FREE

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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Ross Furukawa/Daily Press

12-year-old Adam Ho plays to a crowd of people Friday on the Third Street Promenade.

Proposal could lead to disabled access for homes in Santa Monica

BY GISELE DURHAM
Associated Press Writer

The push to increase the mobility of disabled people could hit home under a proposal that may require new houses or those undergoing major renovation in Santa Monica to be built with accessibility features for the handicapped.

If adopted, it would be the first such mandatory building code in the nation covering privately built homes, and would burnish a reputation for socially conscious lawmaking that long ago earned the city the moniker "People's Republic of Santa Monica."

Opponents criticize the idea as another intrusion into the private domain and an additional expense that would further push home prices out of more people's range.

Advocates see it as progressive and pragmatic in a nation of aging baby boomers.

"In a forward thinking society, it would be nice for someone to be able to ask everyone into their home, or still be able to live there comfortably despite having suffered a debilitative disease or accident," said Alan Toy, 51, who had polio as a child and uses a wheelchair or crutches.

The measure may include such requirements for homes as a no-step entrance in the front or rear of a house, hallways that are at least 36 inches wide, wheelchair accessible routes through first floors, and doorways at least 32 inches wide.

"In a forward thinking society, it would be nice for someone to be able to ask everyone into their home, or still be able to live there comfortably despite having suffered a debilitative disease or accident."

— ALAN TOY
Disabled Santa Monica resident

It could also go further and include provisions such as installing electrical controls and thermostats to be placed at wheelchair-

See DISABLED, page 3

Not another New Year's with no plans

BY NINA DAVIS
Special to the Daily Press

Four days left and I am still not sure what to do New Year's Eve.

I have a great outfit (I think), I know which friends I want to be with, but have no ideas as to what to do.

So today being Friday and having the time, I started calling all the local Santa Monica and Venice restaurants to see what is being offered. Here is a list of restaurants that will be open and their phone numbers.

The top two personal picks are: A luau with grass skirts and a volcano at James Beach Restaurant (310) 823-5396 or Typhoon (310) 390-6565 at the Santa Monica Airport for a night of dinner and dancing. But then again, there is always The Globe which is going to have jugglers and magicians, or ....

See NEW YEARS, page 3

Local police warn of New Year's Eve gunfire

By Daily Press staff

You had better duck and cover when the clock strikes midnight on New Year's, or you could be killed with a stray bullet.

The ritual of shooting firearms on New Year's Eve may have started in Mexico, but it has moved into the Los Angeles area in the last decade, as well as across the country.

"It's outrageous and it shouldn't be," said LAPD spokesman Jack Richter. "It's just stupid."

Dozens of people die each year from stray bullets and authorities this week warned against firing guns into the air, saying such acts would be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

"It's a problem in Los Angeles County," said Santa Monica Police Lt. Frank Fabrega. "If you are here in Santa Monica, you will hear 10 to 15 minutes of gunfire."

"It's outrageous and it shouldn't be. It's just stupid."

— JACK RICHTER
LAPD spokesman

Last year, stray bullets killed one man and wounded five others in the county, including a 10-year-old boy. Discharging a firearm into the air is a felony and punishable by one year in

See GUNFIRE, page 3

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- Subway
- Lazey Daisey
- Chevron
- Jiffy Lube
- Tom's #1 Family Restaurant
- Yoshinoya Beef Bowl
- Santa Monica Car Wash
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- Eddie's Liquor
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Scorpio, go out and see a movie

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★★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★-Positive ★★★-Average ★★-So-so ★-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Use the morning to clear out calls and errands. Mellow yourself through physical activity. By afternoon, you can put your feet up, swap jokes with your friends or whatever else might appeal to you. An older relative or associate makes an appeal, which is also a compliment. Tonight: Home is your castle.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Balance your checkbook after recent expenses. You will feel better knowing your limit. Later, hook up with friends, relatives or a loved one. Extremes mark your emotions and, hence, your actions. Don't worry anymore, just enjoy those who are in your life. Tonight: Discuss New Year's resolutions.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ You bloom this morning, ready to greet others or handle any matter you need to. Relax more, if possible. Friends surround you, making it possible to let the good times roll. Enjoy a special person in your life or, rather, let this person dote on you. Tonight: Be someone's love object.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Lie low this morning. If you can, sleep in or maybe curl up with a good book. By afternoon someone invites you out. Getting together with friends or a loved one uplifts your spirit as well as those of others around you. A spontaneous party begins before you know it. Tonight: Beam in whatever your heart desires.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Use the morning for your errands and social needs. A loved one does the unexpected. Extremes mark a situation. Act on your feelings and express your nurturing qualities this afternoon. Spending the afternoon with someone just might be a beginning. Tonight: Continue playing it low-key.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Take your time with a decision involving work and commitments. Though you might be surprised by what someone requests, you are pleased in another way. Indulge a loved one, doing what he or she wants most. If single, go on the prowl! Join friends. Tonight: Out and about.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Reach out for someone at a distance. Your understanding allows both of you more spontaneity and flexibility. Make plans in the morning. Think about what you want to do with an older relative. Plan a get-together. Visit with each other. Tonight: Be a lead player.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Be more forthright with someone who cares a lot about you. A surprise delights others and you. Discussions open doors. You understand a loved one better when he or she shares more. It is a mutual process. You need to open up, too. No longer be the secretive Scorpio! Tonight: Movie time!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Someone whips you into their stuff, with a fun disclosure early on. You enjoy this person a lot. Do more sharing and talking together. You're building a relationship on strong foundations. Do for each other, making the most of the moment. Tonight: You don't have to tell everyone!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Listen to someone you deal with frequently. A surprise could knock on your door when you least expect it. Allow more fun into your life by showing your sunny and fun side. Give up being so somber. Play away. Everyone needs to be a kid again once in awhile. Tonight: Accept someone's invitation.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ You find the answer or the solution, surprising even yourself! Whether you're working on a puzzle or dealing with a real-life situation, you succeed. Relax in the later afternoon, as someone might tap into your energy later. You'll want to be there for this person. Tonight: Keep a matter hush-hush.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Stay still while you absorb information. Something might upset you when you least expect it. Follow through on someone's request later on. Bring others together, enjoying the flavor of the day. A spontaneous party ensues as a result. Tonight: Get ready for a long night!

WEATHER

Today ... Rain with a high 61°F. Winds from the south at 7mph.

Tonight ... Rain with a low of 50°F. Winds from south at 3mph.

Tomorrow ... Mostly cloudy High—63°F Low—50°F

QUOTE of the DAY

"Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent."

— Eleanor Roosevelt

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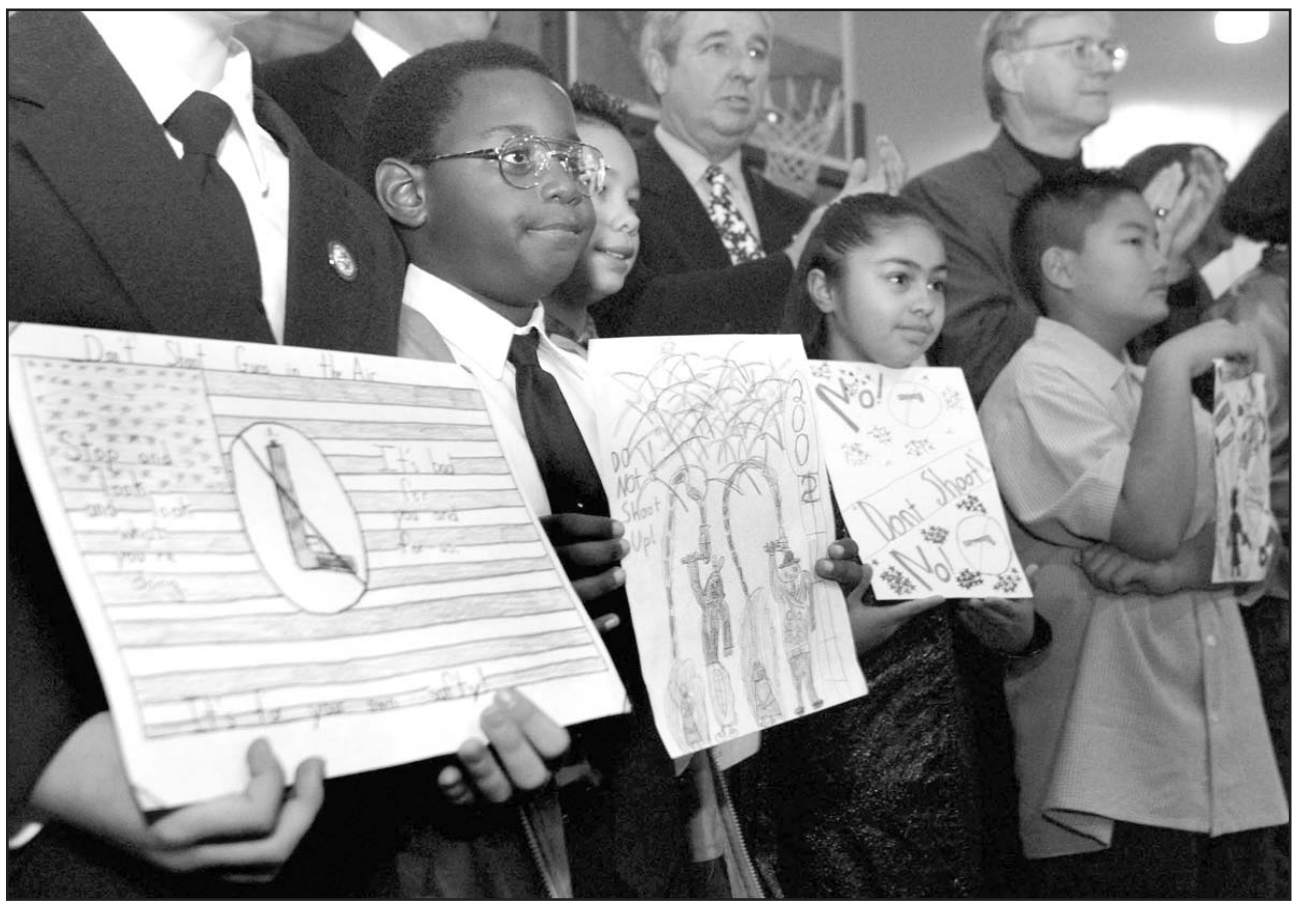
LOCAL

Gunfire on New Year's Eve can be dangerous



Associated Press

Young finalists of the Los Angeles Police and county sheriff's departments, "Gunfire Reduction Campaign," including 7-year-old Noble Gray, second from left, display their work Friday during a ceremony at the LAPD police academy in Los Angeles. The campaign has been established to persuade New Year's celebrants from shooting firearms into the air.

GUNFIRE, from page 1

state prison. If someone dies as a result of the bullet, the shooter will be charged with murder.

"That bullet can literally travel for blocks. In all honesty, they travel faster when they are coming down."

— POLICE LT. FRANK FABREGA
Santa Monica Police Department

Researchers report that a bullet fired into the air can climb two miles into the air and remain in flight more than a minute. As it falls, the bullet reaches a velocity of 300 to 700 feet per second. A velocity of only 200 feet per second is sufficient to penetrate the human skull.

"That bullet can literally travel for blocks," said Fabrega. "In all honesty, they travel faster when they are coming down."

While law enforcement, in partnership with the community, local businesses and the media, has made an impact on reducing indiscriminate gunfire, the problem persists. Local law enforcement is once again asking the community to celebrate the new year safely and responsibly. Don't fire guns in the air. Remember what goes up will come down and when a bullet comes down it is traveling at a fatal velocity.

If you see a person shoot a gun, report it immediately by calling 911 and give the dispatcher as much information as possible. If you only hear gunfire, call (310) 458-8491 immediately.

NEW YEARS, from page 1

Places to go for New Years Eve ...

Border Grill 310-451-1655
Bravo Cucino 310-394-0374
Broadway Bar and Grill 310-393-4211
Café Delfini 310-459-8823
Capo 310-394-5550
Chez Jay 310-395-1741
Chinois on Main 310-392-9025
Drago 310-828-1585
Georgio Baldi 310-573-1660
The Hump 310-313-0977
ICugini 310-451-4595
Il Nido 310-399-1843
Ivy at the Shore 310-393-3113
Jake and Annies 310-452-1734
Jiraffe 310-917-6671
Josies 310-581-9888
La Vecchia Cucina 310-399-7979
The Lobster 310-458-9294
Lula 310-392-5711
Melisse 310-395-0881
Michaels 310-451-0843
Monsoon Café 310-576-9996
Ocean Ave Seafood 310-394-5669
One Pico 310-587-1717
Rix 310-656-9688
Rebeccas 310-260-1100
Sabor 310-829-3781
Schatzi on Main 310-399-4800
Sushi Roku 310-458-4771
Typhoon 310-390-6565
Valentino 310-829-4313
World Café 310-392-1661
Ye Olde Kings Head 310-451-1402
Canal Club 310-823-3878
Capri 310-392-8777
Casablanca 310-392-5751
Chaya Venice 310-396-1179
Globe Venice Beach 310-392-3105
Hals Bar and Grill 310-396-3105
Hama Sushi 310-396-8783

Disabled access to be considered for homes

DISABLED, from page 1

accessible heights.

The proposal is still in the formative stage. The Santa Monica City Council has approved paying $75,000 for a consulting firm to study the feasibility of such a law. The main objective is to define how much disabled access the codes should require and how "major" a remodeling project has to be before it would fall under the law.

"What comes out of it remains to be seen, but ultimately the council will decide how the ordinance will be drafted," said Tim McCormick, a city building official.

Councilman Herb Katz cast the sole vote against funding the study.

"I don't see a real need for it," he said. "I understand it commercially, but privately I don't see a need for a disabled building code. It'll never fly."

The consultant's report is due by May and the council plans to hold public meetings in the spring to collect opinions from among the city's 84,000 residents.

The potential impact of a such a law on the city is unclear. A recent community profile published by the Rand Corporationdescribes Santa Monica as fully built up and likely to have a stable or slightly declining population barring a substantial growth in new housing.

But Santa Monica's direction on access for the disabled could have broader influence.

Toy, a university researcher and part-time actor, believes the issue will increasingly be at the forefront of city and state agendas as the population ages.

"They're going to start demanding, as a generation, that these kinds of policies get implemented throughout society," said Toy.

Incorporating accessibility features during the construction change would come at minimal cost, a maximum of $600, he said.

Builders disagree with that estimate. The cost could run into the thousands of dollars, according to the National Association of Home Builders.

"Every time you add costs to a home, you edge someone else out of the (housing) market," NAHB spokeswoman Donna Reichle said.

"It means that person will have to save a few more years for a down payment ... or have to wait longer to take advantage of the tax benefits of owning a home."

Instead, Reichle said, consumers should set the pace for disabled access features in the housing industry.

"Builders have a lot of experience in responding to market needs," she said. "If there's a demand, then they're going to start fulfilling it."

Peace party scheduled for New Year's Eve

By Daily Press staff

The "Now More Than Ever" New Year's Eve Peace Party will take place Monday, Dec. 31, 2001, beginning at 8 p.m. at The Church in Ocean Park located at 235 S. Hill Street in Santa Monica.

The peace-themed party will feature the "Now More Than Ever" comedy showcase with popular stand-up comedians Bill Bronner, Doug Ferrari, Denise Munro Robb and David Zasloff, as well as a special highlighted performance by the comedy/folk music duo "The Boners," featuring musicians Suzy Williams and Bill Burnett. Music DJ Jason Kramer will spin "classic rock oldies" for party participants to "dance in" a new and hopefully improved year. The party emcee will be popular folk journalist Hank Rosenfeld.

Other party highlights will include a "New Year's Resolution Open Mic" which will take place so courageous party goers can share their private resolutions publicly. Prizes will be awarded for what are judged to be the most meaningful and most humorous resolutions. And, in keeping with the tradition of the 22nd annual peace party, a unique "Midnight Peace Ceremony" will be held this year to remember the victims of the Sept. 11 tragedy.

Admission is $20.02 per person and will include a complementary buffet dinner, complimentary champagne and complimentary parking.

The peace party is being sponsored by and will benefit the Alliance for Survival peace group. The party venue is wheelchair accessible. There is no dress code. All ages, singles and couples are invited.

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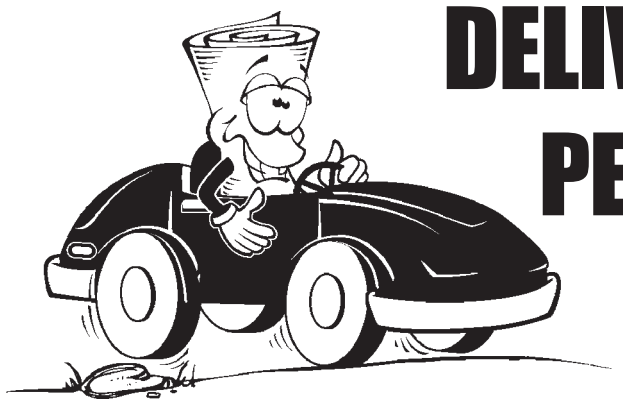
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STATE

Ten Orange County cities may have landslides or liquefaction in quakes

By the Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — Parts of 10 south Orange County cities may be susceptible to landslides or liquefaction during an earthquake of magnitude-6.0 or greater, the state Department of Conservation said.

At-risk areas include Aliso Viejo, Irvine, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente, Dana Point, Laguna Hills, Laguna Beach, Laguna Niguel and Mission Viejo, seismic hazard zone maps show.

"Knowing where liquefaction and landslides are most likely to occur means that officials can require special engineering steps on new construction to make people and buildings safer."

— DARRYL YOUNG
Department of conservation

"Knowing where liquefaction and landslides are most likely to occur means that officials can require special engineering steps on new construction to make people and buildings safer," Darryl Young of DOC said.

The maps are made by the department's Division of Mines and Geology.

All real estate sold in the state requires the seller to disclose natural hazards prior to sale, including properties inside a Seismic Hazard Zone.

Orange County landslide zones are common along the eastern and western border areas of the maps where there are undeveloped hill slopes. Liquefaction zones occur mostly in drainage areas along the Interstate 5 corridor and the Pacific Coast Highway in Laguna Beach; along Aliso Creek, and through Laguna Hills along Alicia Parkway.

California roads rated poor

BY COLLEEN VALLES
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — California rates more than a third of its roads as poor, a higher percentage than any other state, according to a study by a group financed primarily by the highway construction industry.

"I believe our system is second to none, but there's room for improvement."

— DENNIS TRUJILLO
Department of transportation spokesman

The state rated as "poor" 37 percent of its 168,000 miles of road, according to the report released Thursday by The Road Information Program, which completed the study for Transportation California, a group of contractors, unions and other organizations.

TRIP said its analysis of 2000 information from the Federal Highway Administration found that California spent $82 per resident on maintenance — less than any other state. The FHA doesn't break down per capita spending on roads.

TRIP said Georgia gave its roads the best rating, with none in poor condition.

The other states with the highest self-reported percentage of "poor" roads, according to TRIP, were Louisiana, at 27 percent; Massachusetts, at 25 percent; and New Jersey and Missouri, both at 21 percent. On average, states reported that 11 percent of their roads were in poor condition.

TRIP cautioned that though all states reported to the federal government on the quality of their roads, there was no way to ensure they used identical standards.

According to the report, the other states that spent the least were Illinois, which spent $94 per person and ranked 9 percent of its roads as poor; Michigan, which spent $106 per person and ranked 15 percent as poor; Minnesota, which spent $108 per person and ranked 4 percent as poor; and Ohio, which spent $109 per person and ranked 6 percent as poor.

The study also recommends that voters in California approve Proposition 42, on the March 5 ballot, which would use gasoline sales taxes for road maintenance.

The TRIP analysis included interstates, freeways, major state roads and arterial roads, which are the major roads of a community, research director Frank Moretti said.

Dennis Trujillo, a spokesman for the California's Department of Transportation, said the state is dedicating about $1 billion a year to maintenance and repairs. Cities and counties received an additional $400 million last year for maintenance as part of the state's Congestion Relief Program. The state currently has $6 billion in general road improvements under way.

Gov. Gray Davis "has reversed a trend of 16 years of disinvestment in transportation," said Trujillo. "I believe our system is second to none, but there's room for improvement."

India, Pakistan relations severed first time in 30 years

BY NEELESH MISRA
Associated Press Writer

NEW DELHI, India — As India and Pakistan shot at each other and spoke of war, weeping friends and relatives on both sides bid farewell Friday before the two nations sever their land and air links for the first time in 30 years.

Warning that an Indian troop buildup at the border was pushing the countries into confrontation, Pakistan told the United States it may need to further reinforce its side of the frontier by moving troops now helping the U.S. hunt for Osama bin Laden, Pakistani officials said.

President Bush said Friday his administration was "working actively to bring some calm in the region, to hopefully convince both sides to stop the escalation of force." He said India should "take note" of steps by Pakistan to crack down on Islamic militants.

The South Asian rivals — both of which have nuclear weapons — have been threatening a new war since a Dec. 13 attack by gunmen on India's Parliament. New Delhi says Pakistan sponsored the attack and demands it arrest and extradite the leaders of two militant groups India says conducted the operation. Pakistan denies the charge.

The Indian army ordered evacuations of 20,000 people from more than 40 border villages in the Indian-held part of Kashmir, and traded shells overnight with Pakistani border forces, officials said Friday. Soldiers also laid mines outside the villages.

Retaliatory firing by Pakistani troops killed a 3-year-old in an Indian border village, police said. The firing ended two days of relative calm.

The two nations on Thursday ordered each other's 110-person embassy staffs cut in half and banned overflights as of next Tuesday. On that day, India will also close bus and train links, and private cars will also be barred from crossing the border — closing transport links for the first time since the 1971 war.

The halt to transportation links is a haunting reminder of past wars and a psychological blow for millions on both sides connected by blood or friendship.

Men and women wept, desperately embraced relatives and tried to hold hands through the iron window grills of the cars as the Samjhauta Express, the only train between the two nations, pulled out of the Old Delhi station, carrying people home before the deadline.

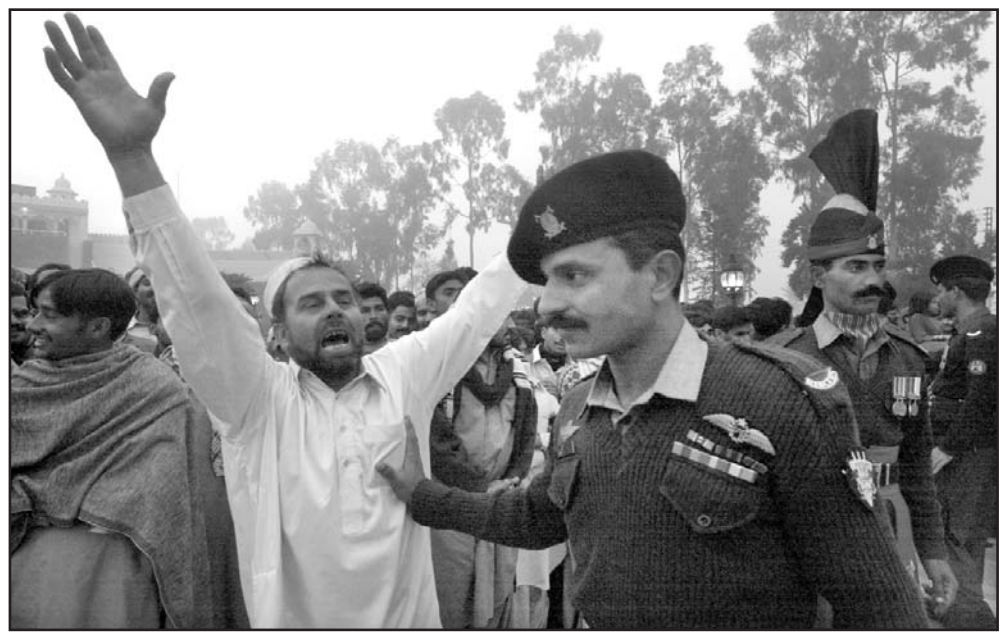
At the Lahore station in Pakistan, an Indian woman, Amina Begum, stood tightly holding the hand of her brother Tanveer Ahmad, a Pakistani. Both wept.

Separated in their childhood, they had met after 53 years. "I had come here to stay for two months, but now I'm going back just after seven days," Begum said as she boarded the train. "Now I don't think he will be able to see me even at my death."

A spokesman for Pakistan's military-government said India's troop buildup at the border was making a confrontation inevitable. "The Indian government is putting itself into a corner where it would be difficult for them to now back off," Gen. Rashid Quereshi said in Islamabad.

Pakistan told the United States on Friday through official channels that it may have to move troops from its western Afghan border to the eastern frontier with India, a senior diplomatic official and a senior army official said. Those troops are currently patrolling the Afghan border, hunting for fleeing members of bin Laden's al-Qaida terror group.

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since independence from Britain in 1947. Two of those wars — in 1947 and 1965 — were fought over the divided Himalayan region of Kashmir. Many in both countries feared the prospect of a fourth.



Associated Press

A border guard restrains a Pakistani man shouting "Long Live Pakistan!" across the border at the end of the daily border closing ceremony in Wagah, along the Pakistan-India border on Friday. India and Pakistan shot at each other Friday and talked of war as they prepared to sever land and air links for the first time in 30 years — since their last war.

OPEC oil ministers confirm 6 percent cut to lift prices

BY BRUCE STANLEY
AP Business Writer

CAIRO, Egypt — After more than a month of uncertainty, OPEC confirmed Friday it would cut its official output by 6 percent in an effort to firm up sagging oil prices and protect its member nations' main source of income.

Oil ministers from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed in an emergency meeting that it would slash output by 1.5 million barrels a day beginning Jan. 1. The cuts are to last for at least six months, OPEC officials told a news conference.

The decision appears unlikely to have a major impact on the prices consumers pay for gasoline or heating oil. OPEC approved the cut in principle back in November, and energy markets have already factored it into current prices for crude and refined oil products.

OPEC decided to proceed with the planned cuts only after persuading rival, independent producers such as Russia and Norway to reduce their own output.

Having already trimmed OPEC's official production by 3.5 million barrels a day this year, the group's 11 member nations were determined to make independent producers share the burden of the next decrease instead of boosting sales at OPEC's expense.

"The main task for us at this moment is the stabilization of the market," OPEC Secretary-general Ali Rodriguez told reporters.

Oil producers have suffered "a sustained drop" in crude prices during the past month, he said. "If we maintain this trend, we can suffer a collapse in the price. ... It's a very big problem for producers and even for consumers."

OPEC's announcement got a perky response from major oil markets. The price of Brent crude contracts for February delivery climbed 42 cents to $20.76 a barrel, after having jumped by $1 Thursday on the International Petroleum Exchange in London. February contracts of light, sweet crude rose 32 cents to $21.22 on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

"The reaction of any oil producer to OPEC's decision can be none other than positive, as it is already pushing oil prices up considerably," said Leonid Fedun, vice president of Lukoil, Russia's biggest oil producer.

OPEC's benchmark crude price averaged $18.68 a barrel Thursday, the most recent day for which information was compiled.

Rilwanu Lukman, Nigeria's presidential adviser on petroleum and energy, said OPEC's production cut would be "more than enough" to lift the group's benchmark price to $22 a barrel — the group's minimum target price.

However, some member countries questioned whether the combined reduction in OPEC and non-OPEC supplies would be sufficient to restore OPEC's benchmark to its desired range of $22 to $28 a barrel.

"We hope that prices will stabilize within reasonable limits, meaning between $20 and $25 (a barrel). This is what is expected now," Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Al Naimi told reporters just before the meeting began. Saudi Arabia is OPEC's largest and most influential member.

Death toll from Central African Ebola outbreak rises to 21

BY ALEXANDRA ZAVIS
Associated Press Writer

MEKAMBO, Gabon — A 5-year-old boy died Friday in an improvised isolation ward as the death toll from an outbreak of the deadly Ebola disease rose to 21 in two Central African nations.

Adamou, who only had one name, was the fifth member of his family to catch the highly contagious disease in the remote town of MeKambo in northeastern Gabon, near the border with Republic of Congo. His mother, a nurse, died after treating an Ebola patient. The disease then spread to her mother, brother and another child.

"My heart is heavy," said the child's uncle, John Otolany, whose eldest son remained in the isolation ward concealed behind plastic sheeting at the town's crumbling medical center. "This disease continues to ravage my family."

Because of the risk of contagion, Otolany was the only family member present when health workers in rubber boots, plastic overalls, masks, gloves and goggles carried the child out of the ward in a plastic body bag, loaded him onto the back of a truck and transported him to a tiny cemetery in a jungle clearing.

Fighting back tears, Otolany watched as the child was lowered into the grave, sprayed with disinfectant and covered with soil.

Medical officials have identified 17 Ebola cases in Gabon, of whom 15 have died since the outbreak began in late October. Twelve more suspected cases have been identified in Republic of Congo, where six people have died.

A team of medical experts from the World Health Organization and Gabon's health ministry arrived in the region in December and have been working with military doctors to trace victims, treat patients and educate the local population about the disease. The international aid group, Medecins Sans Frontieres, or Doctors Without Borders, is also helping to contain the virus.

In a statement from Geneva, WHO said medical experts were monitoring 206 people — 91 in Gabon and 115 in Republic of Congo — who had possibly come in contact with those infected with the virus.

"We anticipate one or more cases may develop among these contacts," the statement said.

About half survived the virus' incubation period of up to three weeks without developing signs of the disease. The rest continue to receive daily visits from officials who watch for symptoms such as fever, bloody diarrhea and vomiting.

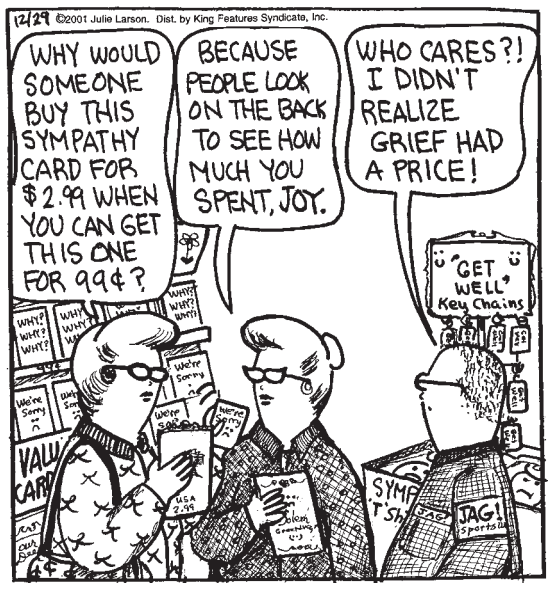
Ebola is one of the most deadly viral diseases. There is no cure, and death occurs in 50 to 90 percent of those who contract it.

The virus is passed through contact with bodily fluids, but is not airborne. The disease usually kills its victims faster than it can spread, burning out before it can reach too far.

The World Health Organization, however, has said it believes the outbreak has peaked.

COMICS

The Dinette Set by Julie Larson



Natural Selection®

By Russ Wallace

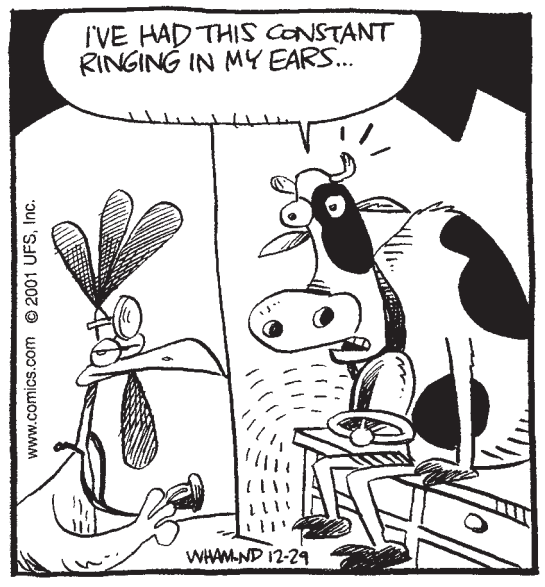
"I don't know how he does it. These great girls always flock to him, and we get nothing."

edge City

by TERRY & PATTY LABAN

Reality Check®

By Dave Whammond



Speed Bump®

By Dave Coverly

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Hidden away
7 Bit of smoke
11 Rub the wrong way
12 Cuzco native
13 Colanders' kin
14 Pub projectile
15 Jingle writer
16 Plague
17 Visionary
18 South Carolina river
19 Not lax
21 Terminus
22 "21" and others
25 Have a meal
26 Gofer's assignment
27 Be heedful
29 Goes out
33 Lark
34 Criminal
35 Lab container
36 Game trip
37 "Picnic" playwright
38 "Batman" butler
39 Middling grades
40 "Fawlty Towers" star

DOWN

1 Hacienda homes
2 Tolerate
3 Liqueur type
4 Danish cheese
5 Perfect place
6 — Moines
7 Make broader
8 Overly worried
9 Theater fixtures
10 Touched lightly
16 Spa offerings
18 Writer Sontag
20 Mexican native
22 Tonic water ingredient
23 Eclipse, in the theater
24 Painter Georgia
25 Czech, e.g.
28 Mah-jongg pieces
30 Sound the trumpet
31 Drills
32 Insinuating
34 Plummet
36 Pouchlike part

G	A	P	E	S	■	A	P	P	A	L
O	M	A	N	I	■	L	E	A	V	E
U	P	P	E	D	■	T	A	P	E	S
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C	O	T	■	S	E	X	■	B	A	T
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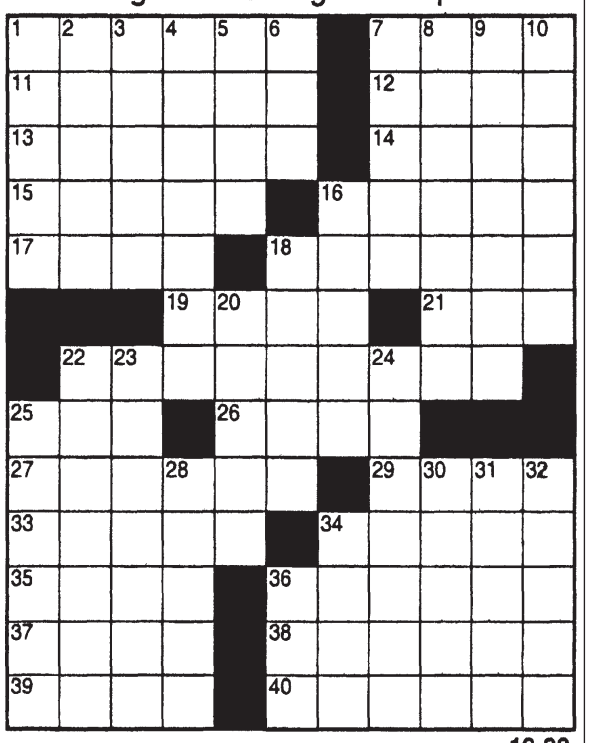
Yesterday's answer



12-29

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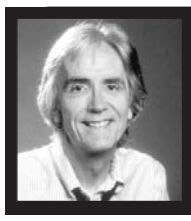

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

Semen in the name of art

The partly government-funded Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada, acknowledged in December that it had provided a grant to Mexican performance artist Israel Mora, 33, for his recent exhibit, "Level 7," which consisted of his own semen in seven glass vials into which he had masturbated, in order, he said, "to examine the concepts of privacy and intimacy within contemporary society." The Centre's president subsequently apologized for its bad judgment in housing the exhibit.

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BACK PAGE

Holiday travelers unfazed by tight security at airports

BY BRAD FOSS
AP Business Writer

Travelers and airline executives were both prepared for the worst during one of the year's busiest weeks for air travel. Instead, many are finding themselves pleasantly surprised.

Holiday flyers braced for snarled lines at security checkpoints after the week began with a passenger's alleged attempt to ignite explosives in his sneakers in midflight.

Yet, like Nancy Franger of Elkhart, Ind., many say it was "smooth sailing" compared to previous years.

Franger didn't mind when baggage screeners at O'Hare International Airport on Friday confiscated her nail clippers and files as she headed to Keystone, Colo., for a week-long ski trip with her husband and three sons.

"I'm glad they caught that stuff," she said.

The amount of time passengers spent waiting to check in or have their bags X-rayed ranged from several minutes to a couple of hours, depending on the time of day, the airport and even the terminal.

Around the country, many travelers, including young children, were asked to walk through metal detectors with their shoes off, while some shuffled through in their socks by choice.

A middle-aged teacher at New York's LaGuardia Airport was asked to finish her cup of coffee by a baggage screener concerned something could be hidden inside. A 78-year-old woman with a pacemaker was hand-frisked at Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix.

Performing arts instructor Jim Hutchinson, 51, of Fort Worth, Texas, said he didn't mind removing his cowboy hat, boots and belt buckle as part of the screening process at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport.

"I'm kind of shocked things were so lax before," Hutchinson said. "It's crowded. Check-in takes a few minutes. What's the big deal?"

Not everyone was happy: At San Francisco International Airport, 44-year-old Mike Fredrickson, an artist who lives in Milwaukee, said the heightened scrutiny unnerved him, and that he may drive rather than fly on future trips.

"I'm kind of shocked things were so lax before. It's crowded. Check-in takes a few minutes. What's the big deal?"

— JIM HUTCHINSON
Holiday traveler

Airline companies had feared many travelers would stay away from planes, but several major carriers said planes were 90 percent full at their peak — about as packed as jetliners ever get and better than the 85 percent forecast by the Air Transport Association, the industry's Washington-based trade group.

For the week ending Dec. 27, passenger volumes were down roughly 11 percent from a year ago, said David Swerienga, the group's chief economist. That's better than the 17 percent decline the industry was predicting for the last two weeks of December and the first week of January.

"It has been better than we would have thought four to six weeks ago," said John Tague, chief executive officer of American Trans Air, the nation's 10th-largest carrier and one of a handful of low-cost, low-fare airlines that have outperformed the rest of the industry lately.

Still, the entire industry is operating with an average of 16 percent fewer available seats because of schedule cuts made after Sept. 11.

And demand remains weak: United Airlines carried more than 200,000 passengers a day on several occasions last week, compared with about 250,000 on its best days a year ago, spokesman Joe Hopkins said.

The largest carriers are not likely to report profits until next summer, at the earliest, because they continue to lure passengers by offering extremely cheap fares, said Ray Neidl, airline analyst at ABN Amro. Delta Air Lines, the third-largest carrier, warned last week it expects to lose $500 million in the fourth quarter.

To better handle the increased passenger traffic during the holiday season, Southwest Airlines dispatched administrative employees from its Dallas headquarters to several airports around the country. The budget carrier even bought out a magazine stand at Baltimore's BWI Airport to make room for a larger security checkpoint.

In the days before and after Christmas, lines were often more backed up as passengers checked their bags, but the addition of baggage and passenger screening lanes appeared to help move travelers into the boarding gate areas more smoothly.

"Passengers are patient, and workers are just doing a great job moving people through the lines," said Mike Bowers, vice president of station operations for Frontier Airlines. "Believe it or not, it's been a good couple of weeks."

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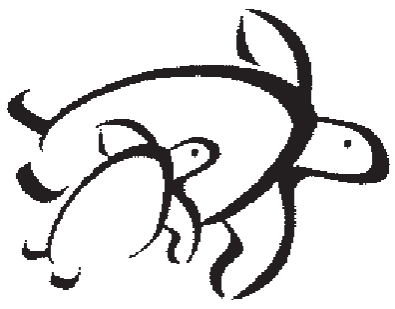

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