FREE

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Volume 1, Issue 39

Santa Monica Daily Press

Serving Santa Monica for the past 46 days

SMC looks to voters for financial help

Buildings are too old to last much longer, SMC says

BY CLAUDIA HIBBERT
Special to the Daily Press

Santa Monica College officials are confident yet cautious that a $160 million bond measure will be passed by voters next spring.

The money will be used to renovate buildings at the aging campus on Pico Boulevard, as well as partially fund a new piece of land the college just bought for $30 million near the airport for a satellite campus and more parking.

"There's two alternatives: find another site to park and shuttle or build underground parking on the campus, both of which cost money."

— DENNY ZANE
SMC consultant

The bond will be on the March 2002 ballot and the effort to convince voters in Santa Monica and Malibu to approve the measure has just begun.

"We're very optimistic," said college spokesman Bruce Smith. "But we'll wage a vigorous campaign, and we're not taking it for granted by any means."

The bond's average cost to taxpayers would be $1.12 per month for renters and $77 per year for the average homeowner in Santa Monica and Malibu. The bond issue in the first year is estimated at $16.21 per $100,000 in assessed valuation, and the average cost over the bond's life will be $19.21 per $100,000.

The bond measure needs a 55 percent approval from residents in Santa Monica and Malibu to pass. Proposition 39, approved by California voters in November 2000, decreased the percentage needed to pass a bond measure from 66 and two-thirds percent to 55 percent. It also limits the maximum annual cost to $25 per $100,000 of assessed valuation.

College officials said bonds are the most traditional way to net funds for building improvements. Gov. Gray Davis' planned cuts to education budgets would impact the college's operations more than its construction needs.

"It's sort of different," said Don Giard, the college's marketing director.

Bond issues historically are approved in the Santa Monica-Malibu area, but the ballot issue next year comes at a time when little might draw voters to the polls, said Denny Zane, a consultant for the Committee for Safety and Modernization at Santa Monica College, the group campaigning for the bond. Zane said Democrats in the area statistically support such bonds by a 4-to-1 margin, while Republican support is about 50-50.

"There's no primary in the Senate seats. There's no primary in the Assembly seats. There's no primary in the governor's race," Zane said. "There's very little that would normally create a turnout among Democrats. You need a good Democratic turnout to feel confident. That's a strategic concern of the campaign."

A "facilities assessment" completed earlier this year outlined 21 projects at the college. Priorities are to replace the earthquake-damaged liberal arts building and temporary buildings with modern labs and classrooms. Facilities for the nursing, environmental studies, earth sciences and math programs also need upgrades, and improvements are needed to meet standards for campus lighting, security and the American Disability Act.

Other pressing needs are to find space for student parking and the emeritus college program, which is geared to students aged 55 and older. The college will soon lose space on city-owned properties that house both services.

The emeritus college program is housed on the ground floor of a city parking structure on Second Street, and the

See SMC, page 3



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

A young boy takes a chance with the tide on Christmas Day at Will Rogers State Beach. After several winning runs, he was finally beat by the mighty Pacific — he was drenched after landing a face plant in the sand.

Some retailers holding off on deep discounts after holidays

BY GARY GENTILE
AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES — The broad promenades of the upscale Beverly Center mall were so empty early Wednesday, you could pop a champagne bottle and not hit anyone with the cork.

Shoppers were unimpressed with the much ballyhooed after-Christmas sales, although many did take advantage of deep discounts at store such as Macy's and The Gap.

"The sales are not as good as we thought they would be," said Darryl Bennett of Lancaster, who arrived early expecting steep discounts on nearly every item. "We went to Macy's, but the items that were on sale weren't the style anymore."

Selling out of fashion fashions was the point as retailers across the state sought to make room for their spring lines.

Alan Uphold of Hollywood did buy a couple of pairs of pants at Bloomingdale's for $40 each, marked down from $70, and some ties that were 25 percent off at Macy's. But he and others felt that retailers were holding back on offering real deals.

"There are no bargains," said Janet Fox of Los Angeles. "They may have to have after, after Christmas sales."

Same store sales at retail outlets in California were up 1.7 percent statewide compared to the same pre-holiday period last year, according to TeleCheck Services Inc., a check acceptance company. Sales were up 2.2 percent nationwide, the group said.

See DISCOUNTS, page 3

Daily Press becomes fixture on Santa Monica sidewalks

City officials approve newsstands. See page 3 for details on where to find a daily newspaper.

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Looking for the Daily Press?

The Santa Monica Daily Press is a free newspaper that is circulated throughout all six commercial zones within the Santa Monica city limits.

Hundreds of copies can be found in news racks at these local businesses:

Pico Blvd. Locations:

- Lowest Liquor
- Fosters Freeze
- Subway
- Lazey Daisey
- Chevron
- Jiffy Lube
- Tom's #1 Family Restaurant
- Yoshinoya Beef Bowl
- Santa Monica Car Wash
- Sunset Liquor
- Yum Yum Donuts
- Weinerschnitzel
- Kentucky Fried Chicken
- Eddie's Liquor
- Discount Tire

This is not a complete list.
You can find more copies in these areas:

- **Montana Avenue Commercial Zone**
- **Santa Monica Boulevard**
- **the Downtown Commercial Core (including Third Street Promenade)**
- **Wilshire Boulevard**
- **Lincoln Commercial District.**
- **Major Hotels on Ocean Avenue**
- **Retail businesses on the Boardwalk and Santa Monica Pier districts**
- **Commercial zones on Pico and Ocean Park Boulevard**

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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)
★★★★ You're fiery and full of spunk. Finally, you can do "your thing," whatever that might look like. Use your imagination when making plans. Express your feelings to a friend who really understands. Someone's perspective always proves to be helpful. Tonight: Visit with your pals.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Your Expenses gain your attention. You might be playing games with your head and need to manage your funds differently. Ask for insight from someone who generally gives you good advice. Get some extra work done. You'll feel better. Tonight: It could be a late night.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Express yourself through ideas and more spiritual actions. You might want to sign up for a mind or emotionally expanding workshop, making more of what is available to you. Through this growth, consider the impact it has on your work. Tonight: Whatever the Twins want.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Listen to a partner and take his or her advice more seriously. Investigate or research a personal interest. You find more knowledge a great help in creating financial and emotional success. Carefully evaluate a change that involves a partnership. Tonight: Dinner for two.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Encourage others to assume a more dominant attitude in your relationships. Being naturally extroverted, you easily make decisions. Join friends. Work on being a follower, even if it might be a bit difficult. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Someone you already do a lot for seeks you out, asking you to pitch in again. You opt to speak your mind and share more than usual. Use your creativity at work and in your home life. Others look to you for suggestions. Take a strong stand. Tonight: Out late.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ Take an overview when people get a bit crazy. A child or a loved one adds to your creativity. You're full of ideas. Spill them out and let others work with them as well. A key friendship fills you with inspiration. This person often serves as a muse. Tonight: Go with something different.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Carefully review a situation that involves a loved one or family member. You might not be seeing this person clearly, or you might not be getting the whole story. Let a partner reveal what he or she knows. Together you'll figure this out. Tonight: Go along with someone's wishes.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Listen to what is happening within someone as he or she spills the beans. You might be delighted by what is revealed. It might confirm what you have been thinking. Your sixth sense comes through for you. Learn to follow your instincts more often. Tonight: Accept an invitation.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Your ability to get the job done only adds to your popularity. You see your ventures far differently than others see them. Allow more creativity to spin out, especially when brainstorming with someone about a work or money matter. Even you could be amazed! Tonight: Indulge in a stress buster.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ You're full of energy and light. Others find you to be unusually imaginative and creative, ready to try new ideas. In fact, your openness could create a lot of hassles for you, if for no one else. Invite a couple of friends along on your adventures. Tonight: Only where the action is!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Stay in if you want. You don't need to respond to other situations or work. You probably need some time alone. Think about your needs first then be concerned with family. You might need some daydream time. Do just that. Tonight: Be a couch potato.

WEATHER

Today ... Partly cloudy with a high 66°F. Winds from the South at 6mph.

Tonight ... Partly cloudy with a low of 48°F. Winds from the West at 2mph.

Tomorrow ... Mostly cloudy High—64°F Low—48°F

QUOTE of the DAY

"Writing is easy. All you have to do is stare at a blank sheet of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead."

— Gene Fowler

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Public opinion polls favor bond approval for college

SMC, from page 1

city has plans to turn property into a park at Santa Monica Airport, where students park and ride shuttles to the main campus a mile away.

"The college has been put on notice," said Zane, who was behind the city's preferential parking initiative, which prohibits students from parking in neighborhoods near the college. "There's two alternatives: find another site to park and shuttle or build underground parking on the campus, both of which cost money."

Renovations are expected to be completed over the next 10 to 12 years. The college's last bond issue was for $22 million in 1992 to build an addition to the science building and library, but most of the buildings on campus are more than 50 years old.

"Buildings do wear out, " Giard said. "The last big cycle of buildings was in the 1960s, so the reason the colleges are doing this now is there's been way too many years since there's been a real push to bring these buildings back to standard.

"There is no other way," he continued. "The state does provide funding for construction projects, but the state today requires a local match, so if we were not to have the bond pass, we would not have any ability to get the state funds. It would be a double loss."

Zane, however, is hopeful. Public opinion polls have been positive, and little evidence exists, so far, that any groups are against the bond, he said.

Several California community colleges this year have turned to their district's residents to support bond issues. Voters in the greater Los Angeles area in April approved bonds ranging from $111 million to $165 million for Los Angeles City College, East Los Angeles College, Los Angeles Pierce College, Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, Los Angeles Valley College and West Los Angeles College.

Mount San Antonio College in the San Gabriel Valley netted the most with a $221 million bond passed in November, and SMC is among six colleges asking for bonds on March 2002 ballots.



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Daily Press circulation manager Kiutzu Cruz installs a newsstand on Montana Avenue and 17th Street.

The Santa Monica Daily Press in newsstands today

By Daily Press staff

The city of Santa Monica recently approved a dozen newsstand racks for the Daily Press, making it easier to find a copy of the city's only daily newspaper.

Readers and customers can now find the Daily Press in permanent newsstands at the following locations:

- 17th Street and Montana Avenue; northwest corner in front the pharmacy
- 14th Street and Montana Avenue; northeast corner in front of Peets Coffee
- Montana Avenue, between 14th-15th Streets; in front of Jamba Juice
- 7th Street and Montana Avenue; northeast corner, in front of Starbucks Coffee
- 3rd Street and Wilshire Boulevard, northeast corner; in front of Surla Table
- Ocean Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard; in front of the Bank of California building
- Wilshire Boulevard, between 22nd-23rd Streets; in front of Manhattan Bagel
- 14th and Santa Monica Boulevard; in front of Chevron
- Wilshire Boulevard and Lincoln Boulevard; in front of Baja Fresh
- Colorado Boulevard and 3rd Street; in front of Santa Monica Place
- Santa Monica Courthouse

The Daily Press has more than 80 newsstands stored in a warehouse which will be installed in all commercial zones in Santa Monica as soon as the city grants permission.

Recycle those Xmas trees

By Daily Press staff

The city of Santa Monica will collect Christmas trees for recycling at four local parks on three consecutive weekends. For the entire month of January, residents may recycle their trees without charge at the city's Refuse & Recycling Transfer Station. Residents with curbside recycling service may place their cut-up trees in their yard waste collection containers. Tinsel, ornaments and stands must be removed prior to recycling.

Santa Monica drop-off service is available at the following locations from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 29-30, Jan. 5 -6, and Jan. 12-13:

- Douglas Park - Chelsea & Wilshire
- Reed Park - Lincoln & California
- Los Amigos Park - 5th & Hollister
- Clover Park - 25th & Ocean Park

During January, Santa Monica residents may drop off their trees, free of charge, at the city's Refuse & Recycling Transfer Station located at 2401 Delaware Ave., Santa Monica. The station's hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call (310) 829-7323.

Los Angeles residents are advised that West L.A. drop-off sites are open from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 5 -6 and Jan. 12-13, at these locations:

- Crenshaw: Rancho Cienega Recreation Center, 5001 Rodeo Road
- Rancho Park: Cheviot Hills Recreation Center, 2551 Motor Ave.
- Westchester: Westchester Municipal Building, 7166 W. Manchester Ave.

For more information about Los Angeles area recycling, call (800) 5-TREE-56.

Beverly Hills fur store sees 'resurgence' in business

DISCOUNTS, from page 1

Geyla Terrell of Los Angeles walked out of the Beverly Center lugging bags from Pottery Barn and The Gap. She said she saved about $120 in both places, although she would have liked to see discounts on things such as Gucci purses.

"The things I really like, they never go on sale," she said.

The number of shoppers throughout downtown San Francisco stores resembled a regular day, though many hauled large shopping bags filled with finds.

Carla Espinoza of Oakland browsed through an Old Navy store, her arms laden with marked-down jeans, sweaters and shirts.

"There are good deals," she said, noting that winter items seemed particularly cheap.

Customers at a downtown Macy's store made a beeline toward steeply discounted holiday decorations chocolates and housewares.

May Leong carried several bags of discounted items but said she already had found most of her good deals before Christmas.

Crowds were also sparse at the newly opened Paseo Colorado shopping center in Pasadena., where many shoppers said they did the bulk of their buying before the holiday.

Gary Goins, manager of Bath & Body Works at Paseo Colorado, said his store offered 50 percent off selected items and some lotions and cosmetics were discounted even more.

"We were packed all weekend long but it's really quiet right now," Goins said Wednesday morning. During the store's first hour Wednesday, fewer than 10 people came in, although most of them did make purchases.

Luxury retailers in Los Angeles and Beverly Hills said sales were steady or even improved from last year.

At Traffic, a high-end clothing retailer at the Beverly Center, owner Sara Dovan offered discounts of 30 percent to 50 percent on some items, but said her business was brisk without the need for sales.

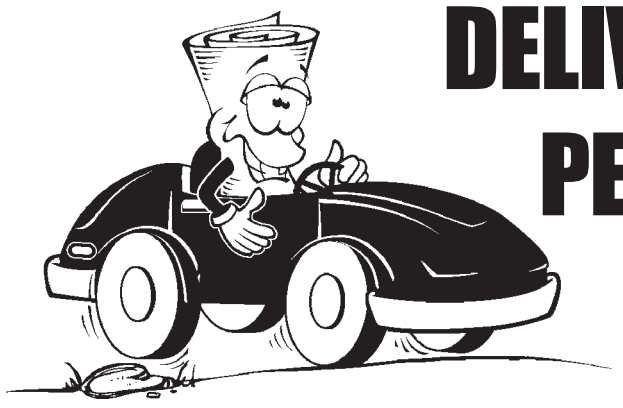
"Celebrities need red carpet outfits for their movie premiers or they need new 'Good Morning America' outfits. God bless them," Dovan said.

Doug Fine, manager of Somper Furs in Beverly Hills, said business is up from last year, mainly because of a resurgence of fur. The store offered a 50 percent after-Christmas discount, which is a long-standing tradition, he said. Many people wait all year for the annual sale, which offers ranch mink coats, regularly $4,000, for $1,995.

"Even people who are very affluent like to get the best price they can," he said.

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STATE▫LOCAL

Courthouse staying open in spite of expected traffic

By the Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. — A judge says next week's Rose Bowl game isn't a judicial emergency and the courthouse will stay open, despite predictions that a crush of fans will clog city streets during the first-ever non-holiday football contest.

Private businesses and some local government agencies want to send employees home early Jan. 3. But courthouse officials rejected a suggestion by the city to close at noon and send the building's 100 workers home early.

"People really need to arrive early and people who don't need to be in that area can avoid the traffic."

— CMDR. MARY SCHANDER
Pasadena Police Department

"A football game doesn't really qualify as a judicial emergency," Presiding Superior Court Judge Mary Thornton House said.

Normally the Rose Bowl follows the Rose Parade on New Year's Day, or Jan. 2 if New Year's falls on Sunday. But under the recently enacted rotating college football playoff format, the championship game will be played at the Rose Bowl this year, two days after the parade.

The Miami-Nebraska game kicks off at 5 p.m. Thursday, with opening ceremonies set for 4:30 p.m. Police have urged fans to arrive by 3 p.m. because of anticipated traffic jams.

"People really need to arrive early and people who don't need to be in that area can avoid the traffic," Cmdr. Mary Schander said.

Unit devoted to catching criminals at all costs

By the Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Time is no factor for a special Sheriff's Department unit that shadows hard-to-catch criminals who have eluded authorities.

The group known as the North Regional Surveillance and Apprehension Team is comprised of determined investigators who will do about anything to capture their suspect.

They will sit in trees. They will wait in the freezing cold. Recently, a team of investigators spent 58 hours staking out a suspect's house in San Bernardino County.

In 2000, the unit conducted about 400 surveillance operations and arrested 127 people, clearing 475 cases and recovering more than $2.7 million in stolen property, according to a report submitted to the Sheriff's Department.

The group was first assembled in 1985 to coordinate the search for the Night Stalker, a serial killer who was later convicted for a handful of murders. The unit now helps various law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County that do not have the manpower for surveillance.

"There just aren't enough superlatives for the job they do," said Bonnie Patton, a county probation officer who often asks the unit to arrest probationers on her behalf. "They are so smooth, so cool . . . They just mingle with probation violators and put the handcuffs on them and take them away before they even realize it."

The unit does not have problems recruiting new officers, most of whom are chosen from among the best detectives in the Sheriff's Department. More than 60 applicants fought for three openings on the team this year.

The unit's anonymity has made it very effective and its leaders plan to keep it that way. Photos of investigators are not even allowed, even for the department yearbook.

"There's Sheriff's Department people who don't even know about us," said Lt. Mike Wenrich, who heads the unit.

School food the best around

By Daily Press staff

The school district has the best cafeteria food in the country.

The district has announced that the restaurant hospitality's 2002 Best Kids Menu In America Competition has been won by the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's Food and Nutrition Services Department.

The organization stated that out of hundreds of menus received, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's menu stood above the rest. The award will be presented at the Restaurant Hospitality Kids Marketing Conference on Feb. 21-22 in San Diego. Tracie Thomas, food and nutrition services supervisor will be present to accept the award on behalf of the entire district's farmer's market salad bar program staff. In addition to receiving the award, the winning menu also will be featured in restaurant hospitality's April 2002 issue.

Enron donates to Democrats just before bankruptcy

BY LARRY MARGASAK
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A week before filing for bankruptcy protection, energy giant Enron Corp. donated $100,000 to the Democratic Party committee that helps Senate candidates, campaign finance reports show.

The company, which had given 90 percent of its money to Republicans this year before the Democratic donations, also has hired high-profile Washington lawyer Robert Bennett, whose past clients include President Clinton.

"Donations of this type reflect certain political realities which are followed by all major corporations," Bennett said Wednesday in explaining Enron's $50,000 checks on Nov. 25 and Nov. 26 to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Enron filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Dec. 2.

Tovah Ravitz-Meehan, a spokeswoman for the Democratic Senate fundraising committee, said the head of the organization, Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., has asked that Enron's money be given to a charitable organization helping laid-off Enron workers. She said the charity hasn't been chosen.

"It wasn't right to keep it and it wasn't right to give it back to Enron so we're looking for charitable options," Ravitz-Meehan said.

Congressional Republicans and Democrats alike have heaped criticism on Enron, accusing the company of burning stockholders who were unaware of the company's failing condition, throwing thousands of people out of work and decimating retirement accounts.

Earlier this week, Democrats on the Senate Commerce Committee demanded the Federal Trade Commission investigate why company executives were allowed to cash out their stock while other employees were prevented from selling the company's sinking shares in their retirement accounts.

Bennett said there was no connection between congressional inquiries and the donations.

"It is very unfair to draw any improper motive based on these contributions," he said. "While the money was given in November, a large portion of it had been committed as far back as September."

Bennett will represent Enron in dealing with Congress, the news media and investigators.

He represented Clinton in the sexual harassment lawsuit filed by Paula Jones, and was the Senate ethics committee's counsel in the investigation of five senators with ties to a failed savings and loan operator.



Associated Press

Scripps Memorial Hospital-La Jolla personnel and a Coast Guard rescue pilot, center, move a victim of a single-engine plane crash to the hospital in La Jolla, Calif., on Tuesday. Two people were plucked from the waves about two miles from shore northwest of the city of Oceanside, near where the Cessna 172N crashed, U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer John Wright said. The cause of the crash is being investigated by the National Transportation Safety Board.

Tensions begin to rise at India-Pakistan border

BY BARRY SCHWEID
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Colin Powell declared two groups based in Pakistan as terrorist organizations and launched a diplomatic blitz to try to head off a conflict between India and Pakistan.

Powell made two telephone calls Wednesday to Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and two to Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh urging restraint. These followed earlier calls Monday and Tuesday to Musharraf.

"It is critically important there be a lessening of tensions between India and Pakistan," Phillip Reeker, a State Department spokesman, said.

He said Powell has told both leaders they need to resolve their differences through dialogue.

India has accused the two groups designated by Powell as terrorist organizations of carrying out a suicide attack Dec. 13 on the Indian parliament.

While Powell's move against them appears to give tacit support to India, the State Department went out of its way to heap praise on Musharraf, a valued ally in the U.S. campaign against the al-Qaida terrorist network in Afghanistan.

"Musharraf has proved he is a capable and reliable coalition partner in the face of domestic opposition," Reeker said.

The two groups also are believed to have trained fighters in camps in Afghanistan and are suspected of receiving support from Pakistan's intelligence agency.

However, the official who provided this information to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said intelligence operatives did not appear to be working with Musharraf's support.

The training of fighters was carried out in Afghan camps run by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, the official said.

While the Bush administration does not have proof that the two groups carried out the bloody assault on Dec. 13 in which 14 people died, the administration also has no reason to dispute India's contention, according to a U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity.

Calling the designation an important step in the U.S. war on terrorism, Powell's action makes it illegal for people in the United States to provide material support to the two anti-India groups.

It also requires U.S. financial institutions to block their assets. While the groups are not known to have such assets in the United States, the order makes it illegal for institutions to permit funds for the two groups to pass through.

The groups, Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, claim to be supporting the people of Kashmir and have conducted numerous terrorist attacks in India and Pakistan, Powell said in a statement.

Powell's move adds the groups to 39 others that were designated as terrorist organizations Dec. 5.

Indicating he supported India's account, Powell said in his statement: "As the recent horrific attacks against the Indian parliament and the Srinagar legislative assembly so clearly show, the Lashkar e-Tayyiba, Jaish e-Mohammed, and their ilk seek to assault democracy, undermine peace and stability in South Asia and destroy relations between India and Pakistan."

The parliament in Srinagar, the regional capital in the part of Kashmir controlled by India, was attacked Oct. 1 and 38 people died.

Pakistan also froze the assets of the two groups Monday and briefly detained the leader of Jaish-e-Mohammed on Tuesday. But India said the steps fell far short of its demands that the groups' activities be halted and their leaders arrested and handed over to India.

President Bush switches stand on foreign policy

BY BARRY SCHWEID
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON — Meaning it as a compliment, George Mitchell remarked the other day that President Bush had reversed himself on "nation-building" with his tough policy on Afghanistan.

The former Senate Democratic leader said it was to Bush's credit that he did not allow his campaign rhetoric to stop him from using force to counter terrorism and to go on from there to try to rebuild Afghanistan.

Switches like that are not unusual. Well-remembered by President Clinton's critics was his pursuit of better relations with China after accusing Bush's father during the 1992 presidential race of coddling the Chinese.

Once Clinton moved into the White House he saw things differently.

George W. Bush, struggling with foreign policy issues and trying to strike a balance between Republican isolationists and interventionists, criticized his Democratic opponent, Al Gore, during the 2000 campaign for getting involved in what Bush called "nation building."

He said Clinton and Gore had overextended U.S. military forces by intervening in places where U.S. security interests were not at stake.

But after the Sept. 11 terrorists attacks Bush all but declared war on Afghanistan's Taliban rulers for sheltering Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaida terrorist network. Bush is using U.S. troops, successfully, to root out the Islamic fundamentalist militia and to hunt for bin Laden.

When that campaign ends, Bush has vowed to pursue terrorism beyond Afghanistan's borders. However, his tools might be financial and diplomatic, not military. There have been hints in both directions.

Bush is falling in line with a long tradition.

Barely a year into his presidency, Bush's views on foreign policy are only beginning to evolve.

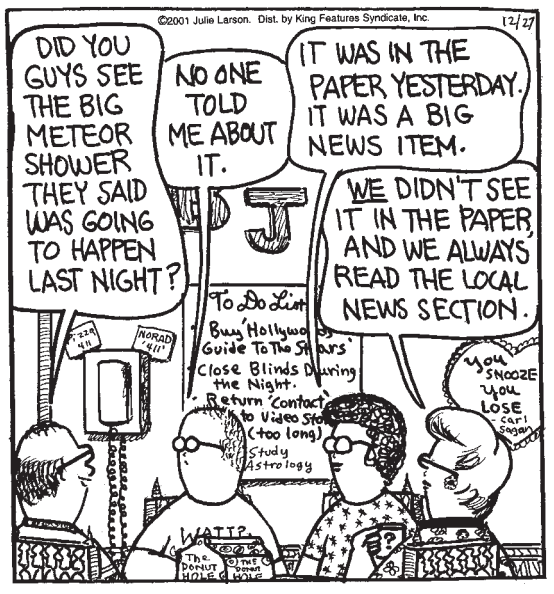
Last week, Bush exercised an escape clause in congressional legislation that called for the shift and delayed it for six months. It would be no surprise if he delayed the move again next year.

On the other hand, Bush vowed during the campaign to act as a benevolent broker — nudging, rather than trying to force — Israel and the Arabs toward peace agreements.

As president he has held to this course, agreeing with the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon that violence must be curbed before steps toward peace can be taken.

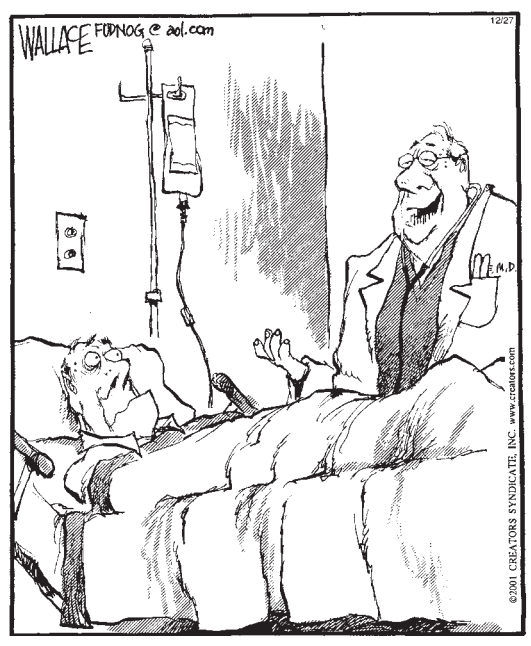
COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Natural Selection®

By Russ Wallace



"Ohhh ... don't worry, Mr. Allen. Your legs are fine. The reason you can't feel them is because we removed your arms."

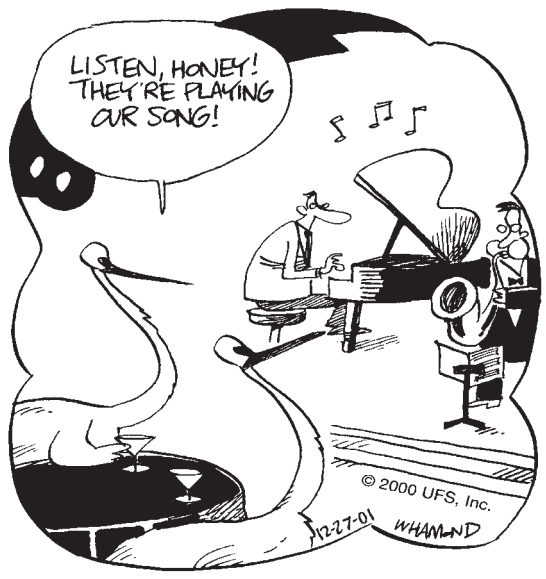
edge City

by TERRY & PATTY LABAN



Reality Check®

By Dave Whammond



Speed Bump®

By Dave Coverly



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

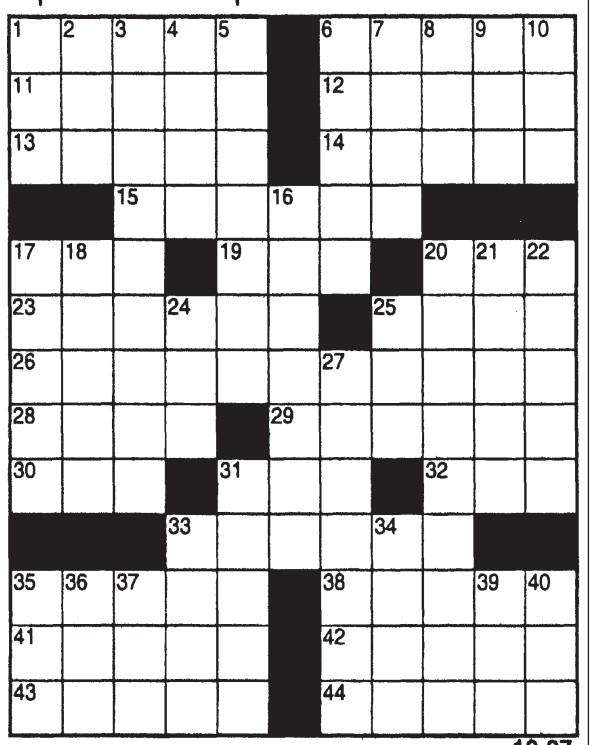
1 River critter
6 Exultant
11 Neptune's domain
12 Neigh sayer
13 Annoy
14 Actress Sophia
15 Went for another take
17 Chick holder
19 Prom rental
20 Sch. average
23 Singer James
25 Lingerie buys
26 Math field
28 For two, in music
29 Soybean, for one
30 Workout unit
31 Sparkler
32 Butter serving
33 Waco school
35 November stone
38 City on the Missouri
41 Stand
42 "— a Hot Tin Roof"
43 Farm units
44 Kicked, in a way

DOWN

1 '50s dance
2 Rink surface
3 They may exert pressure
4 Make highways
5 Ballroom dance
6 Perennial flower
7 Tooth part
8 Hockey legend
9 Exploit
10 Comfy place
16 Brinkley's partner
17 Mystery-writing award
18 Avant —
20 Tour discount
21 Ohio city
22 So far
24 Wish undone
25 Plead
27 Poisonous plant
31 Looks
33 Soak in the sun
34 Mideast nation
35 Spigot
36 Metal source
37 Snap
39 Garden aid
40 To boot

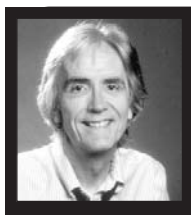


Yesterday's answer



12-27

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-454-7377**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Being a donor might cost you ... literally

• A court in Sweden ordered a certified sperm donor to assume parental rights just because the lesbian couple he assisted have split up and the child needs support (about $265 a month more) (Orebro, Sweden).

• Police chased down and arrested a 42-year-old man suspected of shoplifting six packages of corn removers from a Wal-Mart, an easy collar because his corns slowed down his getaway (San Diego).

• Florida judge Joyce Julian, 44, was arrested at 2 a.m. at a resort's conference center after she, intoxicated and nude from the waist down, verbally challenged security officers and then fled (Amelia Island, Fla.)

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BACK PAGE

ODDS & ENDS

Mother turns in escaped son

By the Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Two escaped convicts nearly slipped through a traffic stop undetected until the mother of one of the men pulled up and turned them in.

Jason Hall and Jason Negm, both 26, were reported missing Saturday night from the Palm Beach County Stockade after a work detail.

They were riding with a friend Sunday when they were pulled over for a cracked windshield, police said. That's when Hall's mother pulled up and told the officer that Hall was on the run.

"She didn't want him to get into more trouble," Lake Clarke Shores patrol officer Troy Jenne said.

Hall and Negm were arrested. Their friend, Eugene Caswell, 25, was also arrested for failing to appear in court last summer.

Hall would have finished his six-month sentence for burglary and petty theft on Jan. 29. He now faces up to 15 years if convicted of the escape — one year for every hour out of jail. A hearing is scheduled for Jan. 22.

Man finds cop; didn't need one

By the Associated Press

LARGO, Fla. — If Joshua Lamoureux really wanted to be a cop, he picked the wrong person to mess with during a traffic confrontation.

The 26-year-old cut off a motorist Saturday, armed himself with a handgun and threatened the other driver, officials said.

The other driver turned out to be Pinellas County Sheriff's Deputy Billy Jo Lyons, who teaches at the public safety institute in St. Petersburg. Lyons, 52, was driving with his grandson at the time.

Lamoureux, who told police officers that he had planned to apply for a deputy job at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, was charged with aggravated assault.

"He just messed with the wrong person," said Largo police officer Rex Troche, who arrested Lamoureux. Lyons is "the man when it comes to training in this county."

Troche said Lamoureux denied making any specific threat to Lyons. Lamoureux does not have a listed phone number and could not be reached for comment.

Balloon travels 4,500 miles

By the Associated Press

ST. PAUL — The world seems a little smaller to a 10-year-old boy after a helium-filled balloon he released found its way to a university student in the Czech Republic — some 4,500 miles away.

Mark Schlotterback, 10, released the red balloon with a card attached on Sept. 9 outside St. Matthews Lutheran Church in St. Paul.

Two months later, a letter showed up at the church. Inside was Mark's postcard and a letter from a 21-year-old psychology student from the University of Palacky in Olomouc, Czech Republic.

"I know you and your teacher will find it weird, but so do I," Jan Kratky wrote from his dormitory. "Your balloon surely had to be charged with some powerful magic because it wouldn't find a way here otherwise."

Assistant state climatologist Pete Boulay said weather conditions were consistent with getting a balloon from St. Paul to the Czech Republic.

"There were high winds aloft, and the jet stream was close by, coming from the southwest to the northeast," Boulay said. "It would have carried the balloon over Greenland, then possibly turned farther south. Winds would have been about 160 miles per hour up at 45,000 feet, and it looks like it could have indeed happened."

James McQuirter, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Chanhassen, said the balloon likely ruptured early during the journey and that the postcard became something akin to the ultimate paper airplane.

It's Christmas always for Murray

By the Associated Press

FORT ST. JOHN, British Columbia — Every day is Christmas for one Canadian mailman: It says so right on his driver's license.

Murray Christmas, 51, says his name always brings a chuckle. He even has a jolly laugh and bells on his delivery sack.

He was born Murray Trondson in Flin Flon, Manitoba, and changed his name to Christmas in 1995 on little more than a whim.

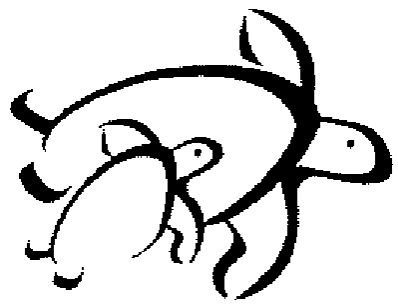
"At a Christmas party someone said 'Merry Christmas, Murray Christmas,"' he said. "As soon as I heard that, it clicked."

His name and good-natured disposition have made him popular along his delivery route.

"As soon as they see the name it brings a smile," he said. But he added: It's a name to live up to. I have to be conscious of it because sometimes I don't feel too Christmasy."

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