

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

7 22 23 26 40
Meganumber: 25
Jackpot: \$48 Million

FANTASY 5

5 14 15 21 30

DAILY 3

Daytime: 1 4 8
Evening: 5 6 6

DAILY DERBY

1st: 06 Whirl Win
2nd: 11 Money Bags
3rd: 01 Gold Rush

RACE TIME: 1:45.34

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

A documentary, "The Indigo Revolution," debuts in January, with World Indigo Weekend scheduled for Jan. 27 to Jan. 29, touting "special," high-energy kids regarded by their dotting parents as psychic and endowed with an identifying, indigo-colored aura. Indigos are said to act imperially and to be astutely rebellious at authority (though cynics say they're just routinely self-centered brats, the product of excessive parental coddling). One Indigo parent told the Orange County (Calif.) Register in November that the numerous instances of her own child's prescience led her to offer her services as a facilitator to other Indigo parents (at up to \$400 for workshops). Indigos "have a temper," she acknowledged, but not an ordinary temper. "(It) seems geared toward philosophical and existential issues."

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 361st day of 2005.
There are four days left in the year

On Dec. 27, 1932, Radio City Music Hall opened in New York.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Everybody gets so much information all day long that they lose their common sense."

GERTRUDE STEIN

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Many hands make light work



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

Rabbis Isac Levitansky (right) and Yossi Wolosow, from the Chabad House, light up the menorah atop of the Santa Monica Police Department substation located at the Santa Monica Pier. Today is the fourth day of Chanukah.

STATE

2006 will bring voters more choices

BY DON THOMPSON

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — After six statewide elections in four years, California is beginning to seem like it's in a perpetual election cycle. And 2006 will give voters no break.

Through a June primary and a November general election, voters will choose a governor, decide races for seven other statewide offices and select 100 members of the 120-seat state Legislature. And that's not even counting the congressional elections.

If heads were spinning over the eight initiatives on last November's special election ballot, they'll be dizzy at the number of potential initiatives next year. More than 50 proposals already are in circulation, including ones to expand preschool education, boost cigarette taxes to pay for health care, require that parents be notified when minors seek abortions, promote the use of alternative fuels, and ban gay marriage and domestic partners' benefits.

State lawmakers can put their

own proposals on the ballot and are likely to do so as they seek more money for libraries, schools, roads, housing, earthquake retrofits for hospitals, high-speed rail and flood control.

Whether voters will be in the mood to approve government reforms or higher taxes was thrown into question in November. They defeated all eight measures on the Nov. 8 special election ballot, including four promoted by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"You have an angry group of voters. They are not happy campers," said Barbara O'Connor, who gauged voter sentiment through focus groups as director of the Institute for the Study of Politics and the Media at California State University, Sacramento.

A post-election survey found that California voters support the initiative process but prefer that lawmakers and the governor seek solutions first, said pollster Mark Baldassare of the Public Policy Institute of California.

"They're still looking for edu-

cation, fiscal, political and government reform in California. They don't think government in

See VOTERS, page 6

Slopes to be firmed up by 2007

BY RYAN HYATT

Daily Press Staff Writer

PALISADES BLUFFS — Officials say they are on schedule to complete an \$11 million project in two years which will help prevent landslides on the Palisades Bluffs.

Ranging from 30 to 150 feet high, the Palisades Bluffs mark the western edge of Santa Monica, where they rise — vertically at times — directly above the Pacific Coast Highway. Landslides have occurred on the bluffs for at least 130 years, officials said.

Feared as dangerous and unstable, Santa Monica's Palisades Bluffs are constantly eroding and in need of repair. That was the key finding of a geotechnical study delivered to the City Council in April of 2004. Scientists recommended draining the bluffs of as much water as possible, while paving over the crumbling rim and evicting the resident ground squirrels.

The URS Corporation, an engi-

See BLUFFS, page 5

Holiday crunch



Walter Shirk/Special to the Daily Press

Emergency crews respond to a two-car accident on Tuesday at the intersection in which three people were injured. Occupants of this Toyota, including two boys, ages 8 and 9, were taken to local hospital. Their condition is not life-threatening, police said. The driver of the Cadillac was not injured.

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HOROSCOPE

Gather with friends, Aquarius

Santa Monica Daily Press



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)

★★★★ Remember, you can control only yourself, no one else. You might need to remind yourself of that fact today. You might not like to admit it. Detach. Schedule a mini-getaway or buy a new CD. Tonight: Maintain your distance but continue to listen.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ You might not realize how you are coming off. Your tone of voice or expressions might reveal more of what you really feel than your words do. As a result, unexpected developments could punctuate your day. Share what ails you with a close friend or family member. Tonight: With the most special person in your life.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Others seek you out. What you choose to do might not be as bold or exciting as usual. Might you have worn yourself out? Let others run the show, and quit being the personality kid for a day. Tonight: Keep plans calm.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ Slow down and take a break before the new year is upon you. Clear out some work or errands. Curb spending for now, as you might have an unusual expenditure or a late paycheck. Tonight: Choose something relaxing.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Try to be less serious. Someone might be playing with your head just to see your reactions. Be creative, flourish and don't worry so much. If you are single, a new person could knock on your door if you lighten up. Tonight: Do something that makes you laugh and smile.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Basics count, and you could make a big difference in what happens. An associate, friend or loved one could be quite unstable. But you might not want to soothe his or her nerves. Ultimately, you will be happier too. Tonight: At home.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ You will express what is on your mind, but don't be surprised at the reactions you get. Try adding a smile or a touch of diplomacy if handling a negative issue. Adjust to the various unusual requests. Tonight: At a neighborhood haunt.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ A child or new friend behaves erratically. Though your immediate reaction could be negative, remember that you like challenges. You've got one! You might need to handle an important matter at work or with a parent. Tonight: Order in.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ The Moon in your sign invigorates you and sends you in a new direction. Be willing to try something different. Flex with the unexpected, and you will gain. Nothing is black and white, even if you feel comfortable with that type of thinking. Tonight: Whatever you want.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Serious discussions surround money and possibly feelings. A partner might be cold, withdrawn or stern. You could try to approach this person differently or with a different mind-set. Tonight: Some time off just for yourself.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Remain goal-directed. Enlist a couple of friends for advice, support or help. Someone close to you might be remote and touchy. You pull the wild card financially. Lady Luck might be in your pocket. Tonight: Gather with friends.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ You are unpredictable because you are tired. Others seem to make demands left and right. Be direct about what you can do. If you feel overwhelmed, say so. People will pitch in. Consider taking a day off. Tonight: A must appearance.



Santa Monica Daily Press

Published Monday through Saturday

Phone: (310) 458-PRESS (7737) • Fax: (310) 576-9913

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Historic Davies estate on display

By Daily Press staff

A piece of Santa Monica history is on display at the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum.

The museum is hosting a free exhibit reception and lecture on its current exhibit, “Marion Davies Estate,” on Sunday, Jan. 8

Marion Davies began her acting career on Broadway and her first film was “Runaway Romany” at 20 years old.

Davies became the most promoted actress through William Randolph Hearst’s newspaper empire, and during the 1920s, she appeared in 29 films. In the early 1920s, she and Hearst moved their company, Cosmopolitan Productions, to California. By 1930, Hearst had built Davies the grandest estate on the “gold coast” of Santa Monica beach.

The museum’s exhibit features historic photographs of Davies and her estate’s five elaborately decorated buildings, landscaping and swimming pool from the Bison Archives.

Marc Wanamaker, founder of Bison Archives and professional consultant on motion pictures, will give a lecture on the history of Davies and her glamorous life at the estate.

The city of Santa Monica is in the process of revitalizing 415 PCH, where the estate is located. A grant from the Annenberg Foundation has made it possible to preserve the location as a public beach facility for the enjoyment of many generations to come. The city’s director of community and cultural services, Barbara Stinchfield, and Jessica Cusick, cultural affairs manager, as well as John Berley with Fred Fisher and partners will be on hand to provide an overview and to discuss the ways the layered history of the site will come alive in the final project.

The exhibit will run from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., with the lecture beginning at 2:30 p.m. The museum is located at 1539 Euclid St. in Santa Monica. For more information, call (310) 395-2290.



Photos courtesy
Marc Wanamaker (right)



SNOW AND SURF REPORTS

CONDITIONS

DATA PROVIDED BY ONTHESNOW.COM

BEAR MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12"-12"	LIFT HOURS 8:00am - 4:00pm	RUNS OPEN 8	LIFTS OPEN 9/12
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CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Made, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed, Thin Cover

JUNE MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 24" - 36"	LIFT HOURS 8:30am - 4:00pm	RUNS OPEN 35	LIFTS OPEN 6/16
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CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed, Obstacles

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 72" - 96"	LIFT HOURS 8:30 am - 4 pm	RUNS OPEN 150	LIFTS OPEN 12/26
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CONDITIONS: Powder, Packed Powder, Machine Groomed

MOUNTAIN HIGH

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 8"-10"	LIFT HOURS 8:00 am - 10:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 10	LIFTS OPEN 8/16
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CONDITIONS: Loose Granular, Frozen Granular, Thin Cover

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SNOW SUMMIT

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12"-12"	LIFT HOURS 8:00 am - 9:30 pm	RUNS OPEN 8	LIFTS OPEN 8/13
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CONDITIONS: Packed Powder, Machine Groomed, Hard Packed, Thin Cover

SNOW VALLEY

NEW SNOW (24 Hrs) 0"	BASE DEPTH 12"-12"	LIFT HOURS 8:00 am - 9:00 pm	RUNS OPEN 5	LIFTS OPEN 5/11
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CONDITIONS: Machine Made, Machine Groomed

CONDITIONS

WATER TEMP: 59°

DATA PROVIDED BY WETSAND.COM

SWELL FORECAST (8-14 FT)

Today is when our next NW swell is due. This is from a massive system we’ve been tracking since last week that originated off the Kamchatka Peninsula. Although this system was incredibly strong with 40+ foot seas in its fetch, this system remained at high latitudes of 40N+, thus increasing the angular spreading decay for SoCal-NCal will see less decay and will be much bigger.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS

Significant NW builds in Ncal today, hits SoCal Wednesday...

Significant NW swell hits New Years Day, and builds on 2nd...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

SATURDAY	LOW TIDE: 11:03PM HIGH TIDE: 4:15AM	2.0FT 4.4FT	9:38PM 4:06PM	1.7FT 3.0FT
SUNDAY	LOW TIDE: 11:56PM HIGH TIDE: 4:45AM	1.3FT 4.8FT	10:23PM 5:38PM	2.0FT 3.0FT
MONDAY	LOW TIDE: 12:39PM HIGH TIDE: 5:17AM	0.5FT 5.2FT	11:08PM 6:48PM	2.2FT 3.1FT
TUESDAY	LOW TIDE: 1:17PM HIGH TIDE: 5:50AM	-0.1FT 5.7FT	11:53PM 7:42PM	2.3FT 3.3FT
WEDNESDAY	LOW TIDE: 12:56PM HIGH TIDE: 6:27AM	-0.7FT 6.1FT	N/A 8:28PM	N/A 3.5FT
THURSDAY	LOW TIDE: 12:38AM HIGH TIDE: 7:07AM	2.3FT 6.5FT	2:36PM 9:11PM	-1.2FT 3.6FT
FRIDAY	LOW TIDE: 1:02AM HIGH TIDE: 7:39AM	1.7FT 5.9FT	3:04PM 9:40PM	-0.9FT 3.1FT

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The QLine

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There's a lot of issues facing Santa Monica and 2006 is shaping up to be a big year of changes. New leadership in the City Manager's office, a new homeless czar and a new president at SMC will all happen in January, as well as a major revamp on a city-wide plan that will shape development for the next 20 years here.

So this week Q-Line asks “What should the City Council’s resolutions be for 2006?”

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition. Please try to limit your comments to a minute or less. It might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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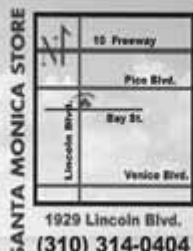
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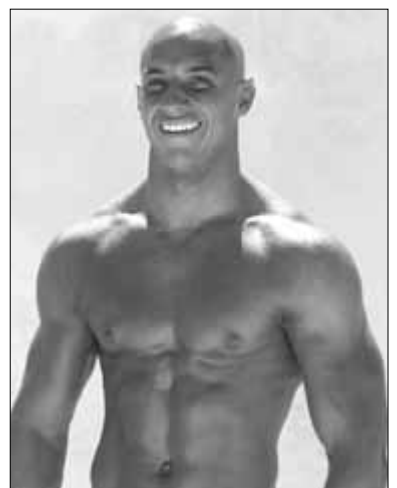
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OPINION

GUEST COMMENTARY BY JOHN W. WHITEHEAD

Government surveillance and intimidation

“As nightfall does not come at once, neither does oppression. In both instances there is a twilight where everything remains seemingly unchanged, and it is in such a twilight that we must be aware of the change in the air, however slight, lest we become unwitting victims of the darkness.”

— Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas

Not since the notorious McCarthy era of the 1950s, when American freedoms faced extinction, has there been such an attack against the Bill of Rights. The recent media focus on President Bush’s authorizing the National Security Agency to spy on ordinary Americans has brought this issue to the forefront. On secret orders from President Bush, the NSA has been monitoring the international phone calls and e-mails of Americans without warrants.

Moreover, the Bush Administration has consistently harassed citizens who exercise their First Amendment freedoms and voice concerns about government policies. The main weapon used in this war is intimidation, specifically through governmental surveillance and government agents.

Indeed, the American government has a near paranoia about dissenting citizens. “The Administration and campaign of George W. Bush,” writes former Congressman Bob Barr (R-Ga.), “is squelching any possible hint of disagreement or protest at every political rally or gathering.” For example, in March of this year, three citizens were removed from President Bush’s town hall meeting in Aurora, Colo., because the car they arrived in featured the bumper sticker, “No More Blood for Oil.”

This past summer, FBI agents went to Windsor, Conn., with a document marked for delivery by hand. On Matianuk Avenue, across from the tennis courts, two special agents found their man. They gave George Christian the letter, which warned him to tell no one — ever — what it said. The letter, which was on FBI stationery, directed Christian to surrender “all subscriber information, billing infor-

mation and access logs of any person” who used a specific computer at a library branch some distance away.

Christian, who manages digital records for three dozen Connecticut libraries, said in an affidavit that he configures his system for privacy. But the vendors of the software Christian operates said their databases can reveal the Web sites that visitors browse, the e-mail accounts they open and the books they borrow. Christian refused to hand over the records, and his employer, Library Connection, Inc., filed suit for the right to protest the FBI demand in public.

This case affords a rare glimpse of an exponentially growing practice of domestic surveillance under some of the heinous provisions of the USA Patriot Act. National security letters, such as the one issued to George Christian, were created in the 1970s for espionage and terrorism investigations.

They were originally intended as narrow exceptions in consumer privacy law, enabling the FBI to review in secret the customer records of suspected foreign agents. However, the Patriot Act and Bush Administration guidelines for its use have transformed those letters by permitting clandestine scrutiny of U.S. residents and visitors who are not alleged to be terrorists or spies.

“The FBI now issues more than 30,000 national security letters a year,” writes Barton Gellman in The Washington Post, “a hundredfold increase over historic norms. The letters — one of which can be used to sweep up the records of many people — are extending the bureau’s reach as never before into the telephone calls, correspondence and financial lives of ordinary Americans.” Indeed, according to a previously classified document released recently, the FBI has conducted clandestine surveillance on some U.S. residents for as long as 18 months at a time without proper paperwork or oversight.

Thus, the government does not limit its attacks to actual terrorists. Ordinary American citizens are the focus as well. Take the case of Selena Jarvis, a social

studies teacher at Currituck County High School in North Carolina. She assigned her senior civics and economics class to use photographs to illustrate their freedoms as found in the Bill of Rights. One student photographed a picture of George W. Bush next to his own hand in a thumbs-down position as a way to express his freedom to dissent.

However, while developing the student’s photographs, a Wal-Mart photo department employee, in obvious need of some education on the Bill of Rights, called the police. They then contacted the Secret Service. But rather than dismissing the case, the Secret Service decided to investigate the matter. The agents interrogated the student and questioned Jarvis. While questioning Jarvis, an agent asked her if she thought the photo was suspicious. Dumbfounded, Jarvis responded, “No, it was a Bill of Rights project!” Jarvis was startled at the claim that the student was a terrorist and called the whole thing “ridiculous.”

Why would the Secret Service, which is not run by incompetent individuals, take the time to investigate a high school student and his class project? It is safe to assume that the Secret Service knew the student was not a terrorist and wanted to make an example of him for others who might be bold enough to use their right to dissent. After the ordeal, Selena Jarvis commented, “I blame Wal-Mart more than anybody. I was really disgusted with them. But everyone was using poor judgment, from Wal-Mart up to the Secret Service.”

Unfortunately, this is not the only ridiculous case of individuals tattling on their neighbors. For example, Barry Reingold was questioned by the FBI after he criticized the war in Afghanistan in the locker room of his local health club. In another case, Derek Kjar’s neighbors reported his bumper sticker of George Bush wearing a crown with the heading “KING GEORGE — OFF WITH HIS HEAD.” As a result, Kjar was interrogated by the Secret Service. In both instances, close contacts of the two men reported them to the authorities.

Since 9/11, it has been consistently

drummed into our heads by the government, with all its alerts and multi-colored alarms, that terrorists are everywhere and even your next door neighbor could be one. As a result, the government’s promotion of fear and paranoia has moved us closer to an Orwellian state where citizens inform on one another. The result is that the citizens often do the job of the police and no longer use good judgment before reporting their neighbors. In the process, such informing citizens are doing away with their own freedoms.

These tactics are not new to the world. The Nazi and Soviet secret police of former regimes were infamous for such tactics. The police controlled the people through fear, and the subsequent result was a totalitarian state. They turned their respective population into a society of informers.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning author and former Soviet dissident, once spoke of how fear destroys the will of the people. He noted how the Russian people would kneel inside the doors of their apartments, pressing their ears to listen when the KGB came at midnight to arrest a neighbor who had spoken out against the government. Solzhenitsyn said that if all the people would have come out and driven off the secret police, sheer public opinion would have demoralized the effort to subdue a free people. But fear and paranoia kept the people at bay.

We should not be afraid of government agents, whether employed by the FBI, the military or local authorities. Their salaries are paid through our tax dollars. Supposedly, they are our servants. Truly free societies do not function that way. Our fear of government servants is a clear indication of ominous things to come. If citizens are too frightened to use their freedoms, then those freedoms will become extinct. And the darkness will be complete.

(Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead is founder and president of The Rutherford Institute. He can be contacted at johnw@rutherford.org.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A big holiday thanks

Editor:

With all the kvetching about whether we are celebrating Christmas or all of the holidays packed into these few weeks of winter, this Jew would like to thank the folks on the south side of Pine Street between 10th and 11th streets for lighting up their homes for one and all to enjoy.

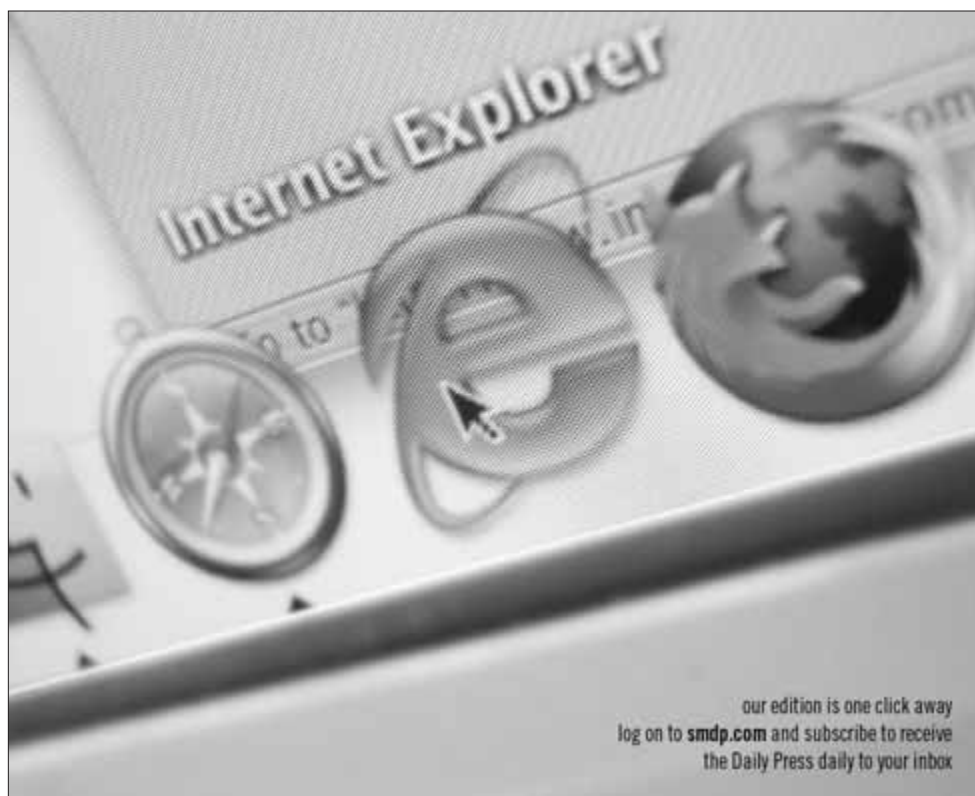
Josh Needle
Santa Monica

Too much pessimism

Editor:

I have never read words from such a depressing, negative individual as those I read in your paper from Ron Scott Smith’s “News On The Edge” column. Take some Prozac or something Ron, you are depressing and depressed. How one person can refuse to find good in anything is beyond me. Have a Merry Christmas and I don’t really care if it offends you to hear me say it.

Billy G. Woody
Santa Monica





Bluffs project to begin in November

BLUFFS, from page 1

neering consulting firm, was hired by City Hall for \$907,000 in April of 2005 to create the design plans for the Palisades Bluffs improvement project, sanctioned to reinforce the steep slopes that line the PCH.

The final design plans for the project are underway and the environmental impact report will likely be reviewed by the necessary government agencies early next year, officials said. After that, construction is expected to begin in November of 2006 and will be finished by May of 2007.

More than half of the \$11 million project is being paid for from federal sources. In 1998, Congress passed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, legislation intended to improve highway infrastructure and safety nationwide.

One of the high priority projects approved under the Transportation Equity Act was the Palisades Bluffs, known for its landslides caused by earthquakes and storms, officials said.

The first reported landslides along the bluffs were reported by stagecoach travelers in route between Santa Monica and Topanga Canyon in the 1870s and 1880s, according to Anthony Antich, an engineer for City Hall.

Antich told the council in April of 2004 that the bluffs over the years have suffered from several slides and "rim failures" — leaving debris covering the PCH. In the 1930s and 1950s, City Hall did some work to limit erosion of the bluffs, but Antich said the tunnels they drilled into the hillside to help drain ground water fell into disuse and are now inoperable.

The geotechnical study called upon more than 50 years of research material and highlighted several approaches to reinforce the bluffs, all with varying costs and impacts on residents and motorists.

The federal government has agreed to pitch in \$6.5 million toward the Palisades Bluffs improvement project, while an additional \$4.5 million that's needed will be paid by City Hall through funds from its re-development agency.

Councilman Kevin McKeown — who has previously showed concern about the eradication methods of ground squirrels at Palisades Park, believed to contribute to the erosion problem — said he hopes the bluffs improvement project will be successful in overall goals.

"Natural erosion created our bluffs, but putting a city atop them has created subterranean water flows that we hope to be able to mitigate," McKeown said. "Palisades Park is too important, and Pacific Coast Highway is too vulnerable."

BLUFFS REINFORCEMENTS DISCUSSED

Dave Britton, City Hall's civil engineer, said URS is incorporating a number of the recommendations suggested in the geotechnical study to reinforce the bluffs. These include: De-watering; surface treatment; soil-nailing; and some plant removal, he said.

"De-watering is probably one of the primary mitigation strategies to lessen potential for future landslides," Britton said. "It could include pipes that are drilled into the bluffs and then water gets into the pipes and is channeled away (from the Bluffs) into the storm water system."

Britton said a surface treatment will likely be sprayed onto the bluffs to stabilize it.

lize it.

"The stabilizing agent will be environmentally benign or a natural material that has been successfully used elsewhere," Britton said.

Another method is called soil nailing. That's when a plate, perhaps five feet in length, is cemented into the face of the bluff, near the edge, and painted to match it, Britton said. The plate is connected to rods drilled 50 to 100 feet inside the park and can be tightened to strengthen the soil.

Britton said non-native plants may be removed from the bluffs, because some of them increase erosion. The non-native plants will likely be replaced with those whose roots spread in a way that will help preserve the slopes.

The idea of paving over the crumbling rim to stabilize it — suggested in the geotechnical study — has been taken off the table, due to a lack of support from citizen groups, Britton said.

SQUIRRELS MAY ALSO ERODE SLOPE HOPES

Another idea recommended in the study — to remove the many ground squirrels that burrow in Palisades Bluffs and contribute to the erosion problem — may continue to occur, but that undertaking is separate from the Palisades Bluffs improvement project, Britton said.

LA County officials classify ground squirrels as communal rodents, many of which are believed to have fleas that carry the bubonic plague — a health risk to humans and other animals when a field inspection reveals there are more than three squirrels per acre visible above ground, said Gail VanGordon, a supervisor for the vector-born disease surveillance unit.

Exceeding this visual survey, VanGordon said the county conducted two in-depth inspections at Palisades Park last March, which revealed the number of below-ground burrows had increased from 46 to 146 in a matter of weeks. Since the ground squirrels frequently burrow together, that likely puts their number well into the hundreds, spread over a 1.5-mile stretch.

In August, the debate over how to deal with some 500 ground squirrels believed to have been holed up beneath Palisades Park reared its head again after a local group voted to continue eliminating the rodents at the county's request.

The Recreation and Parks Commission narrowly voted in favor of upholding a Los Angeles County Department of Health Services directive which would likely require the ground squirrels at Palisades Park continue to be killed in the future, in order to keep the rodent infestation at appropriate health levels.

Britton referred questions regarding the ground squirrel population control to City Hall's open space management division.

Representatives from City Hall's open space management division referred questions regarding ground squirrel population control to Judy Franz, City Hall's spokeswoman.

Franz, on vacation, was unavailable to comment.

McKeown said he doesn't believe the squirrels are contributing to the bluffs' erosion.

"Squirrels don't cause bluff failures, water flows do," McKeown said. "The killing of our squirrels by the county was about fleas, not flows."



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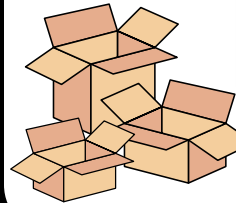
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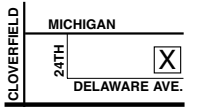
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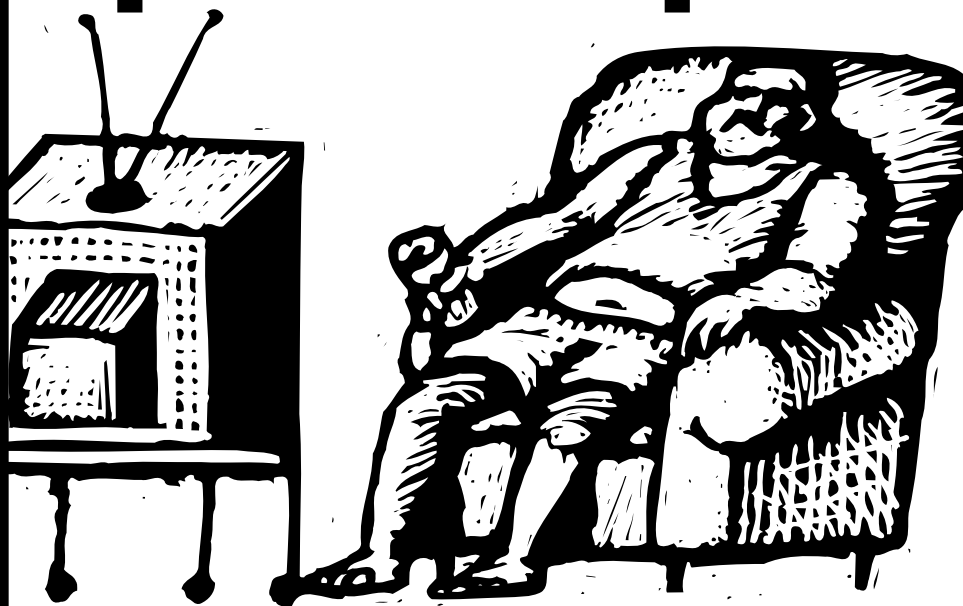
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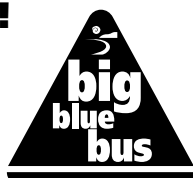


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No break in 2006 for California voters

VOTERS, from page 1

California is working," Baldassare said.

If lawmakers fail to take the initiative on major issues this year, Baldassare said, voters are "going to be looking to make changes in elected officials next year."

Only three incumbent statewide officeholders are seeking re-election: Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, school Superintendent Jack O'Connell and Secretary of State Bruce McPherson. That leaves five open offices, with Republicans' chances partly depending on how well Schwarzenegger appeals to independent and crossover voters in the Democrat-leaning state.

Two Democrats — state Treasurer Phil Angelides and Controller Steve Westly — will face off in the June primary for the right to campaign against Schwarzenegger. Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante, the only prominent Democrat who ran in the 2003 gubernatorial recall election, is likely to make a run for insurance commissioner.

Among legislators facing term limits and officeholders seeking a higher profile, the jockeying for the 2006 elections is like a game of political chess.

State Sen. Joe Dunn, for example, first announced he would run for attorney general, only to be pushed aside when Oakland mayor and former Gov. Jerry Brown said he would seek the office. Dunn, D-Santa Ana, then said he would run for state treasurer but was forced to change plans within days when Attorney General Bill Lockyer jumped into the race.

Dunn settled on controller, the only race without a well-known candidate.

"There's no question that you have to

balance one's wishes with reality in pursuing a career of long-term public service," Dunn said.

Four state senators are fighting for the Democratic nominations for lieutenant governor and secretary of state.

"This is the legacy of term limits — everybody against everybody else," said political analyst Sherry Bebitch Jeffe of the University of Southern California. "There's just no way of knowing how the election will shape up."

Voters have little hope of dramatically reshaping the state legislature, where both houses are controlled by Democrats. That means most races will be decided in the June primary.

Of the 100 legislative contests, 54 are for open seats where the incumbent is not running. Only eight of those are considered swing districts, four in the Senate and four in the Assembly. All but one of the eight seats lean Democratic.

Yet voters' rejection last month of Proposition 77, which would have stripped lawmakers of their power to draw their own political districts, indicates they may not be angered over the current political alignment, said Mark DiCamillo, director of the nonpartisan Field Poll.

Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders are now seeking a compromise redistricting method to put before voters. They also are pledging bipartisan cooperation, which would be a marked change from 2005, when the special election created a bitter atmosphere in Sacramento.

"There's a very brief window to get things done, and there's a lot of work to do, the way voters see it," O'Connor said. "They need to work on substantial projects — not itsy bitsy bills."

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Gay marriage opponents shift focus to November election or beyond

BY LISA LEFF

Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — One of the two groups competing to put a gay marriage ban before California voters in 2006 has bowed out of the fight for now, saying that it does not think the timing or political climate is right to get such a measure passed.

Tuesday was the deadline for ProtectMarriage.com, the sponsor of one of the overlapping initiatives, to submit the signatures needed to qualify for the June primary ballot a constitutional amendment that would have outlawed same-sex marriage and restricted domestic partnership rights in the state.

But Andrew Pugno, the group's legal adviser, said that after a five-month, volunteer-driven effort, the signature drive had fallen about 200,000 voters short of its 591,105 target. In addition, with only a four-month window in which to gather new names in time for November's general election, ProtectMarriage.com's leaders do not plan to circulate the backup petitions they filed with the state, according to Pugno.

Factors in the group's decision included the difficulty of raising money in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and last month's special election, the dimming prospect that the California Legislature will reconsider a bill legalizing gay marriage next year and a lawsuit on the issue that is not expected to reach the state Supreme Court until late in 2006.

"The absence of this obscures for voters the need to pass such a measure," Pugno said. "It boils down to a recognition that a ballot fight isn't likely until 2008. This doesn't resolve the issue by any means; it merely delays the resolution."

VoteYesMarriage.com, the other group seeking to have California join the 18 other states that have amended their constitutions to ban gay marriage, has not abandoned the hope of qualifying an initiative for next November, said organizer Randy Thomasson. But it has postponed launching its petition drive while raising money to hire professional signature-gatherers, he said.

"Whither for 2006 or 2008, VoteYesMarriage.com is devoted to giving the people the chance to protect marriage from the clutches of the bureaucracy," Thomasson said.

The uncertainty surrounding the proposed measures marked a significant departure from the rhetoric that surrounded the gay marriage debate in California last summer, when the Legislature became the nation's first elected state body to pass a bill legalizing gay marriages. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed the law, but conservative activists warned that without amending the Constitution it was only a matter of time before either lawmakers or the courts sanctioned same-sex unions.

A rare rift among conservatives, however, led the two groups to promote dueling gay marriage bans while sniping publicly over which proposal was better. At the center of the split was disagreement over how far the anti-gay marriage camp should go in attempting to repeal the significant spousal rights domestic partners are granted in California.

Polling conducted for ProtectMarriage.com by Harris Interactive last summer showed that while a majority of voters supported a gay marriage ban, there was much less support for taking away the rights domestic partners already have, Pugno said. The initiative being promoted by Thomasson's rival group explicitly states that those existing rights, which include being the assumed inheritor of a partner's estate, would be overturned if the amendment passed.

Given the public's continued support for domestic partnerships and the bad blood that developed between the two groups, ProtectMarriage.com's leaders won't join the other camp unless new polls show that its approach would work, Pugno said. Unless the two sides join forces, the chances of a gay marriage ban getting voted on next year are even more remote, he said.

"There is no hard evidence the VoteYesMarriage people have the ability to qualify a measure by themselves in terms of money or manpower," Pugno said.

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STATE BRIEFS

It's a dog eat dog world at LAX

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A creature care facility at Los Angeles International Airport helps animals overcome pet lag.

The Jet Pets shipping company handles a menagerie of animals in transit and in quarantine, from show horses to dogs and cats and even exotic creatures.

“I’ve shipped ostriches, everything. Ostriches are not fun. Kangaroos. We used to do a lot of lions,” Jet Pets’ David Hasenauer said. “We used to ship dolphins, have to hose them down. Sea lions.”

The Jet Pets kennels and stables stretch across the scrubby fields of an abandoned missile site near the airport.

It was Hasenauer’s father, Frank, who opened Jet Pets in the late 1960s. The airline worker saw animals sitting for hours in tiny crates. A few years later, the federal government approached the small company about housing animals during the quarantine required for international travel.

Shipping animals was easier in those days. Baby elephants came through so often that Hasenauer learned to feed them by hand. A shipment of surly chimps once stopped over on the way to a retirement park.

Pasadena coordinates animal disaster plans

By The Associated Press

SOUTH PASADENA, Calif. — Pets will now be part of the city’s disaster planning.

It was during January’s downpours and mudslides that a group of South Pasadena horse owners and volunteers got together to discuss animal evacuations during disasters. They all watched as a hillside collapsed onto two houses across the Arroyo Seco.

“If you could’ve heard that hillside coming down it was beyond scary. The horses were going nuts,” said Chemin Shapiro, who boards 35 horses in a barn behind her house.

A city Planning and Building Department engineer urged horse owners, as well as Shapiro’s potbellied pig, to move across the street to a city-owned baseball field. But police said they couldn’t be kept in the public park and the critters were moved to Shapiro’s property.

It was that lack of coordination, as well as troubles witnessed during Hurricane Katrina, that prompted South Pasadena’s Animal Commission to push for a city-wide animal evacuation plan.

It will likely catch on in other cities.

Assemblyman Leland Yee, D-San Francisco, said he would introduce legislation requiring cities take into account the “needs of individuals with household pets, service animals and livestock” in their disaster planning.

Yee’s office estimated fewer than half the counties in the state have animal rescue incorporated into disaster planning.

In South Pasadena, police and fire officials are working with the Animal Commission to develop a plan. The panel hopes to eventually establish a team of volunteer rescuers who would be responsible for leading all animals, from horses to house pets, to safer ground.

Taxis take ten percent more

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Taxicab meters are running higher.

A 10.2 percent cab fare increase went into effect last month in Los Angeles and there was a domino effect in other cities. West Hollywood and Burbank immediately pushed up cab rates to match Los Angeles.

Fares in Beverly Hills will rise next month and Culver City and Torrance, responding to requests from cab companies, are considering raising their fares as well.

Cabbies and taxi operators said the hikes were long overdue.

“We need to provide for drivers’ families,” said Nettabai Ahmed, president of the Independent Taxi Owners Association.

“Let’s say the guy puts in a 12-hour shift,” Ahmed said. “And if he makes, let’s say, \$170, that’s a good day for the cab driver. But he has to pay \$70 for the lease of the cab and some money for gas. If you divide it up by hours, it’s less than minimum wage. That’s why the increase is necessary.”

Not surprisingly, affected passengers aren’t pleased.

The higher fares mean each of Los Angeles’ 2,200 licensed cabs now charge \$2.20 to activate the meter, up from \$2. With the price per mile also at \$2.20, up 20 cents, a six-mile trip now costs \$15.20, up from \$13.80.

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Favorable weather improves Western avalanche outlook

BY JON SANCHE
Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Following a deadly avalanche season marked by two deaths within ski areas, forecasters around the West say favorable weather has kept the risk of slides relatively low so far this winter.

Even in Colorado, where the northern and central mountains have some of the deepest late-December snow levels in decades, warm weather has helped strengthen the bond between snow layers.

Still, forecasters are keeping a wary eye on the region, which includes such popular ski resorts as Aspen, Vail, Copper Mountain, Breckenridge and Steamboat Springs.

"We have small areas that have that weak foundation, but now it's buried very deeply," said Scott Toepfer, a forecaster with the Colorado Avalanche Information Center. "Our concern is that as the winter progresses we'll come to a point where we just get that last inch of snowfall and windblown snow, onto primarily north- and northeast-facing slopes, that will be the straw that breaks the camel's back."

Last season saw eight avalanche deaths in Utah, the highest number since record-keeping started in 1951. Colorado avalanches killed five, and four people were killed in Idaho slides. Nationally, there were 28 deaths

last season, according to the avalanche center.

That figure is about average. What was unusual about the winter of 2004-05 is that slides at Colorado's Arapahoe Basin in May and at Nevada's Mount Charleston in January killed one person each. In the previous 19 years, just three of the 416 known avalanche deaths in the nation were within ski area boundaries, according to the National Avalanche Center.

So far this season, the center said, the only two known avalanche fatalities in the United States have been in Colorado. One was a hiker on snowshoes; the other a backcountry snowboarder.

Recent warm weather and rain in central Idaho and other areas helped solidify deep snow from earlier storms.

"When we do lose buried, weak layers on the ground, that's one less thing to worry about," said Janet Kellam, director of the Sawtooth National Forest Avalanche Center in Ketchum, Idaho, near the Sun Valley resort. "In spite of rainy, crummy, gray days in Ketchum, we're actually quite pleased."

Utah forecasters were expecting more storms soon, bringing new snow quickly enough on the heels of previous snowfall to prevent the development of weak layers that could increase the avalanche danger, said Drew Hardesty, a forecaster for the Utah

Avalanche Center. "I think things are shaping up to be OK."

Colorado avalanche forecaster Spencer Logan said the avalanche danger around the state has eased since Sunday. But even in southwestern Colorado, which has had relatively low amounts of snow, there remains a risk for slides.

"The southern area has pretty shallow snowpack, and very strong winds the last couple of days stripped down a lot of mountain areas to bare ground," Logan said. "What snow is left is stacked up in pretty unstable configurations."

Ski resorts use regular patrols and tools including explosives to cause avalanches in controlled conditions.

Recent snow has been a boon to ski areas and backcountry tour operators, who work to make sure their clients understand the risks. That includes the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association, which makes 14 high-elevation shelters available to backcountry skiers via a network of about 350 miles of trails.

Executive director Ben Dodge said the group tries to match client experience levels with the terrain.

"Once people get to the hut and want to make turns on their own, we just hope they have good equipment and skills and know how to use them," Dodge said.

No love for out of bounds snowriders

By The Associated Press

KEYSTONE, Colo. — They tell gripping survival stories about pushing themselves to the limit as they spent nights in the cold and snow after getting lost, but Summit County Sheriff John Minor is not impressed with out-of-boundary snowriders.

In the past week he issued citations for Ski Safety Act violations, with \$300 fines to two snowboarders who got lost outside Keystone Resort's boundaries with violating the Ski Safety Act. He wants the fine to be more.

Sam Mason, 20, spent Friday night lost outside Keystone Resorts' boundary. Minor also issued citations, each which carries a \$300 fine, to Mason's companions who also allegedly ducked the boundary rope at the mountain.

"We have people now going into closed areas that might have gone into a closed area last year and they can't handle it," Minor said. "The snow is exceptionally deep. ... We heard reports during this rescue that there was 8 feet of snow back there."

John Ryan, a snowboarder from Erie who spent two nights in November in the Jones Gulch area before rescuers located him, also was fined \$300 last week.

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Real Estate

2005 a transitional year for real estate



DAYS ON THE MARKET

BY JODI SUMMERS

Our real estate market is in an interesting cycle. Prices in Los Angeles County have increased 15.4 percent in the last year, but the quantity of homes sold has dropped down 3.6 percent, according to DataQuick information services.

The buying frenzy has died down, and appreciation has dropped below 20 percent — so the real estate market is now easing in to a more comfortable, less frenetic stage. Buying property is now an easier process.

"... We are starting to see the 'soft landing' we have been expecting," declares California Association of Realtors Vice President and Chief Economist Leslie Appleton-Young. "The year-to-year decline in sales is not surprising, given the market was so strong in November 2004. Additionally, rising mortgage interest rates, which have moved above 6 percent over the last few months, contributed to the slowdown in sales."

For the record, CAR reports that the median price of an existing, single-family detached home in California during November 2005 was \$548,400, a 16.2 percent increase over November 2004. In Santa Monica, the median single-family detached home sale price is \$1,582,500, according to the most recent records by the Multiple Listing Service. The median price virtually halves to \$795,500 when you factor in condos. Reports show that in 2005, Santa Monica home sale prices have risen 13.8 percent from 2004. Across the country, the average U.S. home price climbed 12 percent over the last 12 months.

Information is confirming hearsay that our housing boom, which has gone on for the past five years is plateauing. Homes are staying on the market longer — close to four months this year, as compared to three last years — and sellers in some cases are cutting asking prices. Still, analysts feel that there is still enough demand in the market to keep prices from rolling over. Keep in mind that approximately 250,000 households move to Los Angeles each year, while new housing is built for 200,000.

"I don't see any signs of weakening," observed John Karevoll, DataQuick's chief analyst. "The market just isn't frenzied anymore."

The UCLA Anderson Forecast — con-

sidered to be one of the most accurate housing forecasters predicts that, "The California economy will probably experience sluggish growth in 2006 but should avoid a recession if, as expected, housing prices cool without crashing."

The forecast also cited the possibility of additional uncertainty when Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan retires in January after 18 years, leaving Ben Bernanke to steer the economy.

On Dec. 12, the Federal Reserve pushed the prime interest rate up to 4.25 percent — the highest level in four and a half years. This marks the 13th consecutive quarter-point move since the Fed began raising interest rates in June 2004, when the funds rate was at a 46-year low of 1 percent. Some analysts believe that the Fed will raise rates at least one more time by a quarter-point at Greenspan's last meeting as Fed chairman on Jan. 31.

The powers that predict real estate cycles don't seem to be worried about a downturn. The question in California is how long the current pace of property price increases can be sustained. Cynics were predicting that we would drop down to single digit appreciation in 2005. Now those same pundits are predicting it will happen 2006. Feel peaceful, no one is predicting price declines right now.

"Declining affordability will constrain sales in 2006 at a greater rate than we've previously experienced, especially in markets where there are higher price points compared with the state as a whole," said Appleton-Young. "Not all areas of the state will continue to experience the unprecedented double-digit median price increases of the past five years. Some high-cost areas, especially those in the more costly coastal regions, face a potential leveling off of median price gains compared with the 10 percent gain we expect for the state as a whole."

For the California real estate market to tank, the state and national economies would have to slow and there would have to be job losses to generate price declines. We saw those in the earlier '90s, but that was after nearly two decades of state governors (Nixon and Reagan) becoming president. Money that was coming to the West Coast for business development was moved to the south — land of the Bush clan, Bill Clinton and Al Gore. More on the impacts of a softening real estate market coming your way soon.

(Jodi Summers is director of the investment division at Boardwalk Realty Santa Monica. Contact her at jodis@boardwalkrealty.com, or call (310) 309-4219. Visit her community history Web site at www.santamonicalandmarks.com)

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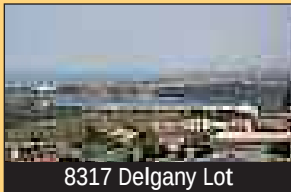
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Real Estate

Younger ethnic Hmong abandon their agricultural traditions

BY DAISY NGUYEN

Associated Press Writer

FRESNO, Calif. — There was a time when Fong Tching's four children worked the fields and accompanied him to the market to help sell their strawberries, eggplants, sugar cane and 60 other crop varieties.

But one by one, the kids are leaving the family business, going to college to pursue more lucrative professions in pharmaceuticals and engineering.

"It's just me and my wife working 30 acres by ourselves," said Tching, 45, surveying a field of ripened berries.

Tching is an ethnic Hmong, a tribe from the hills of Southeast Asia with agriculture in its blood. His children are among the first generation of Hmong in the United States that are not farming.

While no one is tallying how many younger ethnic Hmong are abandoning tradition, leaders in the immigrant community and agriculture industry observers say the trend is striking.

It is a familiar pattern among immigrant farmers — the number of Japanese-American farm laborers who first came to the state in the early 1900s dwindled after World War II.

"They grew up and saw the toughness of farming, their parents working year-round, and they saw that hard labor don't necessarily pay off," said Manuel Cunha, president of Nisei Farmers League. The Fresno-based group was founded in 1971 by second-generation Japanese-American farmers, but most of its 1,000 current members have no Japanese ancestry, Cunha said.

For the Hmong, the same kind of shift means a loss of tradition that dates back centuries. The ethnic group subsisted on farming across generations of migration, until many of the men were recruited by the United States to fight communists during the Vietnam War.

After the communists won in 1975, about 44,000 Laotians, mostly Hmong, fled to camps in Thailand, according to an analysis by the Washington, D.C.-based Migration Policy Institute.

Many Hmong in Southeast Asia continue farming. Those who came to the United States have settled primarily in California, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The 2000 Census counted 102,773 Hmong, roughly 30,000 in the Fresno area.

Tching said he immediately rented farm land when he came to Fresno in 1988. The work allows freedom — "You're your own boss," he says — but requires long

hours. On Fridays, he and his wife often work into the night packing vegetables, sleep for three hours, then make the three-hour drive to a farmers' market in the San Francisco Bay area.

"When I came here, I didn't have a chance to go to school. What I knew was farming, so that's what I did to raise my family," Tching said. "I don't blame them for not wanting this hard life."

Even one of the most successful Hmong farmers in the area says his children don't plan to inherit the business. The kids don't want to deal with the challenges of farming in California, including the high costs of insurance, water and labor, along with rising competition from imported crops.

"I work from 6 a.m. to midnight everyday. If I divide my salary, I'm making \$3.50 an hour," said Tzexa Lee, co-owner of Cherta Farms, which ships Asian vegetables. "My children tell me 'You're poorer now than when we were born.'"

Michael Yang is an example of a Hmong who came of age in the United States and didn't follow his parents into the fields. Instead Yang, who came to the country at age 9, went to college in Northern California and came back to Fresno as a farm adviser, rather than a laborer.

Hmong have struggled to learn new farming techniques and adhere to state regulations, said Yang, whose job at the University of California Cooperative Extension Service is to reach out to the roughly 1,000 Asian-owned family farms in Fresno County and help them better manage and market their crops. He also runs a popular radio show on which Hmong callers exchange farming news and advice.

The majority of Hmong who came to California's Central Valley are farming on a small scale, Yang said, growing exotic crops such as Bok choy, Daikon radishes, bitter melon and yard-long Chinese string beans.

There is a growing demand for such vegetables. In 2004, "Oriental vegetables" accounted for \$15.7 million in sales, according to the Fresno County agricultural commissioner's office, up from \$10.3 million the year before.

Community leaders say they're glad to see young Hmong pursuing higher-paying jobs, but say they're troubled by the idea that the next generation doesn't consider farming a professional option.

"They don't realize that they can expand their parents' business and operate it like a real company," said LoXing Kiatoykaysi, director of Hmong American Community, a Fresno-based community support organization.



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NATIONAL



Aging execs stretch their limits by running marathons

BY TOM MCGHEE
Associated Press Writer

SUPERIOR, Colo. — Newmerix CEO Ed Roberto lives and breathes his job — except when he takes time out of an otherwise breakneck work schedule to train 20 hours a week for his next marathon.

With his 46th birthday looming, he plans to go beyond that 26.2-mile race, pushing his training schedule to get in shape for the gut-wrenching 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile marathon of an Ironman triathlon race.

"I need to be in a place where I can do that by the time I am 50," he said.

Roberto, whose Superior, Colo.-based company — located about 20 miles northwest of Denver — makes business software, is out of bed at 5 a.m. for a three- to five-mile run. After work, he hits the gym for two hours, either running on a treadmill or cross-training on weights.

In between, he is on the phone with customers, prospects, prospective employees, investors and others, along with writing e-mails and quizzing his engineering team about product development. He ends his day at 11 p.m. after spending two hours reviewing e-mails and reading work-related articles.

"I am pretty much working all the time. Work is part of my DNA. I enjoy it so, I don't even know that I think of it as work," he said.

His driven lifestyle has its drawbacks. Roberto blames the collapse of his six-year marriage partly on his addiction to 12- to 18-hour workdays.

Boulder, Colo., entrepreneur Ted Kennedy has never met Roberto, but he knows the type. He has built a business, CEO Challenges, which gives executives the kind of kid-glove treatment they're used to while taking part in endurance competitions. The culmination of Kennedy's Ironman events is the CEO Ironman Challenge World Championship, whose participants vie for the title "Fittest CEO in the World."

He takes care of everything from providing first-class accommodations close to the starting line to getting the executives customized racing uniforms, setting up head-to-head meetings with top coaches, and providing social functions and dinners that allow them to mix and network.

And like all individualized services, competing in Kennedy's contests doesn't come cheap. Prices can range from \$3,000 to \$6,000 per event, with airfare not included.

The CEO Challenges are run in conjunction with major racing events like the Ford Ironman USA in Lake Placid, N.Y., scheduled for July 2006 and the Ironman France, to be held in the French Riviera town of Nice in June. Among the perks at the Nice event is a pre-race helicopter tour of the course and bilingual hosts who will be "dedicated to looking after the (chief executive officer's) needs all week," according to the CEO Challenges Web site. The price is \$5,909.

Kennedy found his niche when he was selling sponsorships for Ironman North America.

"I did a database search of everyone in Ironman races, and I noticed an amazing number of the athletes put down their occupation as CEO or president," he said.

"CEOs are basically overachievers. These are people who have never let anything stand in their way, and they like to set high-stretch goals."

For CEOs who prefer golf to marathons, Kennedy recently added a CEO Golf Challenge, which is paired with Professional Golfers' Association events where

CEOs get to play with pro golfers. CEO Challenge at The Masters in April will cost up to \$12,000 apiece.

Top executives fit the profile of the Type A personality — they are energetic, hard workers who are often pre-occupied with schedules and driven to accomplish their goals, no matter the obstacles, said Barbara Kellerman, research director for the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and author of "Bad Leadership: What It Is, How It Happens, Why It Matters."

"We are not talking about laid-back marshmallows here."

In youth-obsessed America, it makes sense for business leaders, who must win the confidence of shareholders, board members and customers, to stay toned and have the look of a winner, Kellerman said.

Though there is no sure way to quantify the numbers, the ranks of high-level executives attracted to marathons appears to be growing, said Amby Burfoot, executive editor of Runner's World magazine.

"Particularly as a younger group of CEOs begins to assume the mantle, there is a slight shift away from golf or tennis to sports like marathons or triathlons," said Burfoot, who has observed the running world for more than 28 years.

Burfoot said all indications point to an increase in the number of women in high-ranking positions who are competing in marathons.

Women accounted for just 28 percent of participants in races of all distances 12 years ago but now make up 52 percent of participants, according to the Web site RunningUSA.org. And though just a handful of female CEOs head Fortune 500 companies, women hold more than half of all professional and management positions, according to Catalyst, a New York nonprofit that tracks the progress of women executives.

Top executives make up the bulk of customers buying fitness exams, nutrition advice and weight-management programs provided at the nationally respected Cooper Institute in Dallas. Marathon training programs, which were once confined to the ranks of serious athletes, are now readily available to the average person, according to institute medical director Tim Church.

Most CEOs with whom he deals begin training because they want to lose weight, improve their health, relieve stress or even look better, Church said.

"These are people who are data-driven. They look around, and if they are getting older, they are looking at who are the successful agers, and the data is overwhelming that being physically active supports successful aging. It is simple logic for them," Church said.

Once they start running, they are enticed by others who say: "Hey, have you ever done the marathon?" Church added. "It probably only takes two or three people to say that to the average CEO, who is by nature a competitive person, for him to say, 'Hey, I am going to run a marathon.'"

That drive shows in the questions the executives ask at the Cooper Institute, Church said.

"They always have laser-sharp questions, and they want a very focused, definitive answer. It will be, 'How much resistance training should I do,' and they won't take 'one or two days a week' as an answer."

"They want to know down to the minute. They want to know, 'Should I incorporate yoga into my program and if so, how many days? How hot should the room be? Then they get upset when I say, 'This is our best guess.'"

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Santa Monica Daily Press





Defining dish of the 1950s lives on, grows in popularity

BY JEFF BARNARD

Associated Press Writer

BEND, Ore. — Growing up in Texas, chef Gavin McMichael used to ask his mom to make meatloaf for his birthday each year. Now that he has his own restaurant, meatloaf is on the menu, along with quail stuffed with foie gras.

"I was a huge fan, so of course I had to have meatloaf on my dinner menu," said McMichael, a partner in the Blacksmith restaurant in one of the fastest-growing sections of Oregon. "We are creating foodies as fast as we can. Then they want to try things like foie gras."

Mom made meatloaf to stretch the food budget. Dad ate it because it tasted good, especially with lots of ketchup. Now baby boomers are ordering it in restaurants. Meatloaf may not be tops on the healthy food list, though it can certainly be made that way with lean meats and lots of veggies. But this comfort food that became an American staple during the Depression is hanging on, growing up and branching out.

"It has graduated from diner food into restaurant food," while remaining a home-cooking staple, said Andrew Smith, editor in chief of the "Oxford Encyclopedia of American Food and Drink," from his

Brooklyn, N.Y., home. "It is real American food. It is something that is part of our early lives and part of our heritage."

Meatloaf comes out of the late 19th century, when meat grinders became popular, said Lynne Olver, editor of the Web site Foodtimeline.org. The 1884 "Boston Cooking School Cookbook" has recipes for ground veal mixed with breadcrumbs and eggs, baked in small individual molds.

"A big old loaf of meat would violate the American Victorian sense of decorum," she said.

The word meatloaf appears regularly in The New York Times in the 1930s and 1940s, when the Depression and World War II made stretching food dollars imperative. But it was the 1950s when America embraced meatloaf.

"I have cookbooks from the '50s with all sorts of filled meatloaf, gourmet meatloafs, meatloaf for the grill," Olver said.

James E. McWilliams, assistant professor of history at Texas State University at San Marcos and author of "A Revolution in Eating, How the Quest for Food Shaped America," sees meatloaf's roots in scrap-ple, a mixture of ground pork and cornmeal made by German-Americans in Pennsylvania since Colonial times.

"It's a food that's quite consistent with

an American attitude," McWilliams said. "It is so open to interpretation and flexible. Its origins are humble."

President Reagan was a famous fan, and writer Jean Shepherd included family battles over meatloaf in the movie "A Christmas Story." Little brother Randy declares he hates meatloaf, and The Old Man threatens to use a screwdriver and plumber's helper to get some down him.

Chicago piano salesman and sometime food writer Lee Maloney grew up loving his mom's meatloaf, and kept looking for something that would measure up when he traveled the country as music director for various circuses and ice shows.

Most of the stuff he found in diners and truck stops was awful, but circus friends made marvelous variations. A Czech trapeze act made it with hard-boiled eggs in the middle. Others baked whole tomatoes, gherkins, sausage, stuffing and foie gras baked inside. But the closer to Mom's the better.

"My parents have long been gone, but it brings back very fond memories of coming home after school, and eating meatloaf, mashed potatoes and creamed corn," said Maloney.

About 10 years ago, cookbook author David Rosengarten started seeing meatloaf tarted up with wine sauces in New

American Cuisine restaurants, but now finds it in neighborhood bistros, where it is treated with respect in the classic style, with ketchup.

Competing with New York steak and seared scallops, meatloaf is one of the top entrees at the Bandon Dunes Golf Resort in Bandon, on Oregon's coast, where golfers fly in from around the world to walk as many as 36 holes in a day.

All that walking makes people hungry, and if they are staying over a few days, they also want something familiar, said executive chef Don McCradic.

At the Blacksmith restaurant, McMichael mixes ground beef and pork with eggs, cream, roasted tomato puree, poblano chilies, shallots, garlic, onion and Japanese breadcrumbs. He bakes individual loaves in cylinders, and serves them with a tomato sauce, mashed potatoes, green bean-carrot-and-onion saute, and creamed corn.

Smith said he expects meatloaf to keep going strong. His kids like it, and the reasons it became popular — low cost and good taste — remain.

"It's very good wholesome, nutritious food, depending what you put into it," he said. "And I like my way better than in the restaurant. Because it's my way and reminds me of what my mother made."

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INTERNATIONAL



Protesters call for national unity government in Iraq

BY JASON STRAZIUSO

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — More than 10,000 people backing Sunni Arab and secular Shiite politicians marched through Baghdad on Tuesday in support of a national unity government. Attacks on security forces continued, with five Iraqi police and two bystanders killed.

Shootings and bombings killed at least two dozen people, including a U.S. soldier, on Monday, underscoring the end to a lull in violence following the Dec. 15 parliamentary elections.

Officials said insurgents were trying to deepen the political turmoil surrounding the contested vote. Preliminary figures have given a big lead to the religious Shiite bloc that controls the current interim government.

The fresh violence came as three opposition groups threatened a wave of protests and civil disobedience if fraud charges are not properly investigated. The warning came from the secular Iraqi National List, headed by former Shiite Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, and two Sunni Arab groups.

More than 10,000 people, some carrying photos of Allawi, demonstrated in Baghdad in favor of a government that would give more power to Sunni Arabs and secular Shiites. Marches chanted "No Sunnis, no Shiites, yes for national unity."

"We're protesting to reject the elections fraud. We want to ask the government and the elections commission: 'Where did our votes go? Who stole them?'" said Abdul Hamid Abdul Razza, a 45-year-old barber.

Clashes erupted between gunmen and Iraqi police in Baghdad, killing two policemen and two bystanders, Capt. Firas Ketani said. South of Baghdad, a roadside bomb targeting a police patrol killed two officers, and gunmen in southern Baghdad killed another, police said.

The U.S. military said two U.S. pilots died in a helicopter accident in western Baghdad Monday night. The accident was under investigation; the military said no hostile fire was involved.

Iraq's Electoral Commission said Monday that final results for the 275-seat parliament could be released in about a week.

Sunni Arab and secular Shiite factions are demanding that an international body review more than 1,500 complaints, warning they may boycott the new legislature. They also want new elections in some provinces, including Baghdad. The United Nations has rejected an outside review.

"We will resort to peaceful options, including protests, civil disobedience and a boycott of the political process until our demands are met," said Hassan Zaidan al-Lahaibi of the Sunni-dominated Iraqi Front for National Dialogue. He spoke in neighboring Jordan, where representatives of the groups have met in recent days.

The election commission considers 35 of the complaints serious enough to change some local results. But Farid Ayar, a commission official, said there was no reason to cancel the entire election.

He also said preliminary results from early votes by soldiers, hospital patients, prisoners and overseas Iraqis showed a coalition of Kurdish parties and the main Shiite religious bloc each taking about a third. Those nearly 500,000 votes were not expected to alter overall results significantly.

Preliminary results previously released gave the United Iraqi Alliance, the religious Shiite coalition dominating the current government, a big lead — but one unlikely to allow it to govern without forming a coalition with other groups.

Bahaa al-Araji, a member of the Shiite alliance, said the group was preparing to negotiate with other political blocs and had already met with the Sunni Arab Iraqi Islamic Party.

Al-Araji also said likely candidates for prime minister were current Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, who heads the Islamic Dawa party, and Adel Abdul-Mahdi, who belongs to the other main Shiite party, the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

Every defining event in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 has been followed by a period of calm. That includes the June 28, 2004, transfer of power from the U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority, the Jan. 30 elections, and the Oct. 15 constitution referendum.

The recent lull in violence ended Sunday, with the deaths of 18 people.

On Monday, a suicide car bomber slammed into a police patrol in the capital, leaving three dead, officials said. The driver of a motorcycle blew himself up at Shiite funeral ceremony, killing at least two, said Maj. Falah Mohamadawi of the Interior Ministry. A mortar then killed two people in a predominantly Shiite neighborhood.

Four other car bombs killed at least two people, and gunmen killed five officers at a police checkpoint 30 miles north of Baghdad, officials said.

A U.S. soldier serving with Task Force Baghdad was killed when a rocket-propelled grenade hit his vehicle while on patrol in the capital, the military said.

In Jordan, a lawyer for Saddam and a Jordanian newspaper claimed Monday that the former ruler's half brother rejected a U.S. offer of a ranking Iraqi government position in exchange for testimony against the deposed leader.

The half brother, Barzan Ibrahim, reportedly made the claim Thursday before the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Court hearing the cases against him, Saddam and six other co-defendants for the deaths of more than 140 Shiites after a 1982 attempt on Saddam's life in the town of Dujail.

The lawyer spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to give details of the closed session.

Dulaimi and U.S. officials were not immediately available for comment Monday, which was a U.S. holiday. But chief prosecutor Jaafar al-Mousawi denied that there were attempts to cut a deal with Ibrahim during the closed session.

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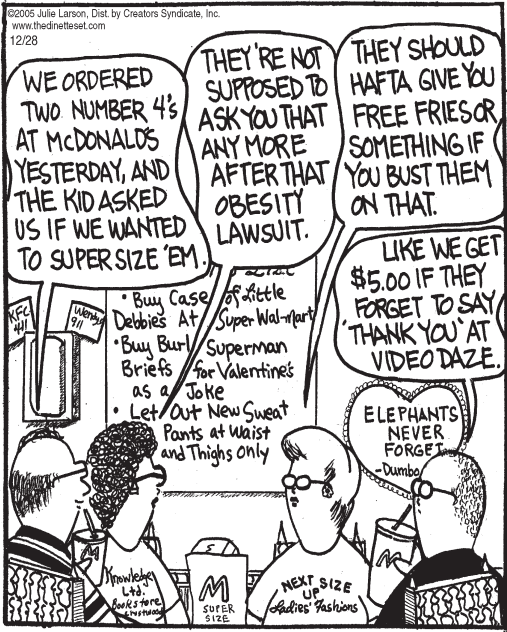
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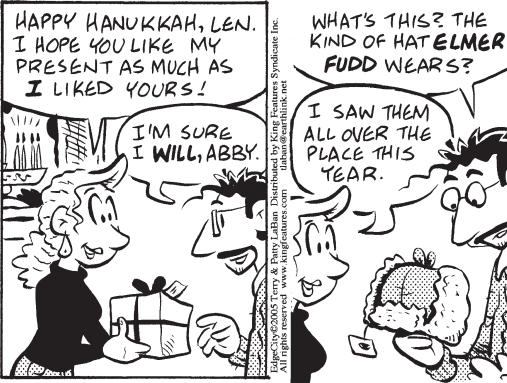


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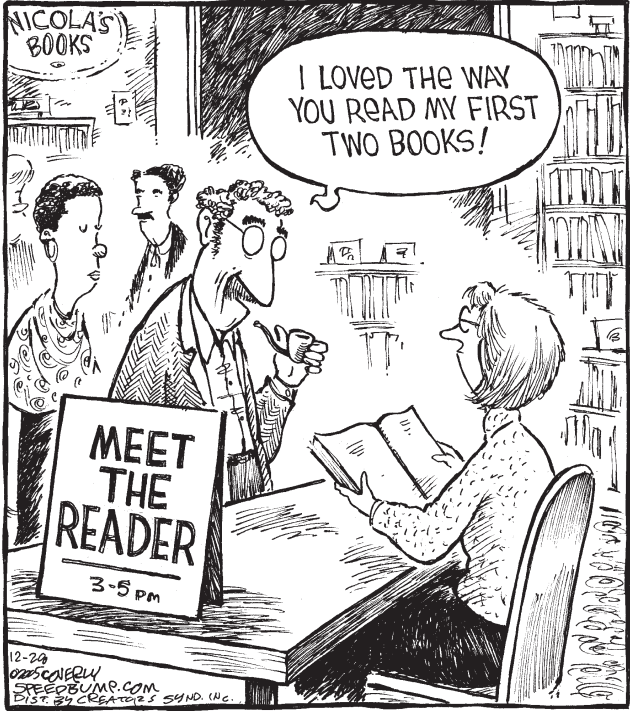
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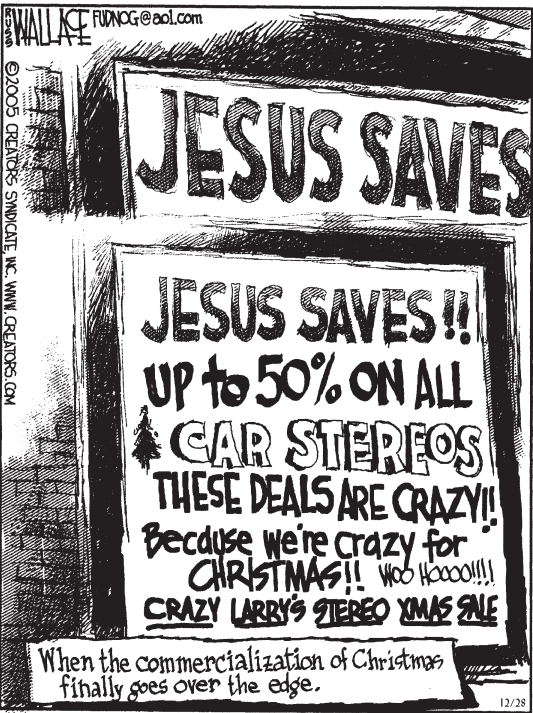
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