years of Western groveling and concessions. The North’s promises to halt its nuclear program were predictably hollow. By 1993, after preventing required inspections of its nuclear facilities, Pyongyang announced its intention to withdraw from the treaty. Our response?

More “diplomacy” — in the form of the “Agreed Framework,” brokered in 1994. For agreeing to freeze its nuclear program, North Korea was offered two light-water nuclear reactors (putatively for generating electricity) and, until the reactors were operational, 500,000 metric tons of oil annually (nearly half its annual energy consumption). The United States, along with Japan and South Korea, paid for these lavish gifts. During these years of apparent tranquility, our handouts and assurances of security buoyed North Korea as it furtively completed two reactors capable of yielding weapons-grade fuel. By 2003 — when the North actually did withdraw from the nuclear treaty — it was clear that Pyongyang had continued secretly to develop weapons-capable nuclear technology.
The pattern of America’s suicidal diplomacy is clear: the North threatens us, we respond with negotiations, gifts and concessions, and it emerges with even greater belligerence. Witness, in the current talks, North Korea’s threat to increase its nuclear arsenal unless its latest set of extravagant demands is satisfied.

Without economic aid, technical assis-

tance and protracted negotiations affording it time, it is unlikely that the North — continually on the brink of economic collapse — could have survived. It is also unlikely that it could have built the fourth-largest army in the world. The North is believed to have sold long-range ballistic missiles to Iran, Yemen, Pakistan and Syria. By some estimates, North Korea already has the material to create eight nuclear bombs. As it doubtless will continue engaging in clandestine nuclear development, the North may soon be selling nuclear weapons.

What made this cycle of appeasement possible — and why do our political and intellectual leaders insist that further “diplomacy” will work? Because they reject moral judgment and cling to the fiction that North Korea shares the basic goal of prosperity and peace. This fantasy underlies the notion that the right mix of economic aid and military concessions can persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear program. It evades the fact that the North is a militant dictatorship that acquires and maintains its power by force, looting the wealth of its enslaved citizens and threatening to do the same to its neighbors. This abstract fact, the advocates of diplomacy believe, is dispensable; if we ignore it, then it ceases to exist.
Notice how, in preparing the way for renewed talks, the Bush administration has ceased describing North Korea as part of an “axis of evil” — as if this could alter its moral stature.

What the advocates of diplomacy believe, in effect, is that pouring gasoline onto an inferno will extinguish the fire — so long as we all agree that it will. Thus: if we agree that North Korea is not a hostile parasite, then it isn’t; if we pretend that this dictatorship would rather feed its people than amass weapons, then it would; if we shower it with loot, it will stop threatening us. But the facts of North Korea’s character and long-range goals, like all facts, are impervious to anyone’s wishful thinking. Years of rewarding a petty dictatorship for its belligerent actions did not disarm it, but helped it become a significant threat to America.

There is only one solution to the “North Korea problem”: the United States and its allies must abandon the suicidal policy of appeasement.

Elan Jurno is a junior fellow at the Ayn Rand Institute in Irvine, Calif. Contact Jurno at media@aynrand.org.

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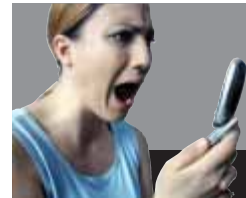
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Santa Monica Daily Press

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS



REV. DR. LAWRENCE
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Carter to speak at King celebration

The Rev. Dr. Lawrence Edward Carter Sr., dean of the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel at Morehouse College in Atlanta, will be the keynote speaker at the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday on Monday, Jan. 15, 2007. The special event will be held at 9 a.m. in the SGI, Inc. World Culture Auditorium, 525 Wilshire Blvd.

Following the celebration will be the Santa Monica Symphony's free Martin Luther King Commemorative Concert at 2:30 p.m. at the same location. Under the baton of Allen Gross, the symphony orchestra will perform Adolphus Hailstork's "Epitaph for Martin Luther King," William Grant Still's "Afro-American Symphony," Copland's Old American Songs, and traditional spirituals.

The free event is coordinated by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Westside Coalition, a nonprofit coalition whose missions are consistent with King's legacy.

The multi-ethnic, interfaith program will also include inspirational readings, music, and presentations of scholarships. The theme is "True Peace is the Presence of Justice."

Carter has served as the first dean of the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel, since 1979, and is a tenured professor of religion, as well as college curator. He is also an adjunct professor at the Morehouse School of Medicine in the Master of Public Health Program.

For 45 years, Carter has studied and worked in 14 American universities, colleges and professional schools; spoken at more than 80 colleges, universities and seminaries; received more than 500 speaking engagements from 18 denominations; and traveled to 33 foreign countries. He has also made radio and television appearances throughout the world.

For more information about the event, call (310) 434-4003.

DAILY PRESS

Local teens document through their 'Eyes'

The Santa Monica Teen Advisory Council will present a multimedia presentation and discussion on the importance of self-expression to Santa Monica teens. The presentation will be held on Saturday, Jan. 13, at 3:30 p.m. in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Auditorium at the Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd.

For the past three months, the Teen Council, made up of 15 Santa Monica High School students, has investigated ways in which teens express themselves through spoken word and urban art. The Council interviewed teens at a open mic program called Downbeat 720 on the importance of spoken word as a means of self-expression. In addition, teen graffiti artists shared their thoughts on the different forms of urban art in the community.

By combining audio recordings, digital images, and old-fashioned interviewing, the Teen Council put together a compelling presentation on one of the most important elements of teenage life – self-expression.

"We chose this topic because we really feel that this truly reflects Santa Monica teens," said one of the youth participants. "We want people in Santa Monica to better understand why youth are involved in activities like spoken word and urban art and what it means to us."

This project is part of the California Council for the Humanities recently inaugurated youth-focused program, "How I See It," a statewide effort to enable young people to share – in their own words – what their lives are like, what they care about and what it's like growing up in a diverse and changing state.

The program also aims to spark interest in the humanities and encourage youth to pursue their new skills and interests through higher education. Through the course of the three-month long project, participants have learned research and presentation skills, including how to interview someone, how to document their research with photography and video, how to incorporate research into a multimedia presentation, and how to organize and conduct a public program.

All ages are invited to attend this presentation and panel discussion. For more information, contact Erica Tang, Young Adult Librarian, at (310) 458-8620.

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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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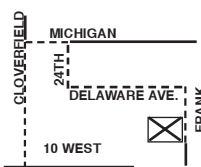
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SM's diverse revenue sources give stability

MONEY FORECAST, from page 1

municipalities may reduce the amount the city receives under the UUT by an average of \$12 million.

"While the city enters (fiscal year 2006-07) in better financial shape than expected, uncertainties at both the state and the local level remain," read the financial report, which was prepared by the accounting firm of Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C., and released last week. "At the state level, estimated operating shortfalls have not yet been addressed for the (upcoming) budget year."

That could lead to higher taxes and fees, as well as cuts to government programs, placing a heavier burden on the back of local government, which could also struggle with increased health care and pension costs, said Jack Kyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles Economic Development Corp.

"All governing bodies are a little nervous," said Kyser. "They have benefited from an unprecedented boom in the real estate industry as property values went way up. Everyone did quite well. But now governments are getting nervous, particularly those that rely heavily on taxes from home sales because we have seen some of the higher prices for homes softening along with the slow-down in the market ... and that goes for condos as well as single-family homes."

With gas prices also rising, a drop off in consumer spending could occur, however, a recession is not being predicted, according to the UCLA Anderson Forecast, a quarterly review of the economy in both the U.S. and California.

Historically, Santa Monica has enjoyed a stable economy and is somewhat insulated from economic downturns in other parts of the state or nation due to its diverse sources of revenue.

"We have three to four sources of revenue that make up the bulk of our funding, but not one of them represents anywhere near 50 percent of all the funding we receive," said Candace Tysdal, acting finance director for City Hall. "Because of this, I think our financial outlook is favorable."

This diverse economic base has held unemployment relatively stable, with a rate of 5 percent in 2005. This compares favorably with the County of Los Angeles (5.3 percent) and the state (5.4 percent), according to the financial review.

"ALL GOVERNING BODIES ARE A LITTLE NERVOUS."

Jack Kyser,

chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.

Santa Monica also continues to have a vibrant office market, both from a leasing demand and investment perspective, with available space being absorbed rapidly, even though leasing rates have reached \$4 per square foot — the highest in the region. At the end of the first half of 2006, Santa Monica's office market vacancy rate stood at a "healthy" 5.7 percent, one of the lowest of all Westside cities, the financial report found.

"The investment market in Santa Monica proves to be just as exciting as the leasing market," the report states. "The mixed-use, 30,000 square foot building at 331 Santa Monica Boulevard sold in March 2006 for \$18.7 million."

Tourism is also a revenue generator for City Hall, and with the value of the dollar decreasing as compared to the Euro and other forms of currency, expect hotels to be filled in the coming months, Kyser said.

"Traveling to the U.S. is going to be very attractive to foreign tourists and this can only bode well for Santa Monica," Kyser said. "I think you'll see a lot of people hitting the beach this summer, and that means local businesses are going to see some heavy spending."

"I think Santa Monica is going to be just fine."

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Photo courtesy

A WAVE OF DEBRIS: A Sri Lankan man surveys the damage caused by the tsunami in December of 2004.

Sri Lanka groups plan a vigil at the SM Pier

TSUNAMI CEREMONY, from page 1

the Sri Lanka American Association of Southern California, and representatives of Sri Lankan organizations from across the state, will assemble at the Santa Monica Pier to commemorate the second anniversary of the South Asia Tsunami — a devastation that has affected the lives of thousands of Sri Lankans both here and abroad.

“WHEN WE RELEASE FLOWERS TO THE OCEAN, THERE IS A VERY STRONG CONNECTION.”

Rashantha de Silva
Cofounder, Paalama

“There were so many lives lost over there and people are still suffering,” Ranga said on Thursday. “People who lost their homes, kids and family.”

Paalama, a Los Angeles-based organization that aims to bring the Sri Lankan community in the United States together, is organizing the event for the second straight year at the pier. Paalama, means “bridge” in Sinhala, one of the languages spoken in Sri Lanka, according to Paalama co-founder Rashantha de Silva.

“The pier is the most fitting place for something like this because of the proximity to the ocean,” said de Silva on Thursday.

The location is also central for the participating organizations, many of which are in Southern California.

The candlelight vigil ceremony will commence at 5:30 p.m. at the pier, where the Sri Lanka Consulate General from the Downtown Los Angeles office will speak about ongoing tsunami relief efforts. Several Sri Lankan religious denominations —

including Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Muslim — will offer prayer services, followed by a moment of silence, when flowers will be released into the ocean.

The event is open to the public.

“When we release flowers to the ocean, there is a very strong connection,” said de Silva. “We are far away from our country and we need to be able to feel [what Sri Lankans are feeling back home].

“For some people, it provides closure.”

REMEMBERING THE SURVIVORS

De Silva moved to the United States 27 years ago, at the age of 14, and his family back home managed to escape the tsunami unscathed. But some of his American friends who were visiting the country on vacation had perished.

The memorial is a remembrance of not only those who passed away, but those who survived and are suffering through the aftermath, trying to rebuild their lives, said Sanjiv Gunasekera, the head of Fullerton-based Sri Lanka Fund.

Many of the groups that are participating in the memorial have been busy over the past two years raising money to help rebuild communities. The Sri Lanka Fund raised \$250,000 within the first 90 days of the tsunami and completed a project of building 40 houses within six months after the disaster.

The organization is also trying to build a 1,600-square foot community center and a preschool. About 60 children under 10 years of age live in those first 40 houses built, said Gunasekera on Friday. The preschool could also service the surrounding neighborhoods where several hundred children are in dire need of early education.

“The rebuilding is at a mid-stage,” Gunasekera said. “There are people who need psychological help. There is a shortage of water, shortage of schooling.

“We should not forget the people who are living and are affected by this.”

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In a nutshell

David Ray (left) and Bridget Eftekar, from Everybody's Nuts, hand out pistachios at the finish line during the Santa Monica Venice Christmas Run.

Fabian Lewkowicz fabianl@smdp.com

Kwanzaa is only 40 years old

KWANZAA, from page 1

“Ujamaa” (Friday — cooperative economics); “Nia” (Saturday — purpose); “Kuumba” (Sunday — creativity); “Imani” (Monday — faith).

As part of the celebration, families gather to discuss the guiding principle of the day and apply it through activities. Dr. LaRita Brown, a member of the First AME Church by the Sea, an African Methodist Episcopal church on Michigan Avenue, said she and her children discuss business investment on the day of cooperative economics and bake home-made cookies.

“IT’S A GOOD GUIDELINE OF HOW TO LIVE YOUR LIFE AND HOW TO RESPECT YOURSELF.”

LaRita Brown
First AME Church by the Sea

Much like Hanukkah and the menorah, Kwanzaa has its own special set of candles, called a kinara. A candle is lit on each night of Kwanzaa, starting with the black candle in the middle on the first night. The seven candles symbolize the seven guiding principles of the holiday.

The First AME Church by the Sea plans to hold a special Kwanzaa service for its congregation this week. The church is also affiliated with the Kwanzaa Heritage Festival and Parade that will be held in Los Angeles.

“The Bible itself is an extension of all the issues we have here in Kwanzaa,” said Rev. Reuben W. Ford of the First AME Church. “It’s not a religious holiday, but we support anything that encourages the spirit [of family].”

The Kwanzaa Heritage Festival and Parade is considered the largest event celebrating the African American holiday in Los Angeles County. The week-long festivities begin today with a candle-lighting ceremony at the African American Arts Museum in Exposition Park and culminates with a parade on Dec. 30 in Leimert Park Village in Los Angeles. The fifth annual event will feature an international food court, a children’s village and marching band.

“Kwanzaa is a celebration of family, community and culture,” said event organizer Karimu Ali of the Kwanzaa Heritage Foundation. “It’s a time when families get together and talk about the past, present and future.”

Though the holiday is new compared to its counterparts of Christmas and Hanukkah, Kwanzaa is on the same level of prominence, according to Brown.

“Kwanzaa is celebrated worldwide in Spain and Italy, England and Russia and other countries,” Brown said.

Though it started primarily for African Americans, the holiday is widely observed by many non-African Americans. “It’s for all people,” Brown said. “It’s a good guideline of how to live your life and how to respect yourself.”

melodyh@smdp.com

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The City of Santa Monica reserves the right to reject any and all bids and waive all minor irregularities. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Giving ‘EXTRA’ help to homeless

RECYCLING PLAN, from page 3

bottles while on the set of “E.R.” and the upcoming Adam Sandler-Kevin James movie “I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry.”

“I just couldn’t believe how many cans and bottles we had lying around the set,” he said. “Each person must have drank like eight bottles. I just thought how great his could be if we could get everyone involved. We’re talking about 5 cents or so per can. That can really add up when you get hundreds of people involved. We’re talking about some serious money.”

Hennessey said within a few weeks he has been able to recruit more than 200 extras, and the list continues to grow.

“I have many people from Santa Monica who are involved and I would love for the city to take the lead on this,” said Hennessey, who plans to reach out to city officials to sponsor the gold bins.

Those interested in the program can go to www.extracansforthe needy.org and learn how to set up a gold bin in their neighborhood.

“If (the homeless) want to spend the money on Jack Daniel’s then so be it. I’m not here to judge,” said Hennessey. “What I really want though is for them to use the money to get them through some rough times, to give them some extra help as they try to climb back up that ladder.”

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Road cleared for fuel cell cars as battery alternative

BY STEVE LAWRENCE

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has cleared the way for automakers to produce hydrogen-powered fuel cell cars to meet zero-emission vehicle requirements in California and 10 other states, according to officials.

The EPA approved regulation amendments adopted by the California Air Resources Board in 2003 that allow manufacturers to produce fuel cells as an alternative to the battery-powered cars and light trucks previously required by the state.

"This waiver simply reflects the prominence of fuel cells," said John Millett, an EPA spokesman. "Fuel cells have really taken off."

California initially adopted its regulations in 1990, requiring by 2003 that 10 percent of the new cars sold in the state by major manufacturers be zero-emission vehicles.

The rules have been modified several times since then. Currently, they call for 2 percent of the six biggest automakers' new cars to be zero-emission vehicles, 2 percent to be gasoline-electric hybrids and 6 percent to be super-low-polluting gasoline-powered vehicles known as PZEV's.

Jobs on the rise for fall

BY GARY GENTILE

AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES — California added 15,900 payroll jobs in November and the gain, though modest, was encouraging as the state and the nation braces for a slower economy in 2007.

Gains were spread across nine industries, with the largest number of jobs, 3,600, added in the information industry, which includes film and television, telecommunications and publishing, the state Employment Development Department said Friday.

California's unemployment rate rose slightly to 4.6 percent in November from 4.5 percent in October. The unemployment rate in November 2005 was 5.1 percent.

Economists said the increase in jobs was higher than expected and welcome, coming as it does in the fourth quarter of the year when economic growth is expected to slow.

"The job gains were distributed over nine of 11 industry sectors," said Howard Roth,

chief economist of the California Department of Finance. "It's always good to see it spread around."

Other job categories that saw gains in November were natural resources and mining, professional and business services and government.

Two categories, leisure and hospitality — which includes amusement parks and spectator sporting activities — and "other services" shed a total of 1,600 jobs in November.

The state accounted for 12 percent of the 132,000 payroll jobs added nationwide in November, slightly more than its usual contribution of about 11 percent.

Construction jobs were down in November, compared to the previous month as well as November of last year.

"The housing slowdown is starting to show up," said Jack Kyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles Economic Development Corp.

While film and television jobs increased, especially in Los Angeles County, trouble

looms for the industry.

The Writers Guild of America contract with Hollywood studios expires in October and the union has rejected an early start to negotiations.

Contracts with actors and directors are set to expire in 2008.

The number of Californians looking for work in November rose to 824,000, an increase of 30,000 from October. About 289,300 of the job seekers had been laid off, the state said.

The state also revised October payroll job gains to 10,600, an increase of 1,300 jobs from the previously reported total.

In all, about 15 million people held payroll jobs in California in October.

Roth said economists are holding their breath as the new year begins with expectations of slow economic growth.

"It looks like both the U.S. and California economies are going into 2007 with not too much momentum," Roth said.

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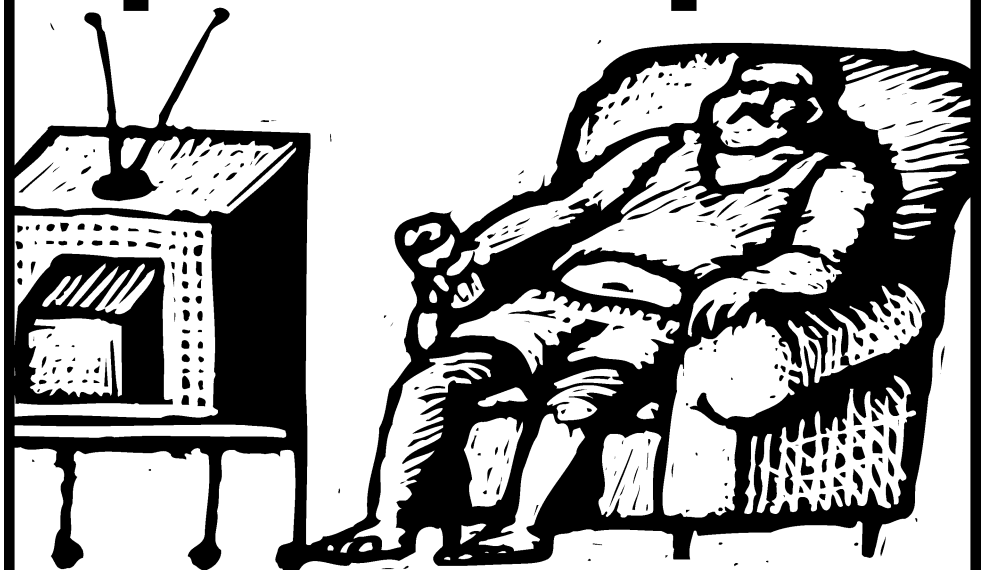
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\$6M frozen poker pot

Judge rules to keep a hold on half of World Series winnings

BY RYAN NAKASHIMA

Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — A federal court judge has ruled to keep a freeze on half the World Series of Poker pot and said a Los Angeles-based TV producer was likely to win his claim to the \$6 million.

U.S. District Court Judge Roger L. Hunt turned down a motion by lawyers for main event winner Jamie Gold to lift an injunction the judge set in September on half the \$12 million pot won in the annual no-limit Texas Hold'em tournament.

Hunt said he had concerns Gold would turn over the money to plaintiff Bruce Crispin Leyser if Leyser were to win his case.

“His actions, in the court’s view, do not give the plaintiff much assurance that the money would, in fact, be available in the event of a judgment in his favor,” Hunt said.

“The likelihood of success weighs on the side of the plaintiff,” he said.

The injunction keeps the money in the legal possession of the poker tournament’s host, the Rio hotel-casino, until the case is concluded. Gold has already withdrawn half the winnings, or \$6 million, most of which he has placed in an investment account, his lawyers said.

Leyser alleges that Gold, a former Hollywood talent agent, agreed in July to split his winnings in exchange for Leyser helping him find celebrities to play in the main event

while wearing the “Bodog” label of an offshore Internet gambling site.

Bodog paid the \$10,000 entry fee for Gold, who beat 8,772 players to win the world’s largest poker tournament and the \$12 million top prize.

Leyser alleges he fulfilled his end of the deal — getting Scooby Doo star Matthew Lillard and Punk’d comedian Dax Shepard to wear the brand, but Gold has refused pay Leyser.

Leyser’s lawyers hailed the decision.

“We’re pleased with this result because it prevents the money from being squandered by someone who admits he didn’t keep his promise,” lawyer David Chesnoff said.

Gold’s lawyers said they were not surprised by the decision.

“Disappointed, yes, but not surprised,” lawyer Patrick Byrne said.

“We recognize our client made the promise,” he said. “But we believe that when all of the evidence of the case is before a jury that they will see there was no consideration for the agreement.”

Byrne argued that Gold promised to share his winnings only after Leyser had gotten celebrities to play, reducing the arrangement to a gift, rather than a binding oral contract.

Leyser has kept a voice mail from Gold on the final day of the tournament in which Gold promises to pay Leyser “your half.”

Gold later said in an affidavit that he only intended to make a gift of some of his winnings, but it never amounted to 50 percent, and accused Leyser of harassing him with text and phone messages during the tournament.

Both sides agreed Thursday to have the judge move the frozen funds into an interest-bearing account while the case proceeds.

Sixteen summits later, Everest climber begins life in Utah’s Wasatch Mountains

BY JENNIFER DOBNER

Associated Press Writer

SALT LAKE CITY — In the climbing world, Apa Sherpa is at the peak.

He has conquered Mount Everest 16 times, a record matched by no one, even reaching the 29,028-foot summit without oxygen on four of those trips.

“He is the Tiger Woods of climbing,” friend Jerry Mika said.

Now, the valley below Utah’s Wasatch Mountains is Sherpa’s new home. He has left Nepal to start a life in business and give his children a shot at a better education.

He and his family arrived in the United States with assistance from an outdoor-clothing executive and business and political leaders. Sherpa also is driven by a deep desire to improve the lives of others, especially in his native land.

“There’s so much this man has to tell from the stories of his life,” said Mika, who met Sherpa in 2003 while working for a Seattle-based clothing maker.

“Western climbers go up Everest one time and come back and get their book deals. But the sherpas are the true unsung heroes, and that’s what I want to help him bring out,” Mika said.

The word “sherpa” means “people from the East.” Years ago, English climbers used it as a nickname for local men who hauled climbing gear up Nepal’s mountains.

The job eventually morphed into a commonly used surname, Mika explained.

Sherpa, 47, is shy and slight, even when enveloped in a puffy down jacket. He and Mika are partners at Karma Outdoor Clothing Co., a retail store in Salt Lake City. He’s also working on his English with the hope of becoming a motivational speaker.

Mika last summer quit his job to help Sherpa relocate.

“He was asking me, ‘Jerry can you help me? My children are getting older, time is running out,’” Mika recalled. “I couldn’t sleep at night.”

So he bought a plane ticket for Sherpa and went to work finding others to help. Outdoor-industry friends and climbers have been generous. Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman was among dozens who wrote letters to speed up the immigration process.

His family — wife Yangjin, 42, sons Tenjing, 21, and Pemba, 15, and daughter Dawa, 11 — arrived here Tuesday night.

Someone has offered to pay Tenjing’s tuition at the University of Utah, and Yangjin will help run a tea house at Snowbird ski resort.

Such kindness “will change my life,” said Sherpa, who speaks broken English.

And maybe the lives of those in Thame, Nepal, the community he left behind.

Thame’s 600 residents live in the shadow of Everest. Children there have one school, and classes end after seventh grade.

Sherpa hopes to earn enough money to build a school in Thame for teenagers and even pay teachers’ salaries.

“Then they can choose, climbing or something else,” he said.

Sherpa reached the Everest summit in 1990 with Peter Hillary, the son of Sir Edmund Hillary, who was among the first climbers to the top in 1953.

Pete Athens also hit the summit that day 16 years ago and has returned six times. He praised Sherpa for “his great heart, his great humility, and his incredible skills as an athlete.”

Sherpa’s last trip to the top was May 16.

“Every time is hard,” he said. “And too risky. The mother goddess of Everest saved my life.”

Mika said Sherpa is bewildered by dozens of Web sites where his accomplishments are noted.

“He is so humble. He will never tell you about his records,” Mika said.

Indeed, Sherpa, who grins and giggles easily, said records are not important.

“More important,” he said, “is to help other people.”

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Medical spas make the move into malls

BY JAMIE STENGLE

Associated Press Writer

DALLAS — Amy Andrade had been thinking about Botox for a while. So when she spotted a spa-like “cosmedical” clinic in the upscale Dallas mall she visits about once a month, she was immediately interested.

When she learned the clinic was connected with one of Texas’ leading medical institutions, she was sold.

She had Botox injected into her 32-year-old forehead and near her eyes to smooth out infinitesimal wrinkles.

“It was great. I felt like I was getting a facial,” said the furniture showroom manager.

She was hoping to look younger and knew about Botox because several of her friends have had the injections.

Medical spas like the one at Dallas’ NorthPark Center are booming. The number in the United States has jumped from 50 in 2002, when Botox injections won federal approval, to about 2,500 this year, according to the International Medical Spa Association. Malls and other retail sites are the hot spot locations as companies and medical institutions move closer to their customers.

Such spas offer minimally invasive cosmetic procedures like injections of Botox, which relaxes facial muscles to make lines fade, and fillers like Restylane, which add volume.

Not all medical spas have ties with a major medical institution like the Klinger Advanced Aesthetics Cosmedical Center, Spa and Salon at NorthPark, which has teamed up with the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Some “cosmedical” clinics don’t even require their practitioners to be plastic surgeons or dermatologists.

Those who specialize in the field say involvement by a plastic surgeon or dermatologist ensures consumer safety.

Dr. Rod Rohrich, professor and chairman of the department of plastic surgery at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, is one of two plastic surgeons who

help oversee cosmetics procedures at the NorthPark operation.

“When you peel back ‘Botox in the mall,’ you have a top-notch medical facility in a mall setting,” he said. “What you’re doing is you’re getting the best of the best in a place where people shop and you’re doing it safely.”

The doctors are generally there just half a day a week — sometimes more. But they say they are always available for the nurse practitioner, who does most procedures.

Benjamin Akande, dean of Webster University School of Business and Technology in St. Louis, said that it’s a business decision that makes sense.

“The partnership with these legitimate entities gives them the kind of credibility that cannot be questioned,” Akande said. “They’re saying this is as good or better as yoau coming to your local plastic surgeon.”

Moving such procedures closer to consumers also makes sense because “cosmetic surgery in the 21st century is not an anomaly,” Akande said. “It’s a daily fact of life.”

The Klinger spa in Dallas is located across from the Barneys New York store and near Neiman Marcus. It offers haircuts, massages and nail services along with its cosmedical procedures. Botox there starts at \$400 for one area of the face, Restylane at \$650.

Andrade, the 32-year-old who got the Botox treatment, said that she’d made a few phone calls to research the procedure before being drawn in by the sleekly designed spa, which is connected to the Sephora cosmetics store next door.

Almost two weeks after her injections, she said she’s been pleased with the results, which she described as a natural look. “I still have expression,” she said, while getting rid of some creases between her eyes. “Nobody really notices it except me.”

Aware that the results fade in three to five months, she said she’ll decide then whether to do it again. She has gotten some compliments.

“Some people say, ‘Oh my God, your skin looks so beautiful.’” Her typical reply is that she’s been using a new skin product.

Her bottom line, though, is: “I like it, so I think that’s what counts.”

Botox is the No. 1 minimally invasive cosmetic procedure, with 3.8 million treatments done last year, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

The International Medical Spa Association estimates that by the end of the year revenue from medical spas will exceed \$1 billion, said Hannelore Leavy, founder and executive director of the group.

The Dallas location is an example of a concept Klinger plans to market to other medical spas and doctor’s offices, said Klinger chairman and chief executive officer Richard Rakowski. For a licensing fee, the Norwalk, Conn.-based company plans to put the Klinger name on other spas that adhere to its standards, which include supervision by board-certified plastic surgeons.

Klinger has another such flagship clinic in an affluent shopping area in Chevy Chase, Md., that is overseen by doctors from Johns Hopkins Medical.

Leavy said each state has different qualifications rules for those who perform minimally invasive cosmetic procedures. Work done by those poorly trained can lead to “a lot of complications,” she said.

In October, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery drew up “guiding principles” for supervision of non-physician personnel in medical spas. Specialists in the field say the issue is who’s running these spas and who’s supervising.

Dr. Richard A. D’Amico, president-elect of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, said the concern is more about safety than location. He said that it’s important that such procedures are at least overseen by a plastic surgeon or a dermatologist.

The procedures may look like simple injections, but serious complications could result if someone isn’t properly trained. For example, an injection that paralyzes the muscle, like Botox, given in the wrong spot could cause an eyelid to droop, he said.

ON THE NET

■ **International Medical Spa Association:**
www.medicalspaassociation.com

Klinger Advance Aesthetics:
www.klinger.com

Skinovative USA, a Tempe, Ariz.-based chain of medical spas that opened in 2001, does not demand that its medical directors be plastic surgeons or dermatologists.

Vin Wells, company founder and chief operations officer, said the chain’s directors are doctors or nurse practitioners who get training at corporate headquarters. “It’s really about the quality of training,” he said.

Skinovative has four mall-based medical spas and is adding two more in the coming months, including one in the Houston Galleria, Wells said.

Despite the accessibility of mall-based medical spas, those who run them say they screen patients to make sure that they understand the procedure and determine whether it’s appropriate for them.

“We don’t want impulse buyers. We take a careful history — talk about pros and cons,” said Dr. Jeff Kenkel, professor and vice chairman of the department of plastic surgery at UT Southwestern, who oversees the NorthPark spa along with Rohrich. “We want to make sure that that person is educated about what they’re looking for.”

Wells of Skinovative says his doctors almost never treat someone the same day. “People aren’t psychologically ready for it,” he said.

Kate Parsons, director of the Center for Ethics at Webster University in St. Louis, said that she is worried that as such services become more widely available, people will be less inclined to examine why they feel the need to fill in wrinkles and look younger.

“I guess my concern is that we’re not examining that as much as we could be,” Parsons said. “It is becoming increasingly accepted as one more option among the array of cosmetics and fashion.”

Native American artists create unique trophy for New Mexico Bowl

BY TIM KORTE

AP Sports Writer

ZIA PUEBLO, N.M. — Memo to chunky-fingered linemen: Handle with care.

The trophy going to the winning team in the inaugural New Mexico Bowl is a 20-inch piece of Zia Pueblo pottery, adorned with ancient symbols and — in a twist on centuries of tribal tradition — hand-painted images of football players.

“We could have done another gold football,” said the game’s executive director, Jeff Siembieda. “This will really stand out.”

For generations, pottery similar to this has been used at Zia Pueblo and other New Mexico tribal villages to haul water and store goods. As tourists streamed West, pots became valued as art, and today prices at some galleries can reach into the thousands.

But awarding tribal pottery to recognize a football champion? At first, even the husband-and-wife artists who crafted three pieces for the Dec. 23 game had to refine their definition of Zia artwork.

“I could imagine seeing a (Native American) dancer painted on the side, not a football player,” said Elizabeth Medina, who hand-coiled and fired the pottery at the couple’s home studio.

Her husband, Marcellus Medina, painted the clay trophies with a white base and, in black, angular Zia patterns — lines resembling

furrows, triangular Zia prayer feathers and, of course, the Zia sun symbol seen on New Mexico’s state flag.

Then came the anachronism. Medina used colored acrylic paints to depict football players in action and logos for the participating teams — the New Mexico Lobos and San Jose State Spartans — and the New Mexico Bowl insignia, which features a Zia sun.

The Medinas created three pots — a championship trophy for the winning team, another for display at the New Mexico Bowl office and a third as a backup. This hardware, after all, can shatter if it collides with a sidewalk.

“I hope the champions give it good care. I hope they nurture it,” Mrs. Medina said.

On the market, each of the pots would probably sell for about \$2,500.

Another Zia Pueblo artist, Ralph Aragon, crafted offensive and defensive Most Valuable Player awards from traditional leather shields.

These awards are nothing close to the typical handouts during bowl season, and that’s exactly the point.

Many bowl games present conventional cups or trophies, perhaps accented with glasswork and topped by a gold- or silver-plated football. At the Orange Bowl, for example, the champion gets a crystal basin filled with oranges.

Siembieda said organizers for the first-year bowl game in Albuquerque wanted something

unique — something that would, in his words, “embrace New Mexico and different aspects of New Mexico culture.”

The bowl’s relationship with Zia Pueblo began when Siembieda wanted to use the Zia sun on the New Mexico Bowl insignia. He visited the village 30 miles northwest of Albuquerque to ask tribal leaders for permission.

“We felt it was the right thing to do,” he said.

When Siembieda asked what he could offer in return, tribal leaders suggested using Zia art for awards. The artists were consulted and agreed, and it quickly became clear the partnership would pay off for all sides.

Siembieda called the artwork “definitely one of the coolest things we’ve done for the game” and said the response from coaches, players, fans and sponsors has been overwhelmingly favorable.

The tribe stands to benefit from the publicity, but for good measure bowl officials contributed to a scholarship fund for Zia Pueblo students. The Medinas, meanwhile, got an unexpected venue to showcase their art.

“It was an honor to be asked to work on this project,” Marcellus Medina said. “We’ve taken our work to shows in Santa Fe, San Diego, all over the Phoenix area. This is a different kind of show, something very different for us.”

The concept, linking ancient tribal traditions with college football, isn’t as much of a stretch as you might think.

Marcellus Medina said the painted feathers on the pottery, for example, symbolize turkey or eagle feathers typically carried by Zia Pueblo hunting parties.

“We take feathers with us on a hunt as a way to carry messages to the gods,” he said. “It’s the same for the football player. He goes out hunting for the ball. He wants to take it across the goal line. He prays to win the game.”

The pottery reserved for the bowl office features images of a deer, cougar, buffalo and eagle. Medina said characteristics of those animals carry over to football players, whether they’re bulky linemen or fleet-footed receivers.

“The deer symbolizes courage,” he explained. “The cougar is aggressive and uses strategy, just like a football player. The buffalo is all power, like a linebacker. The eagle is a messenger to the gods.”

All artwork created by the Medinas is regarded by the couple as offspring, just like their two children. The pots are crafted from the pueblo’s clay, given a bath upon removal from the oven and then clothed in painted designs.

“I’m the mother. I created this pot,” Elizabeth Medina said. “It has life. It has a purpose.”

Free Workshop Reveals 7 ways to slash college costs

SANTA MONICA –An extremely popular free workshop is being held for the parents of college bound high school students during the month of December at various Santa Monica locations.

The workshop will focus on little-known ways of getting money for college, no matter how much income you make, or how good of a student you have. The class will include such topics as how to double or triple your eligibility for free grant money, the secret to sending your child to a private or UC school for less than the cost of a junior college, and the single biggest mistake that 9 out of 10 parents make when planning for college.

The workshop dates are Thursday, January 18th at the Santa Monica Main Library, Saturday, January 20th

at the Santa Monica Main Library 10:15 a.m. to 12 p.m, and Tuesday, January 23rd at the Montana Avenue Library The classes on Tuesday and Thursday 7:15pm to 8:45pm & Saturday Morning 10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. The workshop will be taught by Shanee Chavis an affiliate of the College Planning Network, Inc. the nation's leading expert on paying for college. Ron Caruthers the President of the College Planning Network is a continuous guest of KUSI TV News, Author of "How To Give Your Child A 4-Year College Education Without Going Broke", and an instructor at Palomar and Mira Costa colleges.

Seating is free, but limited by the size of the room. To reserve your seat, call 310-581-7954 leave a message and receive a confirmation returned phone call.

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Dear Dorie
Dorie Meek

New year for kids

DEAR DORIE,

We're coming up on New Year's Eve and I'm at a loss (again) for what to do with my toddlers. I have a 2-year old and a 4-year old and they are both very active. Any suggestions?

PARTY PLANNER

DEAR PLANNER,

Active toddlers need to dance in the new year just like active adults. My recom-

mendation would be to host a small gathering of children for a New Year's Eve party. Start with a healthy dinner and then play DJ — clear out the living room and crank the music ("Shrek" soundtracks, Village People, etc.). At your preferred bedtime, gather the children together and drop your own ball of lights (like the NYC ball) with a countdown. Holiday lights wrapped

around a soccer ball while you're standing on the sofa work just fine. Sparkling apple juice in a plastic cocktail glass can be passed out to the older toddlers for a toast to the new year. This is a nice adult touch and lets the children and visiting parents know that the event is over.

If you're lucky, a grandparent or babysitter can take over and put the children to bed while you and your partner celebrate with the adults a few hours later. This way, you get the best of both worlds. Of course, if the dancing wears you out, an early night isn't so bad. Your toddlers will be up at the crack of dawn for 2007, no matter what you do, so enjoy.

DORIE

GUEST COMMENTARY BY NEALE S. GODFREY

Family food resolutions

For many of us, sticking to a diet is a top New Year's resolution, with sticking to a budget a close second. But each year, it seems, the budget falls by the wayside — sometimes even before we succumb to the allure of that cheesecake in the dessert aisle.

If this is so hard for us, how are we going to teach our kids?

A good way to start is by making, and actually following, a family food budget. Sound mundane? It is. But it's also a huge expense for most families — according to government statistics, the average family of four spends at least \$8,000 a year on food. Getting a handle on your food spending can really help you save, and unlike some other parts of your budget (mortgage, for example), it's an expense even younger children can easily understand.

The first step is to figure out what your family is spending now on all your food in a given week or month — everything, including those vending machine sodas at work and the bagel you pick up as you're running errands. Write it down, and get your children to help. Once you know what you're spending, you know where you can make cuts.

The next step is to set a goal. Begin by counting the number of meals you'll be eating at home each week. Explain to your children that eating out is much more expensive than eating at home, and decide how many times a week (if any) the family wants to eat out. This count should include lunch too — each of you can save a lot of money by bringing lunch to work or school instead of buying it while you're there.

All the remaining meals, of course, will be made at home, so next it's time to set up menus. Discuss this at a family meeting. Set nutritional goals too. Do you want meat with every meal? Do you want to serve only organic foods? Are sugars and fats restricted in your home? Articulate your rules to your children.

Now comes the actual shopping. The idea here is to get your kids involved in saving money on the products you need by teaching them to use coupons and buy in bulk. A very effective incentive: Allow your kids to keep half of the money saved with coupons they find and use. And when it comes to bulk purchases, send them "on a mission" to locate deals on products you use in the sizes you want.

For younger children who can read, a label-checking game can help get them involved: Assign your child the task of finding a product with your specifications as to price, size, calories and ingredients. This task will teach your kids to read labels and decipher price information too. As they get proficient, you can make the "game" harder by stepping up the rate at which they're to find the items. (For safety's sake, of course, always make sure your young shopper stays within view).

After a few weeks of setting eating-out goals, packing lunches, clipping coupons and buying in bulk, it's time to check the spending levels again. If everyone has been disciplined, the amount of money your family is spending on food should have dropped. Get your kids to help add up the new spending and compare it to the old. Explain that this new, lower amount can now serve as your family's realistic, tried-and-true food budget.

One way to make the process especially rewarding for kids: Explain that over time, the amount of money saved per week will really add up, and promise to use some of that extra cash to reward yourselves, maybe with a family vacation or some other special treat. Once your kids see the good things that come with making and sticking to a budget, they'll be on the road to financial success of their own.

Financial expert **Neale S. Godfrey** has written 15 books, including "Money Doesn't Grow On Trees." Her show, "Your Money, Your Children, Your Life," has aired on public television stations.

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Alaska man charged with sex trafficking

BY DAN JOLING

Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — An Anchorage man has been indicted on charges of coercing juvenile girls and adult women into prostitution and paying them off in crack cocaine.

Don Arthur Webster Jr., 49, who went by the name of Jerry Starr and “Daddy,” was indicted in federal court on 28 counts of sex and drug trafficking.

The indictment was made public Wednesday. Webster already was in custody on drug charges stemming from a Nov. 14 indictment, said U.S. Attorney for Alaska Nelson Cohen.

The yearlong investigation was a joint effort of the FBI, Anchorage police and the U.S. Attorney’s office.

Cohen said Webster operated at least seven businesses — Foxy Roxies, Sunshine Girls, American Beauties, Kotton Kandy, Tiffani’s, Tickle Your Fancy and Lickety Split

— that purported to be companion services in which clients would pay for another person’s time and company.

“It was, in fact, a prostitution ring,” Cohen said.

Prosecutors said the prostitution ring was operated on an out-call basis. When a client called, females would meet the caller at his home or a hotel.

Callers paid a fixed hourly fee plus a transportation fee. If requested, the girls and women would provide drugs from Webster for an additional fee, prosecutors said.

The girls and women were required to turn over all money they collected in return for sex acts, prosecutors said. Webster or his representative would pay them in drugs, typically a gram of crack cocaine, prosecutors said.

Webster provided housing for the females at six homes. Police and federal authorities said Webster was violent with the females and threatened them with harm if they disobeyed him or tried to leave.

He would take their personal property and identification when they moved into one of his homes, prosecutors said.

At least five girls and six women were victims of Webster, Cohen said.

Sgt. Kathy Lacey of the Anchorage Police Department vice squad said there may be other victims.

“I would like to encourage them to come forward,” she said.

Cohen revealed few details of the investigation outside of what was stated in the indictment, such as the ages of the juvenile prostitutes. He would not indicate whether the women were U.S. citizens or foreign nationals.

“We want to protect them,” Cohen said.

Charges only include incidents back to 2000 when federal law governing human trafficking was revised.

FBI special agent Toni Marie Fogle said human trafficking crimes have been made a high priority of the agency and are consid-

ered to be a human rights violation.

Cohen said there were no plans to prosecute clients who used Webster’s businesses.

The indictment unveiled Wednesday charges Webster with four counts of sex trafficking using force, fraud or coercion, two counts of attempted sex trafficking of a child, five counts of sex trafficking of an adult, three counts of distribution of cocaine base to a pregnant woman, four counts of distributing cocaine to a child and five counts of distribution of cocaine base.

They were added to the November indictment that included one count each of manufacturing cocaine, possessing cocaine with intent to distribute, and maintaining a place to manufacture, distribute and use cocaine.

Prosecutors are seeking forfeiture of a home belonging to Webster in the Spenard neighborhood of Anchorage. Homes can be seized if used in the commission of sex trafficking or drug distribution and the indictment seeks forfeiture under both provisions.

Palin says state will follow ruling; wants voter feedback

STEVE QUINN

Associated Press Writer

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Gov. Sarah Palin has said the state will abide by an Alaska Supreme Court order to provide benefits to same-sex partners of state employees as of Jan. 1.

Palin’s decision came one day after the Alaska Supreme Court told the state to stop dragging its feet and implement benefits for their same-sex partners, first ordered 14 months ago.

“We believe we have no more judicial options,” Palin said.

But she still wants voters in a special April election to consider the prospect of a constitutional amendment designed to prohibit such benefits.

“Alaskans will further clarify for the court the definition of marriage that applies to benefits to be provided couples,” Palin said.

With that, Palin signed into law a bill passed by state lawmakers in a November special session. The bill calls for voters to weigh in on the issue in a special election.

Voters will be asked if the legislature should adopt a proposed constitutional amendment to prohibit the state or municipalities from providing these benefits.

If there is overwhelming support, then legislators could create a resolution that would go before voters in the 2008 general election.

For that to happen, it still would take two-thirds support each from the House and the Senate.

Palin said she understands legislators have failed to get this on the ballot in the past and the effort may be futile, but believes it’s the state’s responsibility to let voters weigh in.

“That could be the case; we’ll find that

out,” Palin said. “If it’s an overwhelming vote, I would think it bolsters confidence of the legislators to go ahead and ask for that amendment.”

The pending implementation is a long time coming, says Carrie Evans, state legislative director for Washington, D.C.-based gay rights group Human Rights Campaign.

“We haven’t seen that kind of defiance by the governor and legislature of a high court ruling; it’s extraordinary,” Evans said. “Some states just grumble. What we saw was Alaska digging in its heels.”

Alaska will become the 14th state that has a law, policy or court decision that provides these benefits, according to the organization.

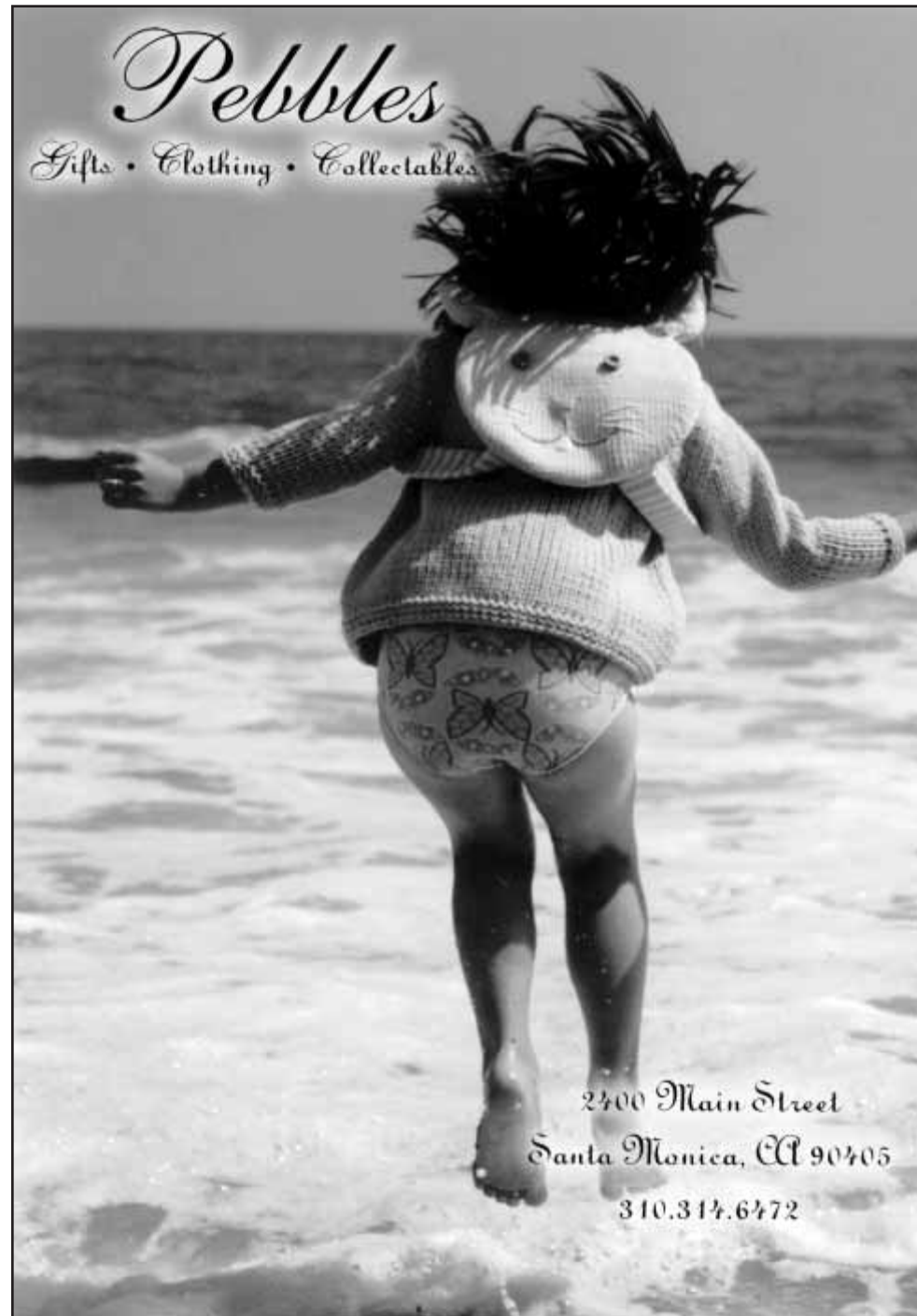
For now, this ends a six year-battle for the American Civil Liberties Union and nine couples who filed a lawsuit challenging the lack of benefits for same-sex couples employed by the state and the municipality of Anchorage.

The high court ruled in October 2005 that denying benefits to same-sex domestic partners violated the state’s guarantee of equal protection for all Alaskans. That’s because the state constitution restricts marriage to between a man and a woman.

The high court last summer set the deadline for the state and the Municipality of Anchorage to begin providing the benefits by January and sent the lawsuit to the Superior Court for implementation.

The municipality has since implemented regulations, complying with the law.

State lawmakers, however, still believed the final word belonged to the legislature, not the courts. During a special session in November they tried unsuccessfully to push back the January deadline.



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BASKETBALL

N'diaye eager to prove

BY JANIE MCCAULEY

AP Sports Writer

BERKELEY, Calif. — The most basic basketball terms sent Rama N'diaye into a state of confusion, to the point that she once grabbed a dictionary to look up the word motion.

It was all she could do to keep up with her California teammates verbally as her mind raced from French to Japanese to English. Plenty of what her coaches for the 15th-ranked Golden Bears holler still goes right over her head.

“Everything is new,” N'diaye said of the American game. “My first days here, I didn’t know what people were talking about.”

Things don’t always immediately click for Cal’s freshman center from Senegal, who played her high school ball in Japan and speaks English as a fourth language behind her native tongue of Wolof, French and Japanese.

Bears coach Joanne Boyle saw beyond the challenges of the language barrier and culture change to see the potential in a 6-foot-5 player who has long arms, can run the floor and play three positions.

N'diaye is an offensive threat in the post and on the perimeter, as well as a capable shot-blocker. N'diaye was averaging 4.9 points and 3.4 rebounds in 16.5 minutes heading into this weekend.

“I tell her every day: ‘I couldn’t do what you do,’” Boyle said. “The days she gets frustrated it really shows and it affects simple things for her. It’ll come. She’s got to be patient with it. She’s been a great addition to us for a lot reasons. Kids don’t understand what foreign kids go through to better their family and better themselves with an opportunity. It’s different sacrifices.”

The 20-year-old N'diaye, whose full name is Adjii Ramatoulaye N'diaye, is the oldest of seven children and has not been home since leaving Dakar, Senegal, for Japan to play her final three high school seasons.

She hasn’t seen her family in three years and homesickness set in when she arrived on the Berkeley campus this past summer — though she communicates with her family by e-mail and a few phone calls a month.

“It’s tough,” she said.
Her father is an inspector of police for the

United Nations and her mother a high school administrator.

Moussa Diagne, a senior on the Furman men’s team, understands what N'diaye is going through and pulls for her to find success.

“It means a lot for our basketball scene,” Diagne said after a recent game at Cal. “People now are all over the place playing basketball — not only boys, but girls, too. We have a lot of talent and potential there.”

Yet N'diaye had little interest in basketball early on, even after her grandfather gave her a ball as a gift when she was 12 and already 6 feet tall. Living with her grandparents for the summer, she would tag along to the gym as her brother played pickup games, until one day she finally decided to take part.

When the boys said they wanted no girls, she had a quick retort: “If I’m not playing, I’ll take my ball.”

She was instantly in.
Her brother taught her to play and she quickly developed into a top prospect. A professional player from her country already playing in Japan encouraged her to make the move to Asia.

There, she averaged 20 points, 18 rebounds, seven blocks and six assists per game as a senior. N'diaye expressed interest in going to college and getting a business degree while also playing basketball — and a man she met in Japan had a connection to Cal assistant Kim Hairston.

“He sent us this tape and said, ‘I’m thinking of sending this tape out to some schools. Tell me what you think,’” Boyle said. “After Kim looked at the tape, she said, ‘Don’t you dare send that tape out to anybody because we want her.’”

Boyle flew to Japan last year and soon after N'diaye visited Cal’s campus.

N'diaye sends extra money home to Senegal to help out her family. She will finally return home this summer.

Boyle recently made a lunch date with N'diaye just to check in and make sure everything was OK and to offer some encouragement. The coach is also working to help her find a part-time job for the upcoming semester at the student recreation center.

N'diaye is eager to prove herself and show she can play in the pros one day either in the WNBA or overseas.

NFL

Niners Bryant suspended for substance-abuse violation

BY GREG BEACHAM

AP Sports Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Receiver Antonio Bryant has been suspended for four games for violating the NFL’s substance abuse policy, dealing a blow to the San Francisco 49ers’ faint playoff hopes.

Bryant has 40 catches for a team-high 733 yards and three touchdowns this season after signing a four-year, \$15 million deal as a free agent last summer.

But Bryant was arrested Nov. 19 on charges of reckless and drunken driving after his orange Lamborghini was seen speeding down a freeway. Bryant also was combative with the police, refusing to leave his car and eventually forcing officers to use leather restraints to keep him in a patrol car.

Coach Mike Nolan wouldn’t say whether Bryant’s suspension was related to his arrest, and the NFL doesn’t comment on details of

such suspensions.
“He takes responsibility for it,” Nolan said. “He was not argumentative in any way. He was disappointed for a number of reasons. The first one was that he felt he let his team down at a crucial time. ... He did not blame it on anyone else.”

Though Bryant has fewer catches than Frank Gore and Arnaz Battle, he has been the 49ers’ No. 1 receiver and best deep threat, averaging 18.3 yards per catch.

The 49ers (6-8) would win the NFC West if they win their final two games and the Seattle Seahawks lose their final two. But San Francisco, which hosts Arizona on Sunday in its home finale, will have to do it without Bryant, who missed practice Thursday and Friday for undisclosed personal reasons.

If the 49ers don’t make the playoffs, Bryant also must miss their first two games next season. He is eligible to participate in offseason training and 2007 preseason games.



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SURF REPORT



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LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

FORECASTS NOT AVAILABLE

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TIDE FORECASTS NOT AVAILABLE

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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	Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 8
	Number of wet days -- 4
	Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 37 / 31
	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 (breach 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+

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		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+

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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Heal the Bay’s Beach Report Card™ is based on weekly water quality monitoring data provided by the City of Los Angeles’ Environmental Monitoring Division and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Data is analyzed as soon as it is made available to us by the public agencies. Beaches are graded on an A–F scale based on the risk of ocean users becoming ill. Samples are analyzed for bacteria—enterococcus, total and fecal coliforms—that indicate biological pollution. A fact sheet detailing the exact methodology used in determining grades for each location is available from the office or on our web site. The report is not designed to measure the amount of trash or toxins found at local beaches.

The Beach Report Card is an indication of past water quality and is not a warranty of the current safety of those areas surveyed. Our lawyers are happy.

Vanish if you want, Taurus

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)

★★★ Good intentions might seem to go nowhere. Don't worry about it. You have an opportunity to rethink plans. Don't be surprised if you opt to head in another direction. Better plans lead to a happier Ram. Tonight: Feeling more Rammy!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Zero in on what you feel is important. Many friends surround you –are you surprised that a certain someone might be a little gruff or jealous? Make plans for some private time together. You both can smile then. Tonight: Vanish if you want.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Others seek you out for answers and suggestions. You could be a touch overwhelmed by what you are hearing. Who is surprised? You might discover that another approach is far more logical once you talk about it. Tonight: Where your friends are.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Read between the lines. Reach out to those who aren't with you. Fatigue could be the result of the hectic pace you're maintaining. Slow down. Make it OK to take a nap! Others seek you out. Tonight: Someone follows your lead.

LEO (July 23- August 22)

★★★★ A partner or child could be really difficult, closing down some of your creativity. Relating on a one-on-one level draws positive results. You might need to imagine what it must be like to walk in someone else's shoes. Empathy and compassion create a better relationship. Tonight: Relax your mind.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Others want what they want. You might feel as if you have no choice but to defer. Actually, that attitude might be the wise choice (for now). A family member or a domestic issue could rear its ugly head. Stay cool. Tonight: One-on-one time.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ State your case, but at the same time, don't isolate yourself. Pitch in with some cleaning up or routine chores. As the day ages, others let you know just how much your efforts mean. Plan a get-together for later. Tonight: Sort through your invitations.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Your imagination helps you work through a problem. Don't question your abilities; you have what it takes. Trust your intellect. Brainstorm with someone who understands. Nap if possible. Tonight: Play it cool, calm and collected.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ You might be more contrary than you realize. Listen to feedback you receive, even if you are uncomfortable with it. Bottoming out or getting back to basics might be uncomfortable but worth it. Tonight: Veg.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Saying what you think might be problematic unless you add a touch of diplomacy. When you are tired or stressed, how you present an issue could be far different. Your gentleness emerges. Tonight: Visit with friends or family.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ You might be looking at the bills and upsetting yourself. You might also be wondering about the give-and-take of the holiday. Let go and express your naturally loving personality. Don't forget a call. Tonight: Chat and catch up on weekend news.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ You might be so buoyant that others walk away – not because they don't like you, but because your high energy makes them feel even more tired. Don't stand on ceremony with an older relative. Tonight: What puts a smile on your face?

Born Today

Music producer Phil Spector (1940)

Actor Richard Widmark (1914)

Author Henry Miller (1891)

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

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Happy Birthday!

You have much to offer, but no one will know it unless you reach out and allow others to get to know you. This year, reveal the true you. Much goes on in your mind that might not be exact, just more your take on events. Test some of these thoughts on others. You might be surprised when you get another perspective. You have a gentle style that draws many – how fortunate if you are single. You might need to be careful who you hook up with, as this person might not be available. If you are attached, schedule more weekends away together. Love builds. PISCES draws you out.

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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
SILVER

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

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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.

SOLUTIONS TO LAST PUZZLE

2	5	7	8	1	6	9	3	4
1	8	3	4	9	7	6	2	5
4	9	6	5	2	3	7	1	8
3	1	2	9	6	4	8	5	7
8	6	4	7	5	1	3	9	2
9	7	5	3	8	2	4	6	1
6	2	8	1	7	9	5	4	3
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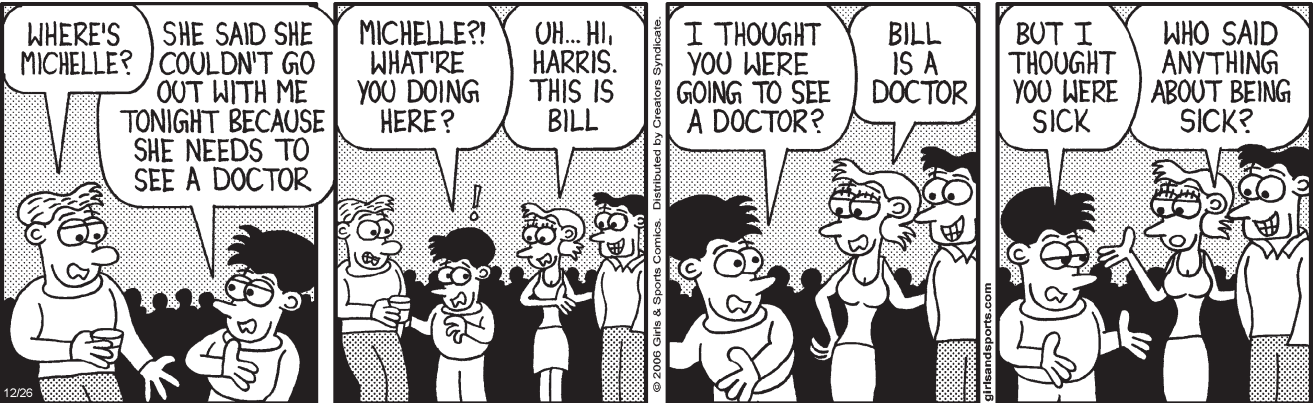
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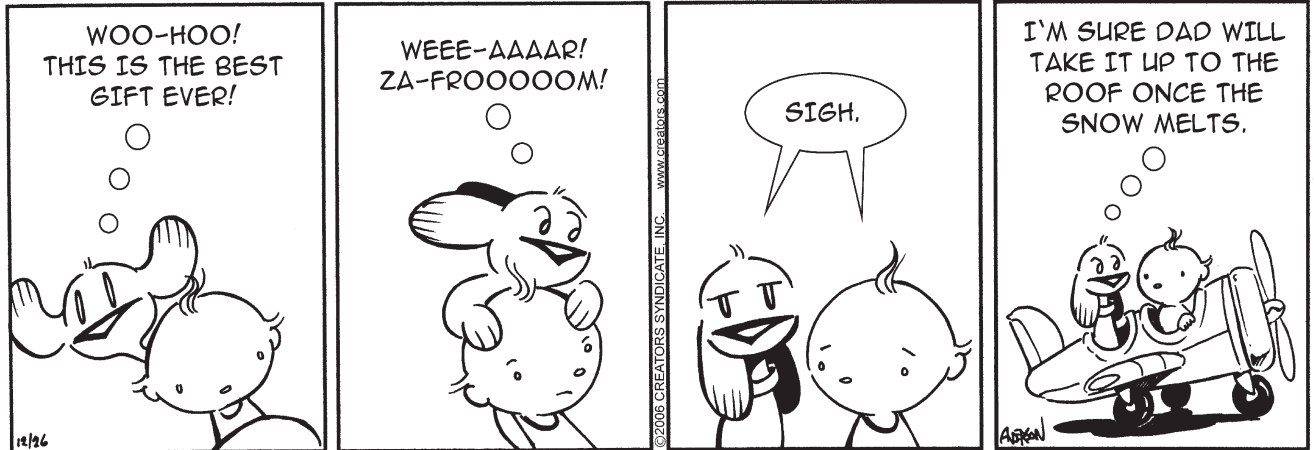
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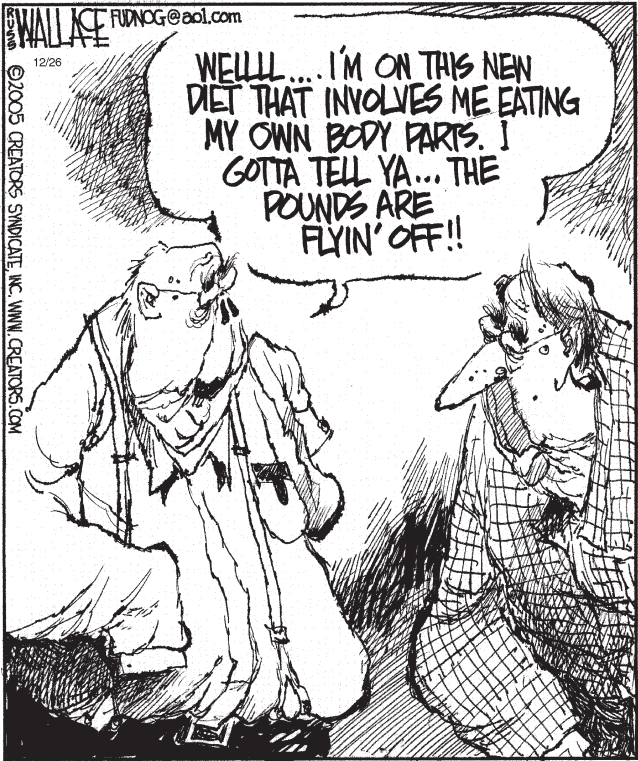
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- 13 Source of troubles
- 15 LAX guess
- 16 Fine, to NASA
- 17 Womens-wear buy
- 18 Cure
- 20 Family
- 21 Brown tint
- 22 Pianist Myra
- 23 String section member
- 25 Regarding
- 28 Tries to save a sinking boat
- 31 For fear that
- 32 Song words
- 34 Glacier makeup
- 35 Haul into court
- 36 Verb for you
- 37 Area near home
- 40 Follow

- 41 Room, in Rouen
- 42 Spirited horse
- 43 Salon offerings

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- 3 Generic
- 4 Mom's mate
- 5 Drench
- 6 Block-head
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- 9 Lone Star Staters
- 11 Concert worker
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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							43		

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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 LOS ANGELES, CA 90035-1156 12/19, 12/20, 12/26/06 CNS-1062600# SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: MARGUERITE V. HALL CASE NO. LP012403

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of MARGUERITE V. HALL. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by JAMES E. BEAL in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that JAMES E. BEAL 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.

Notices

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 03/02/07 at 9:00AM in Dept. A located at 6230 SYLMAR AVE., VAN NUYS, CA 91401 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 BONNIE MARIE BURSK LAW OFFICES OF SAVIN & BURSK 10663 YARMOUTH AVE GRANADA HILLS CA 91344 12/26, 12/27, 1/2/07 CNS-1064918# SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: MARGARET ALDRIDGE CASE NO. SP007021

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of MARGARET ALDRIDGE. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by U.S. BANK in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that U.S. BANK 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 with limited authority. (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 03/02/07 at 9:15AM in Dept. 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.

Notices

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 LAW OFFICES OF SANDRA S. KASS 400 CORPORATE POINTE #400 CULVER CITY CA 902307619 12/26, 12/27, 1/2/07 CNS-1065141# SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

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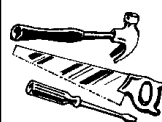
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