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MAKING BIDS COUNT
SEE PAGE 6

THE IT'S SPREADING ISSUE



Photo courtesy Tom Neerken

NEAT: Helen Cox and nurse Sanna Howell use the 'I See U Baby iPad' to show grandparents in England newborn Asher.

e-Meet your baby brother

BY DAVID MARK SIMPSON
Daily Press Staff Writer

MID-CITY Asher Cox has a knack for timing.

He was born 10 weeks early but just in time for this year's flu season, meaning that anyone under the age of 14, including his 3-year-old sister Amber, couldn't visit him at the UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica.

Back in the old days, even though the Cox's live close to the hospital in Santa Monica, it would have meant three months for Amber without much more than a photograph of her new baby brother.

But a pilot program, which will roll out as an option for all patients on Jan. 1, brought the two face to face.

Their mother, Helen Cox, made a call to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and a nurse booted up an iPad video application that allowed the brother and sister to see each other for the first time.

"I would love to say she sat for 30 minutes and gazed at him, but she's 3," Cox said, laughing. "So she kind of looked at him. She showed interest. I managed to get like three pictures, which broke my heart, and then she was kind of like, 'eh, OK. I'm off to playing.' But it was great to have that reaction from her."

"I See U Baby," the iPad video program, sounds like the kind of clever idea that should be easy to employ. Patients ask all the time if they're allowed to Skype with friends or relatives who live out of town or are too young to visit, said Leticia Dahlke, the NICU assistant director.

"Because of security reasons we really couldn't do that," she said. "We couldn't use just any application that's out there. So finally we made a few a requests over time. They probably have been requesting for a few years now."

Ultimately UCLA bought a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)-approved application meant for tele-conferencing, but they let the NICU try it out for parents starting in October, Dahlke said.

SEE APP PAGE 9

City Hall's goal accomplished with subsidized art studio

BY DAVID MARK SIMPSON
Daily Press Staff Writer

SMO City Hall says that it "accomplished its primary goal" in providing a 22,500-square-foot hangar on public land at a highly subsidized rate for a lessee to rent to other artists, according to a report released Tuesday.

The Santa Monica Art Studios, founded a decade ago by artist Yossi Govrin, was never audited to ensure that artists were receiving affordable subleases, despite a contractual obligation that required monthly rents to average $1.50 per square foot.

"Staff has not received complaints about rental rates from any of the subtenants of

SEE RENT PAGE 8

Obama signs bipartisan budget deal, defense bill

JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

HONOLULU Rounding out a tough and frustrating year, President Barack Obama signed a bipartisan budget deal Thursday easing spending cuts and a defense bill cracking down on sexual assault in the military, as the president and Congress began pivoting to the midterm election year ahead.

Obama put his signature on both hard-fought bills while vacationing in Hawaii, where he has been regrouping with his family since Saturday. The bill signing marks one of Obama's last official acts in a year beset by a partial government shutdown, a near-default

SEE BUDGET PAGE 9

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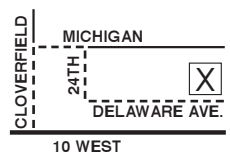
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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Friday, Dec. 27, 2013

Musical guy
Miles Memorial Playhouse
1130 Lincoln Blvd., 7 p.m.
Creating Arts Co. presents "The Music Man." Smooth talking salesman "Professor" Harold Hill has everyone fooled — and the citizens of River City, Iowa are his latest prey. When local librarian Marian Paroo tries to expose him as a fake, Hill sets out to win her heart and save his hide. For more information, call (310) 804-0223.

Saturday, Dec. 28, 2013

Art for kids
Paint:Lab
1453 14th St., Call for times
Kids 5-12 are invited to a special winter art camp. Cost: ranges from $55-$100. All art materials included in the price. For more information, call (310) 450-9200.

Sun on the ice
Fifth Street and Arizona Avenue
2 p.m. — 10 p.m.
Hit the rink at ICE at Santa Monica, a popular holiday attraction. For more information, call (310) 461-8333.

He is real
Miles Memorial Playhouse
1130 Lincoln Blvd., 3 p.m.
Creating Arts Co. presents a holiday classic that is sure to put a smile on even the Scrooges of the season. Based on actual events, "Yes, Virginia" follows 8-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon on a journey to discover if Santa Claus is real. She decides to write a letter to the editor of the Chicago Sun to find out the truth. For more information, call (310) 804-0223.

Stories at the pier
Santa Monica Pier Aquarium
1600 Ocean Front Walk, 3:30 p.m.
Visit the Santa Monica Pier every Saturday for a whale of a tale. The aquarium will host story time in the Dorothy Green Room. Children (and adults) love to hear a good story, and the aquarium has a nearly endless supply of books celebrating life of the sea. For more information, call (310) 393-6149.

Time to knit
Fairview Library
2101 Ocean Park Blvd., 3:30 p.m.
Knitting, conversation, and tea at the library. Everyone welcome. For more information, call (310) 458-8681.

Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013

Walk with the plovers
Annenberg Community Beach House
415 PCH, 8:30 a.m.
Looking for a new holiday tradition? Join the Santa Monica and L.A. Audubon societies and connect with your inner naturalist! Explore the habitat and life cycles of the federally threatened snowy plover, a small white bird that makes Santa Monica and surrounding beach cities its home this time of year. Binoculars will be provided, or bring your own. Comfortable clothing and sun protection are recommended. For more information, visit beachhouse.smgov.net.

To create your own listing, log on to smdp.com/submitevent

For help, contact Daniel Archuleta at **310-458-7737** or submit to editor@smdp.com

For more information on any of the events listed, log on to **smdp.com/communitylistings**



Average 30-year mortgage rises to 4.48 percent

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON Average U.S. rates for fixed mortgages crept higher this week but remained low by historical standards.

Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday that the rate on the 30-year loan increased to 4.48 percent from 4.47 percent last week. The average on the 15-year fixed loan rose to 3.52 percent from 3.51 percent.

Mortgage rates peaked at 4.6 percent in August on expectations that the Federal Reserve would reduce its $85 billion-a-month in bond purchases. Those purchases push mortgage and other long-term rates lower and encourage borrowing and spending. On Dec. 18, the Fed finally decided the economy was strong enough to allow it to reduce the monthly purchases by $10 billion.

Mortgage rates are sharply higher than they were a year ago when the 30-year fixed rate was 3.35 percent and the 15-year was 2.65 percent.

The Commerce Department reported Tuesday that new-home sales dipped 2.1 percent in November to a seasonally adjusted 464,000. But stronger figures for the previous three months suggested that housing may be regaining strength after a summer lull.

The National Association of Realtors said last week that the number of people who bought existing homes in November fell for a third straight month. Higher rates and the lingering effects of the partial government shutdown in October may have deterred some sales.

Still, the government said builders broke ground on homes at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.09 million homes and apartments in November. That was the fastest pace since February 2008 and was 23 percent higher than in October.

To calculate average mortgage rates, Freddie Mac surveys lenders across the country between Monday and Wednesday each week. The average doesn't include extra fees, known as points, which most borrowers must pay to get the lowest rates. One point equals 1 percent of the loan amount.

The average fee for a 30-year mortgage was 0.7 point. The fee for a 15-year loan was 0.7 point.

The average rate on a one-year adjustable-rate mortgage slipped to 2.56 percent from 2.57 percent last week. The fee was 0.5 point.

The average rate on a five-year adjustable mortgage rose to 3 percent from 2.96 percent. The fee was 0.4 point.



File photo

NEW LAW: Santa Monica High School students walk near the gym on campus. New transgender laws are coming to all of the state's campuses.

State schools prepare for transgender rights law

JULIE WATSON
LISA LEFF
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO With a law that spells out the rights of transgender students in grades K-12 set to take effect in California, school districts are reviewing locker room layouts, scheduling sensitivity training for coaches, assessing who will sleep where during overnight field trips and reconsidering senior portrait dress codes.

But administrators, counselors, teachers and school board members also are watching and waiting. The law, the nation's first requiring public schools to let children use sex-segregated facilities and participate in the gender-specific activities of their choice, could end up suspended within days of its Jan. 1 launch if a referendum to repeal it qualifies for the November ballot.

To obtain a public vote on the law, passed by the legislature and signed by Gov. Jerry Brown, a coalition of conservative groups called Privacy for All Students has collected hundreds of thousands of signatures. Counties have until Jan. 8 to verify them through random spot-checking.

Depending on how many are found to be valid, the secretary of state will approve the referendum, determine that it failed or order a review of every signature.

"We don't know what's going to happen when kids come back from their holiday vacation," said Republican state Sen. Steve Knight, who voted against the law. "Are there going to be 15-year-old girls talking in the bathroom and in walks a boy? What are they going to do? Scream? Run out?"

The California School Boards Association is acting on the assumption that the law will stand and that, even if it does not, existing state and federal anti-discrimination laws, as well as year-old California Interscholastic Federation rules under which athletes may petition to play on a sports team that does not correspond with their biological sex, already compel schools to accommodate transgender students.

The association has advised schools to handle requests on a case-by-case basis and with parental input, if possible, but to be prepared to make private changing arrangements both for transgender students and for classmates who might object to dressing with them.

"We did strike a balance between the

SEE LAW PAGE 10





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Get it cheaper

Editor:

In regards to the new proposed fire station ("Fire station bond could cost taxpayers $81M," Dec. 18). We are told that the $81 million bond would not come from a tax hike, but would come from the general fund. Well, isn't the general fund made up from a collection of property taxes and can we rule out that no new taxes are on the horizon to pay for this general fund?

We are told that a majority of the bond will go toward building a new fire station. Well then, how much of that $81 million will actually be used for building a new fire station and who gets the remainder of that bond money?

The $81 million price is highly inflated, and the City Council must know it. Don't let them mislead you. A new fire station, along with seismic standards, should not cost near $81 million. They use words like "the facility is critical to public safety," and "our prime responsibility here is public safety." They use these words to camouflage their real meaning. And their real meaning or intent is to sit around and think up new ways to tax the property owners.

Let the fire chief and the rest of those wooden Indians who are ripping off the system with their extortion wages/retirement packages settle for less and repair the existing fire station.

Bill Alberico
Santa Monica



Laughing Matters

Jack Neworth

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Pussy Riot a 2013 highlight

AS WE'RE ONLY DAYS AWAY FROM New Year's Eve, 2013 seemed to go by so fast. They say the older you get the faster the years fly by. If so, I must really be old because this one zipped by at hyper speed.

Locally, the year began on a sad note. On Jan. 13, Gussy Moran, born and raised in her beloved Santa Monica, and an international tennis star of the 1950s, passed away at the age of 89.

On Christmas day last year I called to wish Gussy a merry Christmas. Sharp as ever, she responded, "Right back atcha, Jackie boy." A few weeks later she was gone. With great difficulty, I wrote her obituary for a noted tennis website.

But there was also a highlight for Gussy in 2013. On Nov. 3 at Reed Park, City Hall, due to the efforts of City Councilman Kevin McKeown, officially dedicated court one as the "Gussy Moran Stadium Court." (Go Gussy!)

As for national "lowlights" in 2013, we're still spending billions, if not trillions, in Iraq and Afghanistan. (The latter being the longest war in our history.) And yet we're cutting back on food stamps and not extending unemployment benefits. What a country.

Another of the lowlights in 2013 occurred on the anniversary of the horrific shootings in Newtown on Dec.14, 2012. It was there that 20 helpless elementary school students and six educators were brutally murdered. On Dec. 14 this year, there was another shooting spree, this at a school in Colorado.

Locally, a disturbed young man on June 7 killed his brother, his father and three others, including a father and his daughter, as he made his way to Santa Monica College to do further damage. If it weren't for the swift actions of local law enforcement, he might have done much worse.

Shamelessly, in 2013 no sensible gun laws were enacted by the do-nothing Congress, even though 91 percent of the country is in favor of background checks. (Including 70 percent of NRA membership!) How does 9 percent stop the will of the people? How is that a democracy? Apparently the answer is "don't ask."

I'd have to say the Affordable Care Act (known pejoratively as Obamacare) has also been a disappointment. I'm definitely no expert on the merits, but I still wonder why we are the only industrialized country in the world not to have universal healthcare. And for those against ACA, what is their solution for the tens of millions without healthcare? Emergency rooms as their primary health provider?

I also don't understand why in 2013, with two-thirds of the world's countries having abolished the death penalty, we aren't one of them. In fact, we're the only western nation that still has capital punishment. With the death penalty we are in company with the likes of Pakistan, Iran and North Korea. Yikes!

The only encouraging note is that in 2013 support for the death penalty is at the lowest in 40 years. Also a growing number of conservatives are in favor of abolishing capital punishment, mainly because it's so incredibly expensive to execute a prisoner, what with all the guaranteed legal appeals. (I can just hear some readers say, "So get rid of the appeals." Oh well.)

Topping my list of 2013 highlights was the election in March of Pope Francis, who is devoted to social justice. Preaching grace, humility, peace and compassion, rather than living in the grand papal apartment, Francis resides in the modest Vatican guest house. And instead of the Pope-Mobile, Pope Francis often rides in a 1984 Renault!

Also in my 2013 highlights is that chemical weapons are being destroyed in Syria without us going to war. I realize that war is very popular with some, but I consider it progress that we decided to pass on this one.

There was also a 2013 highlight in Russia. Remember when George W. Bush confessed that he had looked into Vladimir Putin's eyes and saw his soul? I remember it because whenever I see Putin's eyes the only soul I see is Satan's. (And I don't even believe in the devil.)

In 2011 in Russia female singers and human rights advocates, the punk band Pussy Riot, bravely opposed Putin's repressive rule. As a result they were sent to prison for two years.

Last week, the last two members were pardoned by Putin. That didn't stop these heroic souls from blasting the Vlad-Man again. (Which is more than George Bush ever did.) Personally, I think using humor is safer and more effective. To see what I mean go to YouTube and type "Putin on the Ritz."

Back to my 2013 lowlights, which include the 50th anniversary of JFK's assassination and the continued secrecy. How is it in a supposedly free country (key word being "supposedly") our government refuses to unseal thousands of files? Frankly, it sounds more like Putin's Russia. And yet we just accept it like good little sheep. All I can say is, where's a Pussy Riot when you need one?

JACK can be reached at facebook.com/jackneworth, twitter.com/jackneworth or via E-mail at jnsmdp@aol.com.

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PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Kevin Herrera
editor@smdp.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Daniel Archuleta
daniela@smdp.com

STAFF WRITER
David Mark Simpson
dave@smdp.com

CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER
Brandon Wise
brandonw@smdp.com

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Paul Alvarez Jr.
editor@smdp.com
Morgan Genser
editor@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Bill Bauer, David Pisarra, Charles Andrews, Jack Neworth, Lloyd Garver, Sarah A. Spitz, Taylor Van Arsdale, Merv Hecht, Cynthia Citron, Michael Ryan, JoAnne Barge, Hank Koning, John Zinner, Linda Jassim, Gwynne Pugh, Michael W. Folonis, Lori Salerno, Tricia Crane, Ellen Brennan, Zina Josephs and Armen Melkonians

NEWS INTERN
Greg Asciutto
editor@smdp.com
Brian Adigwu
editor@smdp.com

VICE PRESIDENT–BUSINESS OPERATIONS
Rob Schwenker
schwenker@smdp.com

JUNIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Rose Mann
rose@smdp.com

OPERATIONS MANAGER
Jenny Medina
jenny@smdp.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Darren Ouellette
production@smdp.com

CIRCULATION
Keith Wyatt
Osvaldo Paganini
ross@smdp.com

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The Santa Monica Daily Press is published six days a week, Monday through Saturday.

19,000 daily circulation, 46,450 daily readership. Circulation is audited and verified by Circulation Verification Council, 2013. Serving the City of Santa Monica, and the communities of Venice Beach, Brentwood, West LA. Members of CNPA, AFCP, CVC, Associated Press, IFPA, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce.

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Your column here

Frank Clemente
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Congress should help the unemployed, not Wall Street

WHEN HOLIDAY SHOPPERS MAKE a bad choice, the worst result may be an ugly sweater. But Congress recently made a bad choice that is ruining the holidays for over a million families — and will spoil the coming new year for millions more.

That was the decision — imposed by conservatives — not to extend unemployment benefits for the long-term jobless, while maintaining huge tax loopholes for wealthy Wall Streeters and multinational corporations. Congress can reverse its choice in early January, but the clock is ticking.

We are emerging from the worst employment crisis in three-quarters of a century. Job losses in the Great Recession were very deep. The unemployment rate hit 10 percent for only the second time since the 1930s, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Moreover, the ranks of the long-term unemployed — those out of work for more than six months — hit a post-World War II record. Even now, over a third of those out of work have been so long term.

And little wonder: in November, there were almost three unemployed people for every job opening. The problem isn't that people don't want to work; it's that there aren't enough jobs.

Faced with this cruel reality, in the recent budget deal members of Congress had the chance to extend unemployment benefits for 1.3 million Americans — including 20,000 recent veterans — whose benefits run out three days after Christmas. Instead, they turned their backs on those in need and headed home for the holidays. What's more, without Congressional action, another 3.6 million long-term unemployed will lose their benefits in 2014.

Extending unemployment benefits is not only a lifeline for the jobless; it also boosts our economy, as hard-pressed families immediately use the money to buy essentials.

While playing Scrooge to constituents, Congress played Santa Claus to campaign contributors by refusing in the budget deal to close any tax loopholes that benefit corporations and the wealthy.

A recent poll by Hart Research Associates shows that the American public strongly supports such measures.

Congress could raise $60 billion if it closed one loophole that subsidizes the offshoring of American jobs. Corporations are allowed to deduct from their federal income taxes all the costs of sending a U.S. plant or office offshore (shipping bills, building the new facility, interest costs on the loans to finance the move). Yet, companies don't have to pay U.S. taxes on the foreign operations' profits until those earnings are brought home, which many companies never do. The American public supports closing this corporate tax loophole by a whopping 62 to 36 percent margin.

If Wall Street billionaires were required to simply treat their salaries as salaries — rather than more lightly taxed capital gains — we could bring in $17.4 billion, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Right now hedge fund chiefs and other money managers can cut their tax bill almost in half by claiming their huge earnings are eligible for a 23.8 percent rate, when they should be paying 39.6 percent. The American people strongly disapprove of this "carried interest" loophole, 68 percent to 28 percent.

Corporations play lots of financial games with their stock options (the right to purchase shares, often at a big discount). When they award them to top executives, corporations write off on their taxes more than their own books say the options are worth. They also use them to get around a $1 million limit on the deductibility of salaries — fueling excessive executive compensation. Facebook used stock options manipulation to create a $16 billion tax deduction, according to Senate investigators. Stopping this option abuse would raise $25 billion, the exact cost of the unemployment extension.

So Congress has to reverse course. It's already spoiled the Christmas holiday for more than a million out-of-work Americans. Now it needs to make a New Year's resolution that the first order of business when it returns in January will be to renew benefits for the long-term unemployed. And if it wants to pay for it, close a tax loophole or two to make sure big corporations and wealthy money managers pay a fairer share of taxes.

FRANK CLEMENTE is executive director of Americans for Tax Fairness.

The Q Line

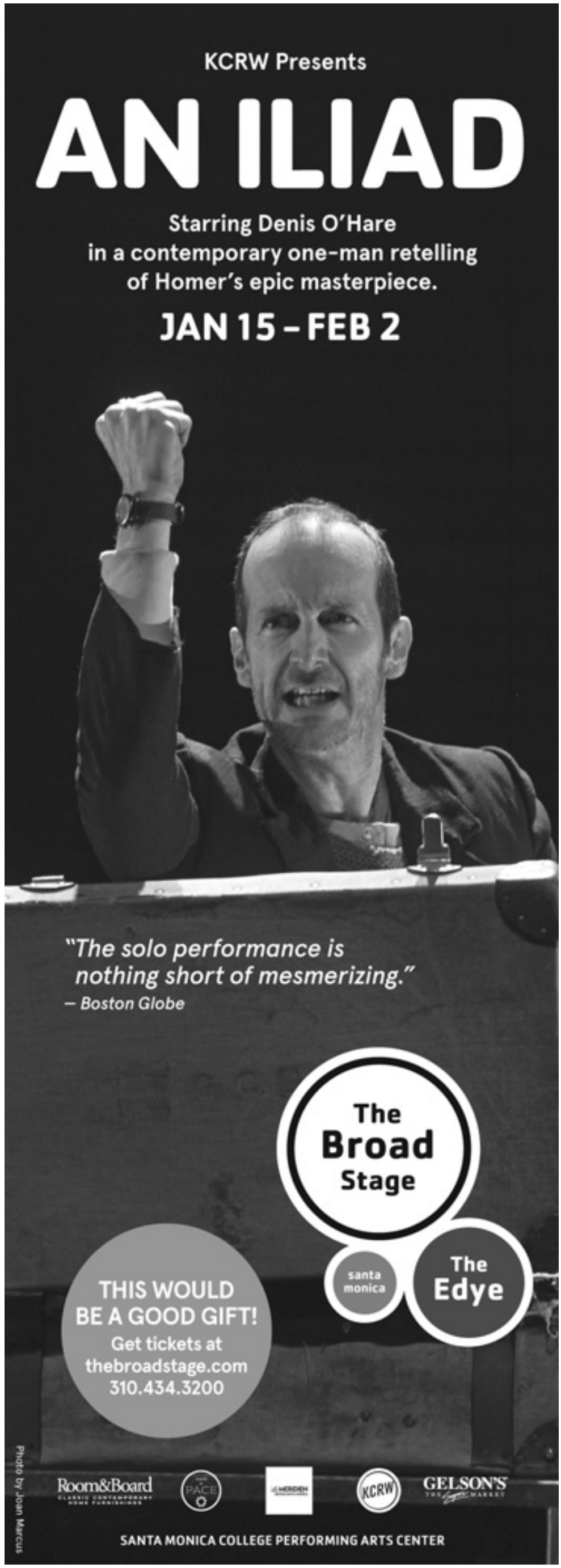
For art's sake

City Hall has theoretically left millions of dollars on the table by subsidizing artists' studios at the Santa Monica Airport. A Daily Press report found that a lease negotiated by city officials included a base rent of 37 cents per month, per square foot. That lease now generates $9,885 a month.

So, this week's Q-Line question asks:
Do you believe taxpayers should be subsidizing artists? What's the value in doing so?

Contact **qline@smdp.com** before **Friday at 5 p.m.** and we'll print your answers in the weekend edition of the Daily Press. You can also call **310-573-8354**.





How to make your home bid stand out

ELLEN GIBSON
Associated Press

More than 4 million Americans buy a home each year, but there's no telling how many offers are discarded along the way. And no one wants to get edged out in the bid for a dream home.

Real estate is rebounding in many regions of the country, and buyers can face formidable competition. Of course, the best way to snag the home you want is to promise the most money. But there's more to making an offer than simply setting and stating your price.

Here, two top real estate agents in a perpetually competitive market — Washington, D.C. — share pointers on crafting an offer that will outshine the rest:

SHOW THEM THE MONEY

The key, both said, is assuaging the sellers' fears. They worry mainly that the deal will fall through, so have your financing in order before you submit an offer. Make sure the lender checks your credit, assets and employment status before pre-approving your loan, and get a detailed letter with the amount you are authorized to borrow, recommends Elizabeth Blakeslee, a Coldwell Banker broker in the capital region.

Another way to signal you are a serious buyer is by putting down a large, good-faith deposit. A 2 percent to 4 percent escrow deposit is common. However, Nancy Itteilag of Long and Foster real estate, who has been listed among the top 10 agents in the country for sales volume by the Wall Street Journal/REAL Trends, tells her clients to write a check for at least 10 percent. Within 30 days, the buyer will need to hand over this money as part of the down-payment anyway.

"If the seller has a nice deposit in escrow, they know the buyer is not going to wake up and change their mind," she says.

ELIMINATE SURPRISES

The other unknown that keeps sellers up at night is dread of repairs, says Blakeslee. Most offers are contingent on a home inspection. To eliminate that variable, have the inspection done before putting in an offer, and specify any repairs you expect the seller to make. That way there won't be surprises later.

Alternatively, buy a home warranty or even request that your real estate agent throw one in as a closing gift. That way the seller knows that if the heating system gives out, it will be covered.

"They don't want the buyer nitpicking — coming back with 'the icemaker doesn't work'," Blakeslee says.

Another contingency in most contracts is the home appraisal. If the value of the property as assessed is lower than the purchase price, the buyer can back out of the deal. Most lenders require an appraisal before underwriting a mortgage, so unless you are paying cash, you won't be able to waive this condition, Blakeslee says. However, if you are infatuated with the house, you can volunteer to pay, out of pocket, the potential difference between a low appraisal amount and the purchase price.

OFFER PEACE OF MIND

The goal is to be as accommodating as possible without sacrificing your family's needs. Talk to sellers about furnishings or appliances they want to take or leave behind. Also, give the owners plenty of time to move. Consider allowing them to stay in the home for a month after the settlement date at no charge, Itteilag says, as long as they continue to pay utilities. As a buyer, you don't have to make a mortgage payment the first month anyway.

"When you have people who have been in their homes for 20 years, they don't want to be pushed out," she says. "Sometimes you can't put a price tag on the comfort level you've offered them."

PERSONAL CONNECTION

Make your bid stand out with personal touches. For instance, write a letter to the seller detailing why your family fell in love with the home and the community. During your house tour, Blakeslee advises looking for a detail that connects your family with the previous occupants.

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CRIME WATCH
BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

Man arrested for allegedly stealing copper

Crime Watch is a weekly series culled from reports provided by the Santa Monica Police Department. These are arrests only. All parties are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 18,

A security guard at an apartment complex under construction saw two suspects near an electrical control panel door holding some bolt cutters. The door had a pad lock on it and it appeared they were going to cut the lock. When he confronted them, the pair walked up some stairs to the ground level. The security guard followed them and saw four other suspects leaving with three trash cans on dollies filled with copper pipe. The guard followed them and got pictures of the suspects and a license plate. He made a police report and provided police with the photos. On Dec. 21, an Los Angeles Police officer found the vehicle using an automated license plate reader. The driver was arrested and held for questioning. Santa Monica Police officers found evidence in the vehicle linking the driver to the theft. He was placed under arrest for burglary. He was identified as Lawrence Edward Thomas, 35, of Gardena, Calif. His bail was set at $50,000.

SUNDAY, DEC. 22, AT 7:24 P.M.,

Officers responded to the 1200 block of the Third Street Promenade — Sephora — regarding a report of a shoplifter who just fled the store. Officers were able to locate and arrest the suspect in a nearby alley after being directed by store security. The suspect allegedly handed over $235 worth of merchandise that she did not pay for. The security guard told officers that he saw the suspect take several items from inside the store and place them in a tote bag. She then left without paying. When she was outside of the store the guard reached for the tote bag, but the suspect pulled it away and ran. She was found to be on probation for petty theft. The suspect was identified as Lilian Marina Carranza, 39, of Los Angeles. She was booked for robbery and a probation violation. Her bail was set at $50,000.

SUNDAY, DEC. 22, AT 2:40 P.M.,

Officers were on patrol along the 500 block of Colorado Avenue when they noticed two people sitting on some steps. They recognized one of them and knew that she was on felony probation for narcotics. They approached the two and noticed the strong odor of marijuana around them and a glass pipe containing the drug on the woman's lap. She was asked if she had any other drugs on her, to which she replied "no." She told officers they could search her. So they did and found a rolled up dollar bill with methamphetamine inside. The woman was placed under arrest for possession of drugs. She was identified as Daunielle Antoinett Coleman, 25, a transient. Her bail was set at $10,000.

FRIDAY, DEC. 20, AT 12:30 P.M.,

Officers made contact with a man who appeared to be really drunk near the corner of Seventh Street and Olympic Boulevard. While talking with him they determined he was unable to care for himself and placed him under arrest for public intoxication. During a search officers said they found 13 clear plastic baggies that contained various amounts of methamphetamine. Officers believed the man was trying to sell the drug. They placed him under arrest for being drunk in public, possession of narcotics for sale and a misdemeanor warrant. He was identified as Julius Edward London, 65, a transient. His bail was set at $30,611.

THURSDAY, DEC. 19, AT 6 P.M.,

Officers responded to the 1500 block of Broadway after a witness reported to the police that they saw a suspicious person leaving a garage concealing an unknown item in his jacket. Officers found a suspect matching the description of the suspicious person in a nearby alley riding a bicycle. He was also riding it without a light during nighttime, a violation. Officers stopped him and asked him if he would consent to a search. He said he would. The search revealed several items that could be used in a burglary. They also found a woman's necklace and some cocaine. The witness was transported to the scene and identified the suspect as the one who was seen leaving the garage. Since he had no business being there police placed him under arrest for probable cause burglary and drug possession. While at the jail, police searched him further and said he was in possession of meth and heroin. He was ultimately booked for burglary, possession of drugs, grand theft, possession of burglary tools, a warrant and for riding the bike without a light. He was identified as Mario Rojas Torres, 60, of Santa Monica. His bail was set at $57,500.

TUESDAY, DEC. 17, AT 12:30 P.M.,

A harbor guard noticed that the SMPD boat Monica 1 was moored improperly adjacent to the Santa Monica Pier. That caused the boat's bow to strike a portion of the pier. Thinking that was strange, police viewed surveillance footage from the pier, which showed a suspect walking down a catwalk toward the boat in violation of the "no trespassing" signs. The woman in the video was then seen pulling the boat closer to the pier, causing it to strike the landmark. Officers were able to identify the woman from the video and later found her near Barnard and Neilson ways. They placed her under arrest after she allegedly admitted to the vandalism. Damage to the boat was estimated at over $500. The suspect was identified as Marta Draculi, 42, a transient. She was booked for vandalism. Her bail was set at $20,000.

editor@smdp.com

Editor-in-Chief **KEVIN HERRERA** compiled these reports.



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RENT

FROM PAGE 1

SMAS," the report stated. "Thus, staff that administers the lease has no evidence that the rents were or are unaffordable to the artists that use the space. Moreover, the remedy for violations of the affordability requirement is unclear."

Govrin has repeatedly refused to provide the Daily Press with proof that affordable rates are being offered. He did not respond to e-mails seeking comment and has hung up on a reporter.

City officials plan to hire an independent consultant to complete an audit of the lease, and determine if rents were being offered at the $1.50 rate, by May.

Rent for the space has been paid, officials said, and it's not clear whether City Hall could sue on behalf of its subtenants.

But affordability was not the primary goal of the council that approved the lease, officials said in the report.

"Council and staff were apparently focused primarily on preserving studio space for artists within the city as land values rose and studio space was redeveloped," city officials wrote in a recent report on the studios.

It should be noted that the document that council voted on, which allowed then-City Manager Susan McCarthy to negotiate the lease with the Santa Monica Art Studios, said that studios would be available to tenants at an average of about $350 per month. The Daily Press reached out to dozens of artists but only one responded to requests for information about rent, saying she paid about $850 for one of the smallest spaces in the hangar.

Before the studios even opened for business, the Arts Commission recommended that means testing should be performed on all incoming artists so that the space would be "limited to artists who are not able to afford privately owned studio space rented at market rate."

The initial proposal from the commission suggested that applicants would correspond with 80 percent of the Los Angeles County median income. Today, the median income is about $56,200, according to the census.

Council voted unanimously to send the issue back to the commission with information from city officials about the feasibility of the means testing.

A few months later, council approved means testing, using as a baseline 175 percent of the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan statistical area median family income. Today, this baseline number is around $122,000.

At the council meeting over a decade ago, Govrin spoke in opposition to means testing, according to the meeting's minutes.

One of the Arts Commission member who presented the suggested means testing to council declined to comment for this article.

There is no evidence provided that shows that means testing has been performed.

In providing this space at the extremely subsidized rate, currently at $9,885 per month, council passed on an estimated $4 million to $6 million over the past 10 years.

On top of renting studios to artists, Santa Monica Art Studios rents exhibition spaces at rates going up to $660 per month, according to its website. The studio takes a 25 percent commission on all sales not handled directly by the artist.

dave@smdp.com

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APP
FROM PAGE 1

Parents can use the program for two 15-minute periods a day. The iPad is placed on top of the child's incubator, facing downward. There is no sound so the nurses have written little notes like "thanks for visiting me," and "I love my grandparents," which they place next to the baby periodically throughout the session.

Amber isn't the only relative who wanted to see Asher, but couldn't visit him as he gained strength in the NICU. Helen Cox's family lives in England.

"My dad and sister saw him for the first time on there," she said. "My dad cried, he sobbed. That for me was just so valuable."

Helen Cox visited Asher all but one of the nearly 100 days that he was in the hospital, usually twice a day. Still, being away from her baby was excruciating.

"For me, one of the hardest things to do as a mom in this situation is to leave your kids at night, night after night, 93 days of not taking that person home with you, who is meant to be with you," she said. "I can phone up and say I want a quick update. But to actually see your son, that's like a little lifeline."

Asher went home on Dec. 13.

dave@smdp.com

BUDGET
FROM PAGE 1

by the Treasury, a calamitous health care rollout and near-perpetual congressional gridlock.

Although the budget deal falls short of the grand bargain that Obama and congressional Republicans once aspired to, it ends the cycle of fiscal brinkmanship — for now — by preventing another shutdown for nearly two more years.

But the rare moment of comity may be short-lived. Hanging over the start of the year is a renewed fight over raising the nation's borrowing limit, which the Treasury says must be resolved by late February or early March to avert an unprecedented U.S. default. Both sides are positioning behind customary hard-line positions, with Republicans insisting they want concessions before raising the debt limit and Obama insisting he won't negotiate.

The last vestiges of 2013's legislative wrangling behind him, Obama's attention turns now to major challenges and potential bright spots in the year ahead. In late January, Obama will give his fifth State of the Union address, setting his agenda for the final stretch before the 2014 midterm elections, in which all of the House and one-third of the Senate are on the ballot.

The elections could drown out much of Obama's effort to focus attention on his own, key agenda items.

Those include his signature health care law. The critical enrollment period for new insurance exchanges closes on March 31. Also at mid-year, Obama will be seeking to secure a comprehensive nuclear deal with Iran before a six-month deal struck in November runs out.

"Hopefully the president has finally learned that if he wants a productive second term we need to focus on finding areas of common ground," said Brendan Buck, a spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio.

Wary of letting expectations get too high, Obama's advisers have been careful not to read too much into Congress' success in trumping pessimistic expectations and pulling off a modest, end-of-year budget deal.

In an email on Thursday, senior Obama adviser Dan Pfeiffer called for a renewed focus in the new year on job creation, an unemployment insurance extension and raising the minimum wage.

"While it's too early to declare a new era of bipartisanship, what we've seen recently is that Washington is capable of getting things done when it wants to," Pfeiffer said. "There's an opportunity next year for this town to do its job and make real progress."

The product of intensive talks before lawmakers left Washington for Christmas, the budget deal alleviates the harshest effects of automatic budget cuts on the Pentagon and domestic agencies. It reduces those cuts, known as the sequester, by about one-third, restoring approximately $63 billion over two years.

A projected $85 billion in savings are located elsewhere in the deal, including increases in an airport security tax and a fee corporations pay to have pensions guaranteed by the government. Also included: a contentious provision to pare down annual cost of living increases in benefits for military retirees under age 62. Those cuts will save the government about $6.3 billion over a decade.

With lawmakers eager to leave town for the holidays and Republicans hoping to keep the focus on problems with Obama's health care law, the deal passed with bipartisan support in both the Democratic-controlled Senate and the Republican-controlled House — despite opposition from tea party groups that lined up to oppose it, arguing the deal would raise spending.

The comprehensive defense bill Obama signed will give military personnel a 1 percent pay raise. It also covers combat pay, ships, aircraft and bases. Lawmakers also gave Obama a rare victory in his fight to close Guantanamo Bay, by lifting the most rigid restrictions on transferring detainees overseas as part of the defense bill.

In a statement Thursday, Obama said Congress had taken a positive step by lifting those restrictions, but protested other constraints Congress left in place, including a ban on transferring detainees to the U.S. for imprisonment, trial or medical emergencies. He said some of the remaining restrictions, in some circumstances, "would violate constitutional separation of powers principles."

"I oppose these provisions, as I have in years past, and will continue to work with the Congress to remove these restrictions," Obama said.

The signing of the defense bill capped a year-long campaign led by the women of the Senate to address the scourge of rape and sexual assault in the military, which the Pentagon estimates may have affected 26,000 members of the military last year.

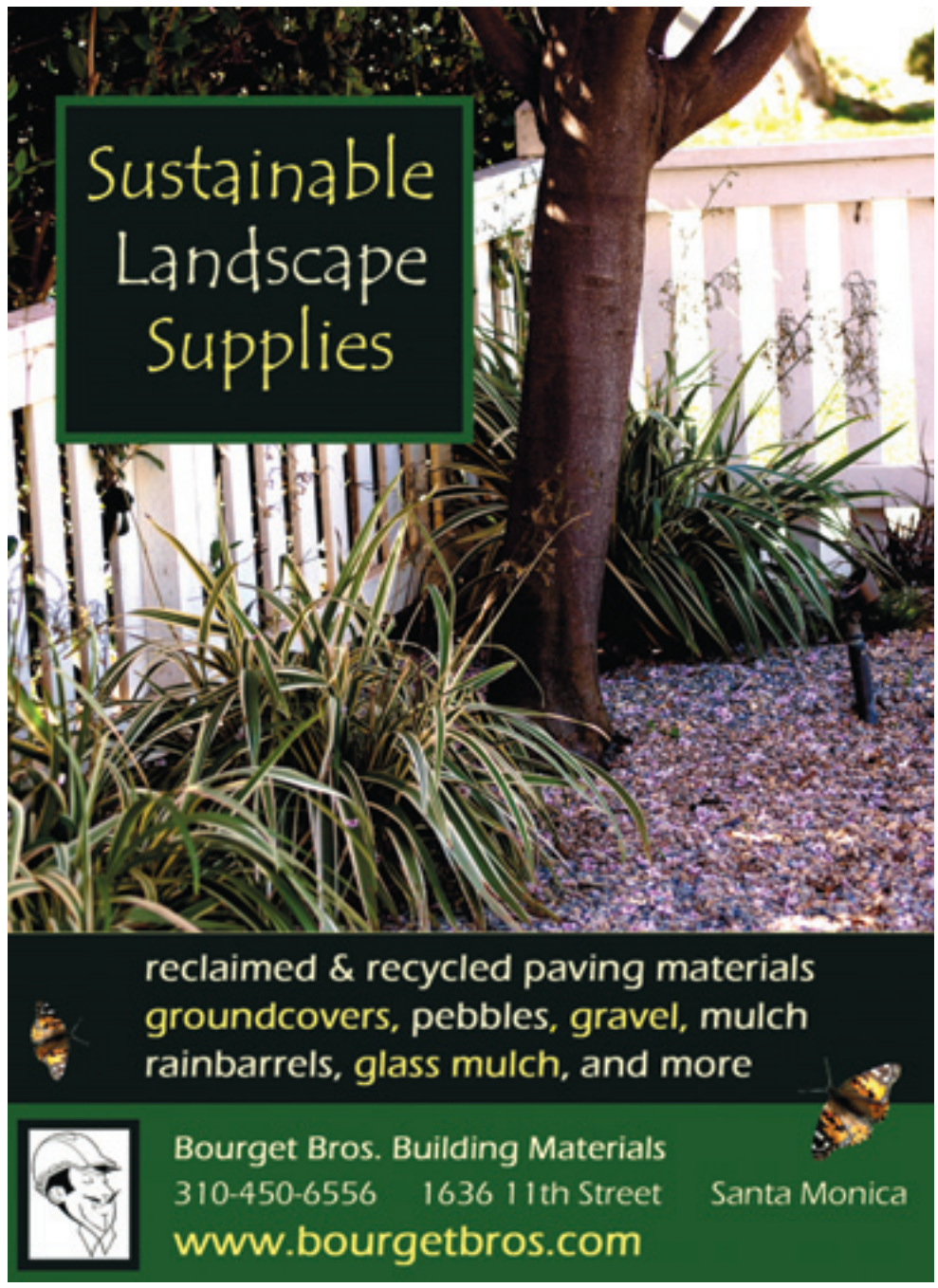
Commanders will no longer be permitted to overturn jury convictions for sexual assault. The law also requires a civilian review when commanders decline to prosecute, requires dishonorable discharge or dismissal for those convicted, eliminate the statute of limitations for courts-martial in rape and sexual assault cases and criminalizes retaliation against victims who report an assault.

The bill provides $552.1 billion for the regular military budget and $80.7 billion for the war in Afghanistan and other overseas operations, reflecting deficit-driven efforts to trim spending and the drawdown in Afghanistan after more than a decade of fighting there.

Obama signed the two bills and several others in private, without reporters present, after an early-morning workout a nearby Marine Corps base. After signing the bills, Obama set off for a hike with his wife and daughters along a popular trail in Oahu leading to a 150-foot waterfall.









LAW
FROM PAGE 3

sensitivities associated with gender identity, not only for those students who experience a change in their gender status but the students who would be in the same facilities, in the same classrooms and on the same teams," General Counsel Keith Bray said.

Parent Christy Musser said she plans to take two of her three school age children out of public schools in Southern California.

Her oldest son will remain in the high school where he is a sophomore, but Musser said her eighth-grade daughter feels so uncomfortable about a transgender student coming into the restroom or locker room that she distributed flyers about the referendum at school.

"At this time in their lives, these kids are young, innocent and are just learning about themselves and their bodies, and they don't need to worry about boys coming in the locker room and looking at them, or vice versa," she said.

San Diego school board president, Kevin Beiser, said those fears are unfounded. In the absence of statewide guidance, schools have been dealing with this challenge "in a very delicate, thoughtful and compassionate manner for many years," he said.

"This idea that schools will let a student walk into whatever bathroom they want is baloney," said Beiser, who works as a high school math teacher in a neighboring district.

The possibility that the law could be overturned worries Ashton Lee, 16, a junior at Manteca High School in the San Joaquin Valley. Born a girl, Ashton told his parents and school administrators his sophomore year that he was transgender.

But he said school officials balked when he asked to be transferred from an all-girls aerobics class to a team sports class for boys. "They didn't understand the seriousness of the issue I was dealing with," he said. "They treated it like a normal thing, like I didn't like the class or was bored with the teacher."

Ashton lobbied for the law last spring and thinks his public activism helped persuade Manteca High to acknowledge his gender identity when school resumed in August. He now is allowed to use the boy's restrooms and locker rooms and to wear the junior ROTC uniform for male cadets.

Similar adjustments have been made for five transgender classmates.

The law's passage "showed them this is OK, this is going to be happening in a lot of other places," he said. "If it gets taken away, I'm kind of worried my school will be like, 'Well, we don't have to do it anymore."

California's law comes amid legal challenges across the country involving transgender students filing actions for the right to use facilities that match their expressed identities.

In June, the director of Colorado's civil rights board ruled in favor of a 6-year-old transgender girl who had been prevented from using the girl's bathroom at school. The next month, the Arcadia Unified School District in California agreed to train its staff on transgender issues to settle a complaint brought by a student prevented from staying with other boys during a school-sponsored overnight science camp.

The San Francisco Unified School District has had a policy similar to the new law since 2003. The Los Angeles Unified School District — the state's largest — has had one since 2005. This month, the school boards in Berkeley, Sacramento and Pacifica followed suit.

Namita Brown, an Oakland lawyer who represents school districts in Northern California, said educators are less concerned about installing shower screens or having enough private restroom stalls than figuring out a way "to tone the fervor in the parent community."

"The bottom line is districts are in this impossible place where our primary job is to offer quality education and we are suddenly facing some upset constituents," Brown said.

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT: Draft Zoning Ordinance Update

On January 8, 2014, the Planning Commission is scheduled to hold the third of six public hearings on the Draft Zoning Ordinance. The primary focus will be Division II (all Chapters) and may also include discussion of all other divisions of the draft document, particularly as these divisions relate to Division II. The Commission may also have further discussion related to divisions of the draft document that were the subject of prior Commission public hearings – Divisions I, IV, and V. The Commission will hear public comments and provide comments to staff on all of these topics. On February 5, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. the Commission will consider and adopt recommendations for City Council consideration.

The City of Santa Monica's Draft Zoning Ordinance Update is now available for review at www.smgov.net/pcd.

WHEN:Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 6:00 PM
WHERE:Council Chambers, City Hall
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. You may comment at the Planning Commission public hearing, or by writing a letter or e-mail. Information received prior to the hearing will be given to the Planning Commission at the meeting.

MORE INFORMATION
If you want additional information about this project or wish to review the project, please contact the Project Planner (310) 458-8341. The Zoning Ordinance is available at the Planning Counter during business hours or available on the City's web site at www.smgov.net. The meeting facility is wheelchair accessible. If you have any disability-related accommodation request, please contact (310) 458-8341, or TYY Number: (310) 458-8696 at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting. Santa Monica "Big Blue" Bus Lines #1, #2, #3, Rapid 3, #7, and #9 service the City Hall and the Civic Center. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the Public Hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the Public Hearing.

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de una audiencia pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Carmen Gutierrez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-8341.



Stocks up on job market news

KEN SWEET
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK The stock market continued its upward climb Thursday as traders went back to work after the Christmas holiday, adding to what has already been a historic year for the market.

Traders were encouraged by an unexpectedly large drop in claims for unemployment benefits last week, the latest sign that the U.S. job market is improving. Trading volume was very low, however, as most portfolio managers have closed out their positions for the year

The yield on the 10-year Treasury note, a benchmark for many kinds of loans, briefly crossed above the psychologically important 3 percent mark. It hasn't been that high since September.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 122.33 points, or 0.8 percent, to 16,479.88. It was the 50th record high close for the Dow this year. The index is up 25.8 percent so far in 2013, on pace to have its best year since 1996.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 8.70 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,842.02 and the Nasdaq composite was up 11.76 points, or 0.3 percent, to 4,167.18. With Thursday's gains, the S&P 500 is up 29.2 percent for the year, or 31.3 percent when dividends are included. The S&P is on track for its best year since 1997.

Bond prices fell, pushing the yield on the 10-year Treasury note to 2.99 percent from 2.98 percent Tuesday. The note briefly traded above 3 percent.

Yields have been climbing since late November as economic reports have suggested that the U.S. recovery is gaining momentum. The increase accelerated last week after the Federal Reserve announced it was cutting back on its bond-buying program. The yield last touched 3 percent in September. It hasn't been consistently above 3 percent since July 2011.

"There's a silver lining to see bond yields rise like this, because it's a sign that the economy is getting stronger," said John De Clue, chief investment officer of U.S. Bank Wealth Management.

Yields on Treasury securities like the 10-year note are used to calculate interest rates on student loans, mortgage rates, credit cards, and many other kinds of debt. As the 10-year yield has risen in the last six months, so have mortgage rates. In early May, the average mortgage rate was around 3.35 percent. This week it was 4.48 percent, according the government mortgage agency Freddie Mac.

"We are starting to take the medication away from the bond market, but it's important to note that yields are still at historically low levels," said Dan Veru, chief investment officer of Palisade Capital Management, which manages $4.5 billion in assets.

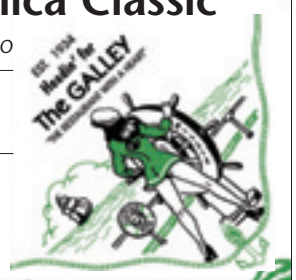
Investors cheered the latest signal that the U.S. economy is improving. The Labor Department said the number of Americans who filed for unemployment benefits fell 42,000 last week to 338,000. The drop was far bigger than economists were expecting and an indication that fewer people were losing their jobs.

It was another slow day for Wall Street, with most investors on vacation for Christmas and only three trading days left in 2013. Approximately 1.96 billion shares traded hands on the New York Stock Exchange on Thursday, well below the daily average of 3.3 billion shares.

In corporate news:

T-Mobile rose 74 cents, or 2.3 percent, to $32.93 after The New York Times and other news outlets reported that the Sprint division of Japan's Softbank was looking to buy the wireless carrier.

Twitter rose $3.35, or 5 percent, to $72.31. The stock is up 22 percent this week alone and 76 percent so far this month. Investors continue to bid up Twitter's shares on optimism the social media company can increase profits from mobile advertising.

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Surf Forecasts

Water Temp: **60.2°**

FRIDAY – **POOR TO FAIR** – SURF: **1-2 ft** knee to thigh high
Minimal new WNW swell. Best for standout spots which are up to waist high on the sets late.

SATURDAY – **POOR TO FAIR** – SURF: **1-2 ft** knee to thigh high
Minimal new WNW swell. Best for standout spots which are up to waist high on the sets late.

SUNDAY – **POOR** – SURF: **1-2 ft** knee to thigh high
Minimal WNW swell eases. Mostly shows for standout spots with 1-3' surf there

MONDAY – **POOR** – SURF: **1-2 ft** knee to thigh high
Minimal WNW swell eases. Mostly shows for standout spots with 1-3' surf there

BEACH REPORT CARD

NORTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Grades for this report are based on monitoring data from the previous 30 days up to the ending date of **December 11, 2013**

HEAL THE BAY - 1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 - beachreportcard.org - brc@healthebay.org - 800 HEAL BAY

QUICK STATS (for the last 30 days)

- Number of sewage spills -- 0
- Number of beach closures due to a sewage spill -- 0
- Number of wet days -- 13
- Number of A grades for dry/wet weather -- 31 / 32
- Number of (C,D,F) grades for dry/wet weather -- 7 / 9

The Beach Report Card is made possible by: simplehuman, LAcurGUY, SIMA and Swain Barber Foundation

Heal the Bay reminds you not to swim or surf within 100 yards of any flowing storm drain or for at least 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 Lechusa and Las Alisos creeks.		
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.	C	C
Escondido Creek, just east of Escondido State Beach.	A+	F
Latigo Canyon Creek mouth.	B	A
Solstice Canyon at Dan Blocker County Beach.	A+	A+
Puerco State Beach at creek mouth.	B	A+
Marie Canyon storm drain at Puerco Beach, at 21572 Malibu Rd..	A	A+
Surfrider Beach at Malibu Colony fence.	A+	A+
Surfrider Beach (breach location)- daily.	A	C
Malibu Pier - 50 yards east.	B	A+
Carbon Beach at Sweetwater Canyon.	A+	A+
Las Flores State Beach at Las Flores Creek (point zero).	A+	B
Big Rock Beach at 19948 PCH stairs.	B	A+
Pena Creek at Las Tunas County Beach.	A+	A+
Tuna Canyon.	A+	ns
Topanga State Beach at creek mouth.	B	A
Castlerock Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	ns	ns
Santa Ynez Storm Drain at Castle Rock Beach.	B	A+
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+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Pulga Canyon storm drain.	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Temescal Canyon drain.	A+	A+
Will Rogers State Beach at Santa Monica Canyon drain (Chautauqua).	F	D
Santa Monica Beach at Montana Ave. drain.	A+	A+
Santa Monica Beach at Wilshire Blvd. drain.	F	B
Santa Monica Municipal Pier.	F	F
Santa Monica Beach at Pico/Kenter storm drain.	C	C
Santa Monica Beach at Strand St. (in front of the restrooms).	B	B
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.	B	B
Venice Beach at Windward Ave. drain.	A+	A+
Venice Fishing Pier - 50 yards south.	A+	A+
Venice Beach- projection of Topsail St..	A+	F
Marina del Rey, Mothers' Beach- lifeguard tower.	F	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Ballona Creek mouth.	A	F
Dockweiler State Beach at Culver Blvd. drain.	A	A+
North Westchester Storm Drain at Dockweiler State Beach.	A+	A+
Dockweiler State Beach at World Way (south of DBW jetty).	A+	A
Dockweiler State Beach at Imperial Hwy drain.	F	A+
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 nonprofit environmental organization making Southern California coastal waters and watersheds, including Santa Monica Bay, safe, healthy and clean. We use science, education, community action and advocacy to pursue our mission.

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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.

LeBron James wins AP Male Athlete of the Year

TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

MIAMI The only thing that keeps LeBron James up worrying at night is basketball, which simultaneously makes perfect sense and no sense.

On one hand, he's the game's best player.

On the other, he's rarely impressed with himself.

Even after a year like 2013 — when a spectacular wedding, a second NBA championship and a fourth MVP award were among the many highlights enjoyed by the Miami Heat star — he still is, as he puts it, striving for greatness. Or, technically, more greatness, since his enormous list of accomplishments just keeps growing.

James was announced Thursday as The Associated Press' 2013 Male Athlete of the Year, becoming the third basketball player to capture the award that has been annually awarded since 1931. James received 31 of 96 votes cast in a poll of news organizations, beating Peyton Manning (20) and Jimmie Johnson (7).

"I'm chasing something and it's bigger than me as a basketball player," James told the AP. "I believe my calling is much higher than being a basketball player. I can inspire people. Youth is huge to me. If I can get kids to look at me as a role model, as a leader, a superhero ... those things mean so much, and that's what I think I was built for. I was put here for this lovely game of basketball, but I don't think this is the biggest role that I'm going to have."

Past winners include Joe Louis, Jesse Owens, Muhammad Ali, Carl Lewis, Joe Montana, Tiger Woods and Michael Phelps. Serena Williams was the AP Female Athlete of the Year, announced Wednesday.

James joins Michael Jordan and Larry Bird as NBA players to win the award.

"I don't think I've changed much this year," James said. "I've just improved and continued to improve on being more than just as a basketball player. I've matured as a leader, as a father, as a husband, as a friend."

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MOVIE TIMES

Aero Theatre
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My Man Godfrey (NR) 1hr 34min

My Sister Eileen (NR) 1hr 36min
7:30pm

AMC Loews Broadway 4
1441 Third Street Promenade
(310) 458-3924

47 Ronin (PG-13) 2hrs 07min
10:45am, 4:15pm, 11:00pm

Walking With Dinosaurs 3D (PG) 1hr 20min
4:40pm, 10:10pm

Grudge Match (PG-13) 1hr 53min
11:00am, 2:00pm, 5:00pm, 8:00pm, 10:50pm

Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom (PG-13) 2hrs 19min
10:15am, 1:00pm, 4:25pm, 7:50pm, 9:45pm

47 Ronin 3D (PG-13) 2hrs 07min
1:30pm, 7:15pm

Walking With Dinosaurs (PG) 1hr 20min
10:30am, 1:45pm, 7:00pm

AMC 7 Santa Monica
1310 Third St.
(310) 451-9440

Frozen (PG) 1hr 25min
9:45am, 12:45pm, 5:30pm, 8:00pm

Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG-13) 2hrs 26min
10:55pm

Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (NR) 1hr 59min
10:45am, 1:50pm, 4:50pm, 8:30pm, 11:35pm

Secret Life of Walter Mitty (PG) 2hrs 05min
10:10am, 1:05pm, 4:05pm, 8:45pm, 11:40pm

Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (PG-13) 2hrs 41min
9:30am, 4:45pm, 11:00pm

Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug in 3D (PG-13) 2hrs 41min
1:00pm, 7:10pm

Saving Mr. Banks (PG-13) 2hrs 00min
10:00am, 1:05pm, 5:00pm, 8:15pm, 11:30pm

Wolf of Wall Street (R) 2hrs 45min
9:30am, 1:30pm, 3:45pm, 7:50pm, 11:00pm

American Hustle (R) 2hrs 09min
10:15am, 1:40pm, 4:15pm, 7:35pm, 11:45pm

Laemmle's Monica Fourplex
1332 Second St.
(310) 478-3836

Inside Llewyn Davis (R) 1hr 45min
1:30pm, 4:20pm, 7:10pm, 9:45pm

Nebraska (R) 1hr 50min
1:50pm, 4:30pm, 7:20pm, 10:00pm

Philomena (R) 1hr 34min
1:40pm, 7:30pm

Her (R)
1:00pm, 4:00pm, 7:00pm, 10:00pm

12 Years a Slave (R) 2hrs 13min
4:10pm, 9:55pm

For more information, e-mail **editor@smdp.com**

SAY 'YES' TO AN INVITE, TAURUS

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Note that people's moods have changed. Make time for a partner or loved one with whom you often take off. Why not enjoy some special time together? A practical discussion will help set the pace for the next few days. Tonight: Dinner for two.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Defer to others. You might want to escape the holiday fervor and do something completely unrelated. A friend with lots of imagination could turn up and add some fun to the moment. Tonight: Say "yes" to an invitation.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★ You have some important matters that demand your attention. You might sense that a parent or higher-up needs your time as well. You will be able to juggle both effectively. A call involving a partner could head your way. Tonight: Get some much-needed rest.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Investigate the alternatives that surround a child or loved one. This person might want a change, and you might not be comfortable with the idea. Keep communication open. Your emotional response might be right-on. Tonight: Enjoy those around you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★ Be more in touch with a family member's needs. Your ability to visualize what someone else wants will help you please others. Use this talent now. Be sensitive to what might not be working properly, be it your car or some other mechanical item. Tonight: Stay close to home.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★★ You express your opinions tentatively yet honestly. You tend to put a partner or loved one on a pedestal, where there is only one place to go: down. Be aware of how you are building this person up. Tonight: Favorite place, favorite people.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★ Be more upbeat and positive in dealing with a financial matter. Your attitude could carry over into a negotiation or conversations in general. Listen to your inner voice, but pull back before acting. Tonight: Your treat.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Beam in more of what you want. Listen to news with greater attentiveness. Understand what is happening within your family and recognize what needs to be done. Tonight: Return a call from a relative.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★ Know what is happening behind the scenes, but understand that you might not be privy to all the conversations. Listen well and ask insightful questions. A partner will let you know how much you are appreciated. Tonight: Get some extra sleep.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Calls come in, and before you know it, you are off doing what you want. A neighbor or close relative will request some of your time. Make it your pleasure. You have a lot of information coming your way! Tonight: Where the crowds are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★ You might have to handle some work or manage a project that has been on the back burner for too long. Use good sense with money, as it could be slipping through your fingers like water. Count your change. Tonight: Grab some munchies with a loved one.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Try to get an overview of a situation and determine which direction you want to head in. You might think that you have a more constructive solution. Test it out on several people before you decide to make it real. Tonight: Go for some exotic cuisine.

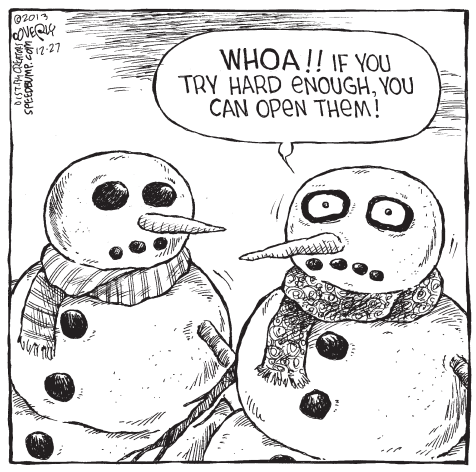
Friday, December 27, 2013

This year you focus on your long-term goals. The possibility of making one, if not more, a reality is reasonable. In many ways, you are inspired to live your life with more attention to others and to your values. If you are single, you are likely to meet someone who will be important to your life's history. If you are attached, the two of you will be happier as a couple if you focus on a mutual goal and make it a reality. Share your feelings more often. Make sure you have enough one-on-one time together. SCORPIO can be intense, devious, insightful and full of resourceful information.

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

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Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



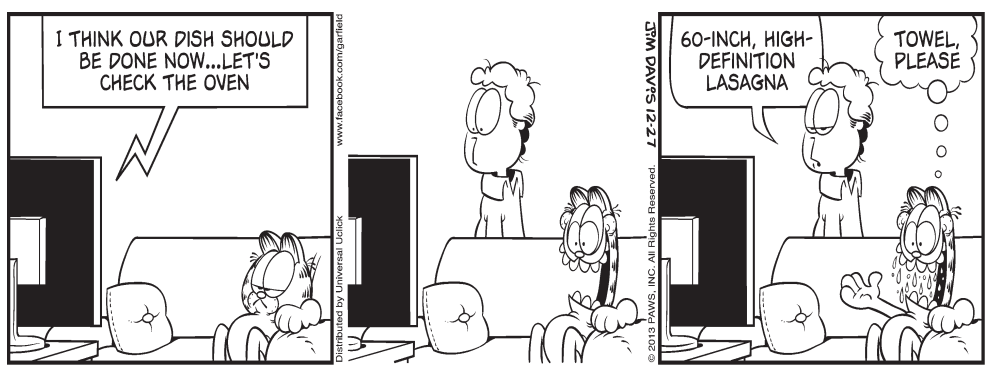
Strange Brew
By John Deering



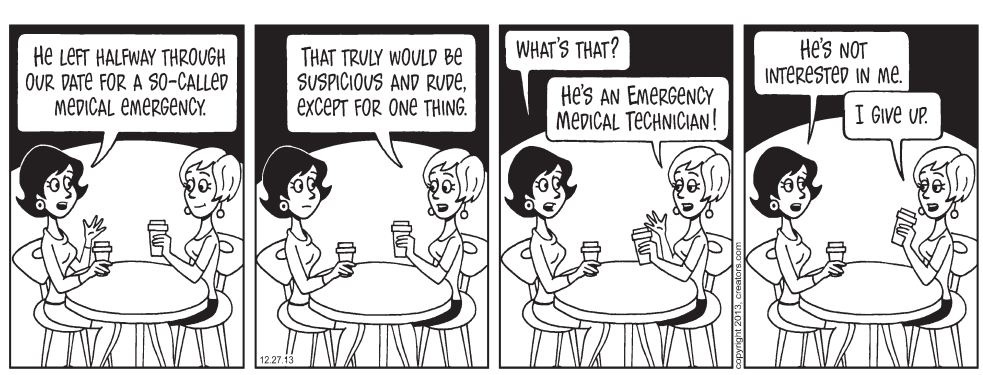
Dogs of C-Kennel
By Mick and Mason Mastroianni



Garfield
By Jim Davis



The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



Sudoku

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 ★ (easiest) to ★★★★★ (hardest).

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

King Features Syndicate

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 YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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The Perfect Gift Guide 2013

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MYSTERY REVEALED!

Daniel Archuleta *daniela@smdp.com*

Reader Justin Walker correctly identified this photo of the Libertad Soccer Club on Olympic Boulevard near 14th Street. He will receive a prize from the Daily Press. Check out the weekend edition for another chance to win.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Breaks, perhaps
6 Low singer
11 Really impressed
12 Over
13 Yard worker
14 Acts the nomad
15 Will Smith biopic
16 Cancel, as a debt
18 Oxford bigwig
19 — Paulo
20 Trawling need
21 Quiche base
23 Salad servers
25 Greek consonants
27 May honoree
28 Hog the mirror
30 Plunge
33 — favor
34 Prepare to fire
36 Two-piece piece
37 Somewhat
39 Help out
40 Astronomer's prime time
41 Generous one
43 Lucy's pal
44 Sock site
45 Door holder's words
46 Finishes last

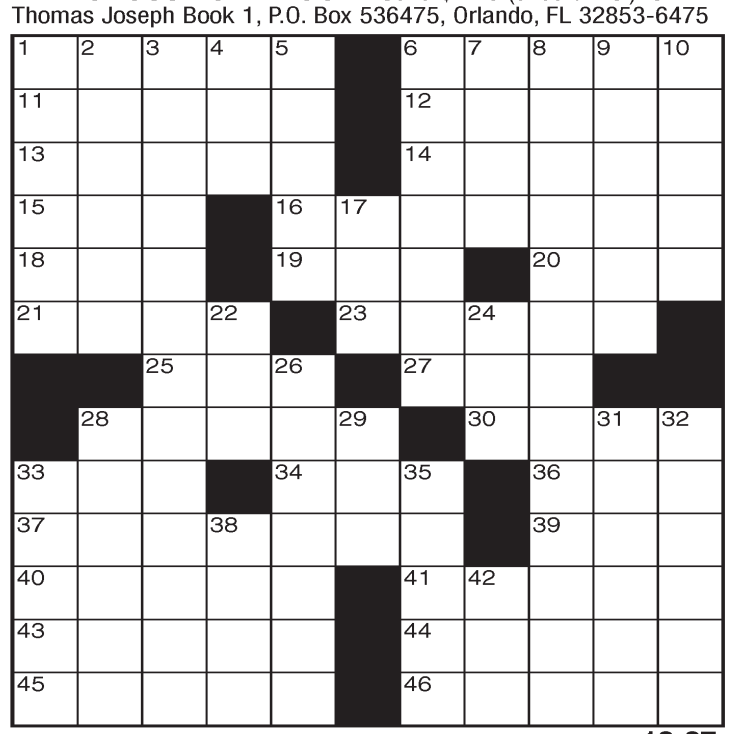
DOWN

1 Angry rant
2 Like some watches
3 1987 John Malkovich movie
4 Merino mom
5 Feudal workers
6 Watering hole
7 Wildly eager
8 2013 Emma Thompson movie
9 Colanders' kin
10 Dawn
17 Cereal bit
22 Take to court
24 Auction signal
26 Mariners' home
28 Civil
29 Goose egg
31 Colorful bird
32 Chaplains
33 Comics unit
35 Military award
38 Those people
42 Musician Yoko

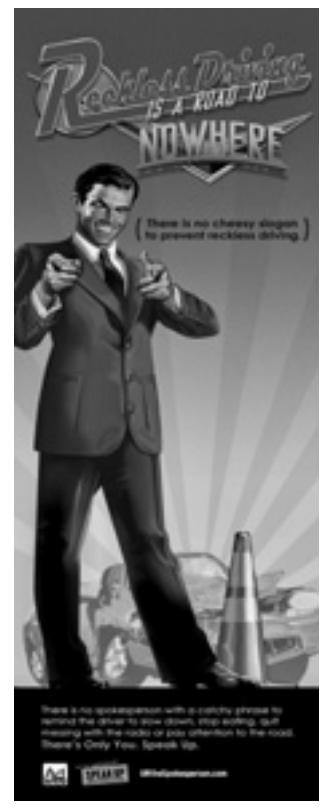
D	E	C	K			P	A	G	E	S
A	C	H	E		R	E	P	U	T	E
F	R	A	Y		A	T	O	N	C	E
T	U	R	N	O	V	E	R			
			O	V	E	R	T	U	R	N
B	E	A	T	E	N			R	O	E
A	L	L	E	N		B	A	N	D	S
C	I	A			A	R	I	S	E	S
H	A	N	G	O	V	E	R			
			O	V	E	R	H	A	N	G
A	V	A	T	A	R		E	R	I	E
R	E	V	O	L	T		A	N	N	E
M	E	A	N	S			D	O	E	S

Yesterday's answer

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



12-27



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ In October, an Ohio judge turned down a petition by Donald Miller Jr., asking to be ruled "alive." "You're still deceased as far as the law is concerned," Probate Judge Allan Davis told him because state law requires challenges to his declaration of death (obtained by Miller's wife in 1994) to be filed within three years. Said Judge Davis, "I don't know where that leaves you." [The Courier (Findlay, Ohio), 10-8-2013]

■ Escape From L.A.: Hundreds of Los Angeles' down-and-out live not just underneath local freeways but inside their concrete structures, according to a June (2009) Los Angeles Times report. The largest "home" is a gymnasium-sized cavern under the Interstate 10 freeway in the suburb of Baldwin Park. That space is nearly inaccessible, requiring squeezing through a rusty grating, traversing a narrow ledge and descending a ladder to reach "a vast, vaultlike netherworld, strewn with garbage and syringes," with toys and rattles and a cat carcass visible on an upper platform only marginally harder for rats to reach. Authorities fear the area, but every few years, state officials try to seal the entrance (which the homeless quickly unseal as soon as the officials leave). [Los Angeles Times, 5-29-2009]

TODAY IN HISTORY

1996 – Taliban forces retake the strategic Bagram Airfield which solidifies their buffer zone around Kabul, Afghanistan.

1997 – Protestant paramilitary leader Billy Wright is assassinated in Northern Ireland, United Kingdom.

2002 – Two truck bombs kill 72 and wound 200 at the pro-Moscow headquarters of the Chechen government in Grozny, Chechnya, Russia.

2004 – Radiation from an explosion on the magnetar SGR 1806-20 reaches Earth. It is the brightest extrasolar event known to have been witnessed on the planet.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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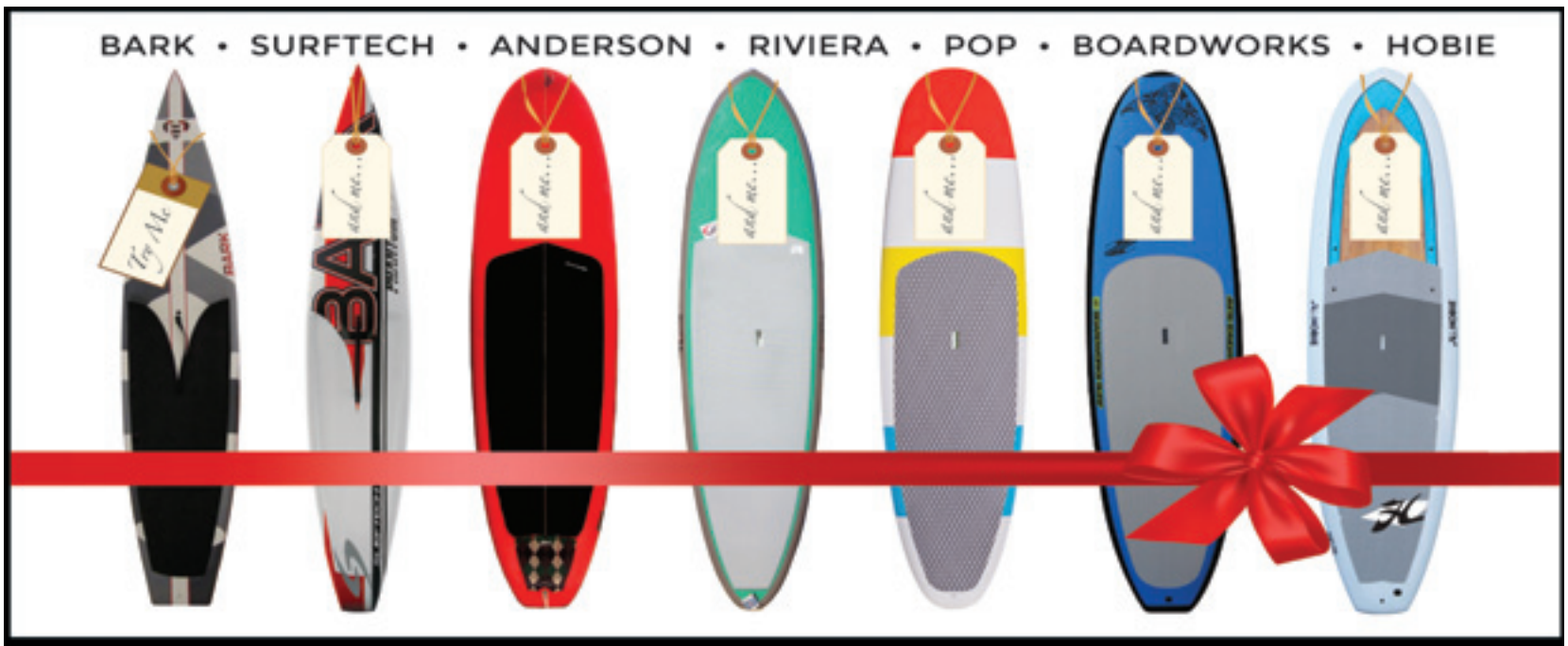
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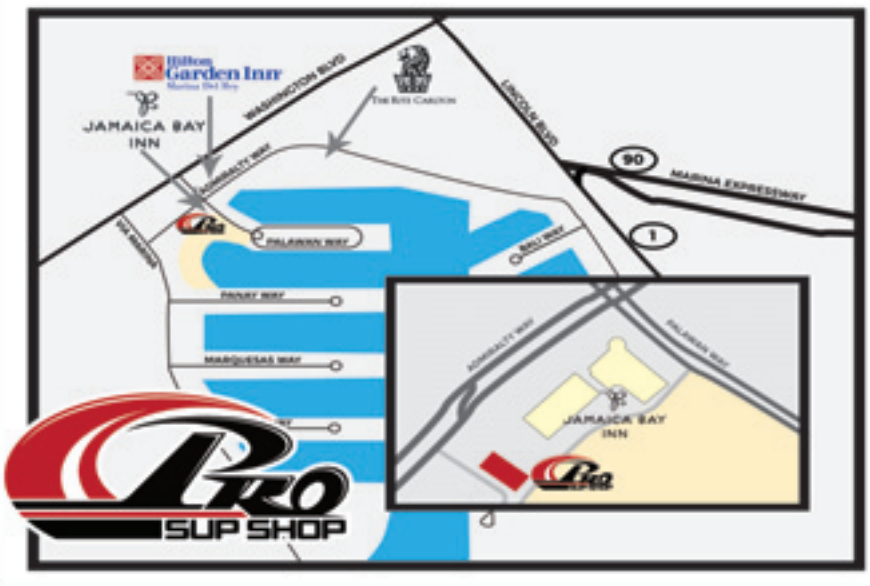


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Internationally renowned **Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects** has been selected as the design architect for the new Miramar Hotel



"Great design arises from sincere collaboration with a client and a deep respect for a project's environmental, economic and social contexts."

—Cesar Pelli



"We are very excited to create a design for the new Miramar Hotel that will vitalize and anchor the important corner of Wilshire and Ocean. Many of my fondest memories growing up nearby are of the area all around the Miramar; Palisades Park, Third Street, the Pier. It is a special place that requires a special vision."

—Rafael Pelli

Following a thorough process involving many of the world's finest architects, we chose Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects to design the new Miramar Hotel.

With hundreds of awards for design excellence, Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects brings extraordinary expertise to this important project. The recipient of the Firm Award, the American Institute of Architects' highest honor for an architectural practice, Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects is acknowledged as a master of its craft.

In 1991, Cesar Pelli was selected as one of the 10 most influential living American architects. Four years later, the AIA awarded Cesar Pelli the Gold Medal, its highest honor for an individual. Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects has been a leader in environmentally sustainable design, having created one of the first 50 buildings in the world to achieve LEED certification. Since then, nearly every project they designed has achieved LEED certification.

Working together, we are committed to creating a new architectural landmark that increases open space, protects ocean views for the community and will return the Moreton Bay Fig tree to public view.

THE MIRAMAR PLAN

Restoring Our Legacy – Investing in Santa Monica's Future

Visit **www.MiramarPlan.com** for more information about the Miramar Plan.