

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

A 'hole' lot of damage!



Carolyn Sackarison/Daily Press

(Top) The intersection of Euclid Avenue and Ocean Park Boulevard sports a massive sinkhole after a 12-inch water main burst around 8 p.m. on Saturday, causing thousands of gallons of water to gush underneath the street and wash out sand to 11th Street.

(Bottom left) Within hours, the pavement gave way and created a sinkhole almost two blocks long and 10 ft. deep. A motorist fell into the hole on Saturday night, but there were no injuries. On Sunday afternoon, the road was still slowly crumbling, and some residents were without water.

(Bottom right) The intersection of 11th Street and Ocean Park Boulevard became a large pool of water and dirt, forcing pedestrians to tiptoe through the muddy mess. City officials, who did not believe the incident was weather related, closed the road to cars and pedestrians. It will take about a month to repair the damages.

Hoaxers vs. rocket scientists

BY MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Is that the moon or a studio in the Nevada desert? How can the flag flutter when there's no wind on the moon? Why can't we see stars in the moon-landing pictures?

For three decades, NASA has taken the high road, ignoring those who claimed the Apollo moon landings were faked and part of a colossal government

conspiracy.

The claims and suspicious questions like the ones cited here mostly showed up in books and on the Internet. But last year's prime-time Fox TV special on the so-called "moon hoax" prompted school-teachers and others to plead with NASA for factual ammunition to fight back.

So a few months ago, the space agency budgeted \$15,000 to hire a former rocket scientist and author to pro-

See HOAX, page 8

City issues \$102K noise fines in law's first year

As of October, more than \$64K have been collected from repeat offenders

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

With some of the harshest noise violations at any airport in the country, 41 pilots have been fined in Santa Monica, amounting to about \$102,000 for the city.

During its first year, the city's controversial airport noise ordinance has had a strong effect on airport operations.

Overall aircraft noise violations decreased by 10.5 percent, from 279 in 2001 to 250 in 2002. Jet aircraft noise violations decreased by 13.1 percent from 237 in 2000 to 206 in 2002.

"We're on the right track," said Santa Monica Airport Manager Bob Trimborn. "We've always been one or two in the nation as far as noise ordinance enforcement goes, and I think this elevates us to an even higher level."

In November 2001, the Santa Monica City Council enacted higher fines for pilots who violate the city's aircraft noise ordinance, which requires planes taking

off and landing at the airport to stay under 95 decibels.

First-time offenders are allowed to get off with a warning, but a second offense can land a pilot a \$2,000 fine. If there is a third offense, the pilot is issued a \$5,000 fine, and after that the pilot is issued a \$10,000 fine for each violation.

During the past year, almost 90 percent of all violations were for first-time offenders. Most of them have not repeated the infraction. However, on 41 occasions this year, a fine was issued to repeat violators. Of those, 18 were issued to individually-owned and -operated aircraft, of which 29 percent have already been paid. Twenty-three pilots of fleet or fractional ownership companies were fined, of which 78 percent have been paid.

There are 17 aircraft that have been banned from using the airport because pilots didn't pay the fines within 30 days. Outstanding fines are referred to a collection agency after 60 days.

"We've really been stepping up the outreach and letting them know about the noise ordinance and the fine structure," Trimborn said. "If it's a jet that hasn't been here before, we go out to the ramp

See FINES, page 4

Taking out trash could be costly for Santa Monica

City weighs pros and cons of dumping its trash operations

BY ANDREW H. FIXMER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Santa Monica officials realize that taking out the trash is becoming a bigger chore than they thought.

And it could get even bigger if the city decides to expand its operations by handling garbage disposal for Beverly Hills and Culver City as well.

Collecting the city's garbage and bringing it to landfills has developed into a multi-million dollar business for Santa Monica.

City officials are thinking about building a new garbage transfer station and expanding its operation for an estimated \$6 million. But the move could squeeze out Southern California Disposal, a locally-owned family business.

The city has owned and operated its own

garbage transfer station in the city yards since the 1940s, where locally-collected refuse is recycled and transferred to tractor trailers, which haul the waste to landfills.

"Our current facility does not meet today's regulatory standards."

— CRAIG PERKINS
Environmental and Public Works
Department, director

Some officials want to expand the city's operation to meet new recycling goals and abide by state and federal guidelines.

See TRASH, page 4

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★★-So-so ★-Difficult

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Deal with last-minute financial information, especially if it can impact your taxes. You might be surprised at how right-on a suggestion is. Start considering your New Year's resolutions and/or plans. Tonight: Use your imagination.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Work with associates and friends. Though you might not be in the mood for work, you'll discover just how much you can get done with some focus. Save late afternoon for a special partner or loved one. Close moments signal the end of the year. Tonight: Swap New Year's resolutions.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Take a hint from Taurus, though you might also have to squeeze in an errand or two. Realize your limits, within reason, and decide what you absolutely must do. Acknowledge when you have said or done enough. Tonight: Join some friends.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ You might have a difficult time settling down in the next few days. You know that certain details need to be handled, but you could have a lot of difficulty covering that ground. You want to, and will, play. Late afternoon, get an errand or two done. Tonight: Catch up on e-mail.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Keep reaching out for others, knowing that some might feel a bit out of sorts with the new year beginning. The unexpected occurs with others who you might not anticipate such strong reactions from. Be generous with your feelings. Tonight: Play away.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Be more generous in the way you handle someone whose nerves are on edge. Quick news comes forward that could cause an enjoyable change in plans. You might want to just mosey home and not do much. Tonight: Happy at home.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Reach out for a loved one at a distance. Take an opportunity to visit with friends in your immediate circle. You could be overwhelmed by a money issue. Slow down and take your time with a child or loved one. Tonight: Avoid brusqueness.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ The unexpected occurs when dealing with others, especially your family. Just when you decide you're on cruise control, you get a bit of a jolt or surprise. Work with others' unpredictability. In fact, you like that touch of excitement. Tonight: Treat yourself well.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You gain momentum as the day gets older, and you could have a difficult time slowing down. The good news is, you achieve your goals in an unpredictable manner. Others might not always understand the fashion in which you discard an activity or make a decision. Taking the time to explain might make all the difference. Tonight: What would make you happy?

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Respond in a meeting, though you might feel jolted by what you do and do not hear. Knowing when to say "enough" could make a considerable difference in your security — both emotionally and financially. Tonight: Your treat.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Clear out your work, as many demands come in unexpectedly. You will want extra time with friends and loved ones later on. Friends surround the spirited Aquarian. A business meeting could even turn into a social happening. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Find the right experts, especially with a difficult decision pending. You might want to change your plans or do something a bit different. Don't be surprised by others' initial reactions. Openly discuss options. Tonight: A must appearance.



QUOTE of the DAY

"Some people stay longer in an hour than others do in a month."

— William Dean Howells (1837-1920)

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Christmas tree recycling

By Daily Press staff

After the holidays, Santa Monica residents may recycle their Christmas trees at various parks throughout the city, but tinsel, ornaments and stands should be removed from the trees. The trees may be brought to the City of Santa Monica's Refuse and Recycling Transfer Station at 2401 Delaware Ave. throughout the month of January for free. The transfer station is open Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and located at 2401 Delaware Ave. For more information, call (310) 829-7323.

The Christmas Tree Recycling Program for this season will also include collections at four local parks on two consecutive weekends. The drop-off dates will be Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 4 and 5, and the following weekend, Jan. 11 and 12. Drop-off sites will be at Douglas Park, Christine Emerson Reed Park, Los Amigos Park and Clover Park.

For West Los Angeles residents, trees may be dropped off Jan. 4 and 5 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the following locations:

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

For more information, call the Los Angeles hotline: 1 (800) 5-TREE-56.

Bowling for charity

By Daily Press staff

On Jan. 24, more than 60 teams representing various businesses, community organizations and government compete with their bowling and fundraising skills for awards at the SuperBowl-A-Thon VII. Each bowler receives an event T-shirt, food and the chance to win fabulous door prizes.

The proceeds from the event will be used to support projects of the Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition (WSHC). For 20 years, WSHC, a project of Community Partners, has addressed the needs of the homeless population in the western part of Los Angeles County by coordinating programs, such as food and shelter, job counseling and health services, as well as providing education and advocacy. WSHC brings together more than 25 member organizations representing local human service, government agencies and faith-based programs.

This year, Morley Builders is the "Perfect Game" title sponsor. Additional support include "Strike" sponsor First Federal Bank and "Spare" level sponsors, which are The Lobster restaurant, Santa Monica Place, Southern California Disposal & Recycling, DoubleTree Guest Suites Santa Monica and the Law Offices of Gordon P. Gitlen. Food will be provided by Johnnie's New York Pizzeria (Third Street Promenade) and Arby's Market Fresh in Santa Monica.

In addition to our sponsors, additional teams representing business, government, media and social service organizations will "bowl for dollars" for the coalition.

The bowl-a-thon will take place between 1 and 5 p.m. at AMF Bay Shore Lanes on 234 Pico Blvd. in Santa Monica. For more information, contact Donna Gentry at (310) 828-7010 or e-mail SBATVII@aol.com.



surf report

Information compiled by Jesse Haley

The last two surfing days of 2002 will be average at best.

West-northwest wind swell generates decent size at exposed breaks. Expect waist- to chest-high sets with good consistency.

Unfortunately, conditions have been windy in the Santa Monica Bay. San Diego is seeing cleaner surf, with better shape and more size, consistently overhead at good breaks.

But L.A. County will get some fun waves today.

We're expecting less size Tuesday, with remnant wind swell fading fast.

New northwest swell is on the horizon, but we probably won't see results until after the new year.

Rumor of the day: I heard a kid from Manhattan Beach say Pratte's reef is going to be all-time today.



Today's Tides:

High- 6:04 a.m. 6.09'
Low- 1:24 p.m. -0.63'
High- 7:37 p.m. 3.64'

Location	Monday	Tuesday	Water Quality
County Line	2-3'/Poor	2-3'/Poor	Not available
Zuma	2-3'/Poor	2-3'/Poor	Not available
Surfrider	1-2'/Poor	1-2'/Poor	D
Topanga	1-3'/Fair	1-3'/Fair	A
Breakwater	3-4'/Poor	2-3'/Poor	A
El Porto	2-4'/Poor	2-3'/Poor	A

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The Q Line

The New Year is a time for renewal, change and introspection. A few weeks ago, Q-line asked what you thought Santa Monica's political leaders should focus on in 2003, but now we want to hear what the citizens have in mind for themselves

So this week, Q-line asks:

"What resolutions or changes will you make in your life for 2003?"

Call (310) 285-8106 with your response before Thursday at 5 p.m. We'll print it in Friday's paper. Please limit your comments to a minute or less; it might help to think first about the wording of your response.

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LOCAL

Local garbage contractor could absorb city's trash

TRASH, from page 1

The transfer station's current permit expires in October 2003. To get another permit from the state, the city's transfer station must meet basic requirements, officials say.

"Our current facility does not meet today's regulatory standards," said Craig Perkins, director of the city's Environmental and Public Works Department. "A new transfer station must be designed to take into account regulatory, operational, environmental and long-term industry demands."

However, some suggest the city should contract for the same services with Southern California Disposal, which is located near the city yards.

The neighboring facility already meets all state and federal guidelines. By building the new transfer station, the city would be duplicating the same facility operated by Southern California Disposal. The move could also hurt the private company's business because the city could dominate the market.

"I don't know if you're aware, but this is a back-breaking, dirty and dangerous work," said Paul Ryan, a consultant for Southern California Disposal. "I think they have earned the right to continue making a living."

It's not clear if the city would lose or gain by contracting with the private garbage hauler. But if it did, it could give Southern California Disposal a quasi monopoly on garbage collection on Los Angeles' westside.

That could lead to higher trash collection fees for the public and Santa Monica because there would be a lack of competition, city officials said.

Officials also predict 10 city employees would be laid off if Santa Monica left the trash collection business.

"It's not in the public's best long-term interest for the city to contract with SCD," Craig Perkins said.

Southern California Disposal officials disagree. They predict the city will save itself not only the construction of a new facility but operating and maintaining the old facility.

The city also could use the land currently occupied by the trash transfer station for something else, Southern

California Disposal officials said.

"We can save the taxpayers money," Ryan said. "These guys live in Santa Monica, too, and they don't want to see anyone get a bad deal."

City officials accuse Southern California Disposal of cooking its books to make it seem like the city would save more by contracting with them. But Southern California Disposal officials accuse the city of inventing numbers to make building the new transfer station more palatable.

To break even on its new trash transfer facility, the city would have to increase the amount of garbage flowing through its facility by nearly 33 percent, according to a staff report.

The city transfers about 110,000 tons of garbage annually. If the new transfer station is built, city officials estimate they will see about 154,000 tons a year.

"We haven't seen where these numbers are coming

from," said Councilman Ken Genser. "There's nothing telling us these are numbers derived from analysis rather than speculation."

When asked where the new garbage would come from, Perkins said his department would go to Beverly Hills and Culver City to lock down contracts with them. Also, the city could franchise garbage collection in Santa Monica so all trash pick-up agencies would have to use the city's facility, according to a staff report.

To some city officials, the issue raises questions over what role Santa Monica wants to play in the regional garbage industry.

"Do we really want to attract more garbage and more trucks into Santa Monica?" said Councilman Bob Holbrook. "Do we really want to be the regional garbage facility for the Los Angeles region? I would say no."

More jets fly into city than before

FINES, from page 1

and greet them and let them know how the procedures work here."

For most pilots that approach has worked well, Trimborn said.

The number of noise violations typically has been small compared to the overall number of planes using the airport annually, Trimborn said. Now, violations have almost been cut in half, he said.

"We are almost reaching the 100 percent compliance mark," Trimborn said. "I don't think reaching that 100 percent mark isn't achievable, it is. But we've already got the number of violations down to the tenths of a percent mark."

Ten of the citations issued have been appealed. When a pilot appeals the alleged noise violation, a hearing is held before an independent arbitrator. The city has prevailed in two of the appeal cases while eight others are pending.

"We were concerned there might be a legal challenge to this, but to date no one has filed a lawsuit," said Santa

Monica Deputy City Attorney Martin Tachiki. "I think there are some people who have said they are not coming to the airport because of the fines, but there's no way of tracking that down or proving that."

Even though overall airport operations are decreasing, the number of jets — which tend to be noisier than propeller airplanes — are increasing.

Total take-offs and landings decreased by 3.7 percent last year from 98,648 in 2001 to 91,167 in 2002. Propeller planes and helicopter activity decreased by 7 percent from 87,537 in 2001 to 81,253 in 2002.

During that same time, jet operations increased by 35.9 percent from 7,291 in 2001 to 9,914 in 2002.

"When the economy is good and people have money, you tend to see more flights," Tachiki said. "And when the economy gets bad, it goes down a little."

"Turbine-powered aircraft have defied that trend," he added. "But I don't know if that will continue. It takes a huge out lay of cash, and many businesses are finding it makes more sense to take commercial flights."

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STATE

Southern California could celebrate clean air milestone

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Southern California is expected to reach an important milestone in its war on smog if wet and windy weather holds through New Year's Eve.

For the first time, the region with some of the nation's dirtiest air is on pace to meet federal standards for carbon monoxide levels.

Southern California will have complied if it had no more than one day each year in the past two years in which the emissions standards were exceeded.

The region posted only one bad day in January and none in 2001. The South Coast Air Quality Management District attributed the trend to improved smog-control devices on newer cars.

"We've come a long way," said Joe Cassmassi, senior meteorologist with the AQMD, which includes Los Angeles and Orange counties and parts of San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

Greater Los Angeles still needs to make it through Tuesday before claiming

victory, but the cleansing rain and wind forecast for coming days makes it likely that carbon monoxide levels will remain low, Cassmassi said.

Southern California still has still has high levels of ozone and particulate matter pollution.

Nonetheless, reaching the federal standard for carbon monoxide shows the state is committed to cleaning up its air, said Jack Broadbent, an air division chief for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A decade ago, about 20 U.S. cities had too much carbon monoxide in their air, but Los Angeles is one of the last urban regions to reduce levels of the pollutant. Southern California will need to meet federal guidelines through 2003 to stay in compliance, officials said.

California as a whole has the nation's toughest standards for motor vehicle emissions. But since tailpipes account for 78 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, Southern California has been hampered by the sheer number of cars on its roads, Broadbent said.

Syphilis outbreak in L.A. leads to calls for more testing

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A countywide 62 percent increase in the number of syphilis cases reported by gay men has prompted health advocates to call for more public outreach and testing programs.

The significant increase, which represents about 360 new cases reported so far this year, has alarmed public health advocates because many of the cases involve men already diagnosed with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

"The implications are that gay men are having more unprotected sex," said Karen Mall, director of prevention for the AIDS Healthcare Foundation in Los Angeles.

Though syphilis is curable, it can cause serious complications for anyone who has HIV, she said.

"Syphilis can lead to neurological problems, blindness and even death," Mall said. "If you are HIV positive and contract syphilis, complications can come much sooner and be much more powerful."

Earlier this year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a 68 percent increase in syphilis cases in California in 2001, as compared to the year before.

Man hijacks trolley near S.D.

By The Associated Press

CORONADO — A female trolley driver had a gun put to her head by an ex-boyfriend who led police on a freeway chase Sunday before he was caught, authorities said.

Police arrested Jayson August, 49, for investigation of carjacking, assault and kidnapping, said Sgt. Jeff Hutchins of the Coronado Police Department.

Police stopped the trolley, which had no passengers on board, after a 90 minute chase by throwing spike strips in front of it. A police dog bit August, and police arrested him, Hutchins said.

The driver of the trolley was not hurt.

August, of Spring Valley in east San Diego, was treated for minor dog bites and remained in police custody.

The incident began around 11:30 a.m. when witnesses saw the suspect board the trolley at a tollbooth on the Coronado Bridge and put a gun to the female driver's head, authorities said.

Officers from the San Diego and Coronado police departments and the California Highway Patrol chased the trolley as it drove across the bridge, then north through San Diego on the Interstate 5 and east on the Interstate 8. They stopped the trolley near the Golden Acorn Casino east of San Diego and took August into custody.



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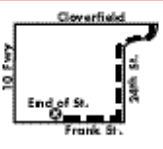
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Gabriel Acosta/Associated Press/San Bernardino Sun
San Bernardino fire investigator Grant Hubbell, left, and Captain David Allen, right, shine flashlights on a third-floor elevator area of the 111-room Sunset Hotel after the hotel, with a history of fires and safety violations, erupted in flames before dawn Saturday in San Bernardino, killing four people and injuring 18 others as firefighters pulled dozens to safety.

Report: Celeb doctor took advantage of frail patients

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A doctor who had his license revoked for catering to the prescription drug demands of celebrities including actress Winona Ryder took advantage of some of his more mentally unstable and chronically ill clients, a newspaper reported Saturday.

In its investigations of Dr. Jules Lusman, the state Medical Board heard from several patients who said Lusman tried to take advantage of them and their weakened conditions, according to the Los Angeles Times, which cited state and court records.

One of the first complaints the Medical Board received about Lusman, 49, involved a frail Pacific Palisades woman, identified only by her initials S.O., who said the doctor tried to get her to co-sign for his mortgage, according to state records.

The board then heard from a man, identified as R.V., who accused Lusman of stealing his Rolex watch. After Lusman showed him a bill for his services, the man concluded he must have handed over the watch while in a narcotic haze, records showed.

Another patient — a mentally unstable man who later committed suicide — sued Lusman, saying he was swindled out of \$20,000 and a piece of art. The case was later settled.

The Medical Board also charged Lusman borrowed \$164,000 from a patient.

A state administrative law judge condemned Lusman this fall for his medical practices, saying that the doctor "routinely resorted to narcotics as his answer to complaints of pain ... while charging hundreds or even thousands of dollars for consultations."

Judge Joseph D. Montoya recommended Lusman's license be revoked, and the Medical Board agreed. In doing so, the

Medical Board's chief of enforcement called Lusman "a drug pusher with a medical license," the Times said.

Lusman, who returned earlier this month to his native South Africa, has asked the courts to set aside the Medical Board ruling. He has said he merely tried to help patients in pain.

**"The accusations
made against me were
all fabricated."**

— DR. JULES LUSMAN
Doctor

"Some doctors don't have any experience with narcotics, so they don't feel comfortable administering them," Lusman told the Times. "I am quite experienced ... I try other treatments, but when you are dealing with intractable pain, you are dealing with patients who have tried everything and nothing works. The accusations made against me were all fabricated."

A check of pharmacy records by Medical Board investigators led authorities to search Lusman's office and home. The search revealed evidence of Lusman's connection to Ryder.

The two-time Academy Award nominee had 37 prescriptions filled by 20 doctors from January 1996 to December 1998, according to Ryder's probation report.

Lusman lost his license the same day a Los Angeles County judge sentenced Ryder, 31, to three years probation, community service and drug and psychological counseling for shoplifting nearly \$6,000 in designer merchandise from Saks Fifth Avenue in Beverly Hills.

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STATE



L.A. audits agency to find \$1M in missing funds

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Auditors searched the financial records of a county-funded employment agency, hoping to discover what happened to nearly \$1 million in missing funds, county officials said.

The Mid San Gabriel Valley Consortium was forced to close earlier this month after the county pulled its funding when allegations of mismanagement and accounting irregularities surfaced during a routine annual audit last spring, officials said.

The county has since hired an independent accounting firm to review the agency's records and determine what happened to the missing funds. A final report was not expected until February.

"The county will perform a 100 percent fiscal and program review," said Adine Forman, a county spokeswoman.

During an audit of 2000-2001 records, investigators discovered the county had been overbilled by \$979,018. Agency administrators returned the money in August.

But when the county examined the fiscal 2001-2002 records to see if the same overbilling practice had been repeated, investigators were unable to locate another \$1 million, Forman said.

Investigators also discovered the agency had not been paying its bills, officials said. The agency had an outstanding balance totaling \$443,831, which was owed to more than 75 vendors, county documents showed.

The agency was formed 26 years ago to help people prepare for jobs and find work. Last year, more than 17,000 residents of Baldwin Park, El Monte and South El Monte received assistance, according to county documents.

L.A. federal jury convicts man of drug trafficking

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A federal jury convicted a Tijuana man Friday on drug trafficking charges involving more than a ton of cocaine that was seized at Los Angeles International Airport in 1994.

Jose Alfredo Vargas, 47, became the fifth defendant convicted in the drug trafficking conspiracy in which cocaine was shipped to a phony auto upholstery business in Fontana. Vargas lived in San Bernardino when the trafficking took place, prosecutors said.

Following a two-week trial, jurors deliberated for two days before finding him guilty of several charges related to the conspiracy to import and distribute cocaine.

He is to be sentenced March 10 by U.S. District Judge Lourdes Baird and could face life in prison.

The case began in May 1994 when a U.S. Customs inspector decided to conduct an "intensive inspection" of a large shipment of plastic pipe being sent from Mexico to the Fontana business called California Auto Upholstery & Hardware.

The shipment turned out to be about 2,300 pounds of cocaine with a street value of about \$124 million.

Customs agents and a team of officers primarily from the Costa Mesa Police Department delivered the cocaine to California Auto.

Two workers took about half of the narcotics to a "stash house" in San Bernardino, where two other men accepted the delivery. All four were taken into custody.

Raymundo Castellon, 29, of San Bernardino, pleaded guilty for his role in the scheme and is serving a 14-year sentence. Ruben Contreras, 36, of El Monte, was convicted in 1995 and is serving a sentence of 19 years and seven months. Carlos Solache-Orozco, 32, of San Bernardino and Jose Loza-Romero, 47, of Tijuana, also were convicted in 1995. Solache-Orozco was sentenced to 30 years and Loza-Romero to 25 years.

Vargas, who investigators say paid \$50,000 cash for the auto upholstery business in 1993, fled to Mexico after the others were taken into custody.

L.A. immigrants turn to radio

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — In the days following the arrests of hundreds of Middle Eastern men who voluntarily registered with the INS, a small Persian-language radio station became a powerful gathering place for the immigrant community, taking calls from those being detained and spearheading a rally that attracted thousands of protesters.

KIRN-AM canceled its programming to provide round-the-clock coverage of the detentions of nearly 400 Middle Eastern men after they reported to the Immigration and Naturalization Service on Dec. 16. Anyone who had problems with their immigration documents were taken into custody.

By midday, KIRN was flooded with calls from worried friends and relatives.

"Everybody is listening day and night to find out what is going on," said Soheila Jonoubi, an attorney who helped organize

the protest outside the INS offices in Westwood. "It was a way that no one had to go through this alone."

Station representatives said they preempted programming because they wanted to be the primary source of news for the community.

"We are in a major market, but the Iranian community is a small town and we are the meeting place," said station manager John Paley. "To be on top of (the detentions) was a natural."

Some Iranian Americans, however, expressed disappointment with the station's nonstop coverage. Massoud Akhari, a volunteer with the Orange County-based group International Harmony, called the programming "shock radio."

"The radio should not have encouraged a protest in front of a federal building," said Akhari. "The appropriate thing would have been to go to the INS and speak calmly about what is happening."

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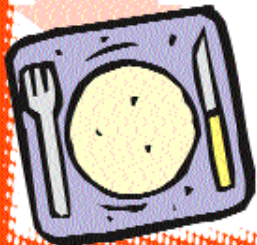
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**NATIONAL**

Moon landing conspiracies continue to haunt NASA

HOAX, from page 1

duce a small book refuting the disbelievers' claims. It would be written primarily with teachers and students in mind.

The idea backfired, however, embarrassing the space agency for responding to ignorance, and the book deal was chucked.

"The issue of trying to do a targeted response to this is just lending credibility to something that is, on its face, asinine," NASA chief Sean O'Keefe said in late November after the dust settled.

So it's back to square one: ignoring the hoaxers. That's troubling to some scientific experts who contend that someone needs to lead the fight against scientific illiteracy and the growing belief in pseudoscience like aliens and astrology.

Someone like NASA.

"If they don't speak out, who will?" asks Melissa Pollak, a senior analyst at the National Science Foundation.

Author James Oberg will. The former space shuttle flight controller plans to write the book NASA commissioned from him even though the agency pulled the plug. He's seeking money elsewhere. His working title: "A Pall Over Apollo."

Tom Hanks will speak out, too.

The Academy Award-winning actor, who starred in the 1995 movie "Apollo 13" and later directed the HBO miniseries "From the Earth to the Moon," is working on another lunar-themed project. The IMAX documentary will feature Apollo archival footage. Its title: "Magnificent Desolation," astronaut Buzz Aldrin's real-time description of the moon on July 20, 1969.

While attending the Cape Canaveral premiere of the IMAX version of "Apollo 13" in November, Hanks said the film industry has a responsibility to promote historical literacy. He took a jab at the 1978 movie "Capricorn One," which had NASA's first manned mission to Mars being faked on a sound stage.

"We live in a society where there is no law in making money in the promulgation of ignorance or, in some cases, stupidity," Hanks said. "There are a lot of things you can say never happened. You can go as relatively quasi-harmless as saying no one went to the moon. But you also can say that the Holocaust never happened."

A spokesman for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington says there will always be those who will not be convinced. But the museum does not engage them in debate.

The spokesman acknowledges, however, that if a major news channel was doing a program that questioned the authenticity of the Holocaust, "I'd certainly want to inject myself into the debate with them in a very forceful way."

Television's Fox Network was the moon-hoax purveyor. In February 2001 and again a month later, Fox broadcast an hourlong program titled "Conspiracy Theory: Did We Land on the Moon?"

Roger Launius, who agreed to Oberg's book just before leaving NASA's history office, says the story about the moon hoax has been around a long time. But the Fox show "raised it to a new level, it gave it legs and credibility that it didn't have before."

Indeed, the National Science Foundation's Pollak says two of her colleagues, after watching the Fox special, thought it was possible that NASA faked

the moon landings. "These are people who work at NSF," she stresses.

The story went — and still goes — something like this: America was desperate to beat the Soviet Union in the high-stakes race to the moon, but lacked the technology to pull it off. So NASA faked the six manned moon landings in a studio somewhere out West.

Ralph Rene, a retired carpenter in Passaic, N.J., takes it one step farther. The space fakery started during the Gemini program, according to Rene, author of the 1992 book, "NASA Mooned America!"

"I don't know what real achievements they've done because when do you trust a liar?" Rene says. "I know we have a shuttle running right around above our heads, but that's only 175 miles up. It's under the shield. You cannot go through the shield and live."

**"All I know is that
somebody sued me
because I said I went to
the moon. Of course, the
courts threw it out."**

— JIM LOVELL
Astronaut

He's talking, of course, about the radiation shield.

Alex Roland, a NASA historian during the 1970s and early 1980s, says his office used to have "a kook drawer" for such correspondence and never took it very seriously. But there were no prime-time TV shows disputing the moon landings then — and no Internet.

Still, Roland would be inclined to "just let it go because you'll probably just make it worse by giving it any official attention."

Within NASA, opinions were split about a rebuttal book. Oberg, a Houston-based author of 12 books, mostly about the Russian space program, said ignoring the problem "just makes this harder. To a conspiracy mind, refusing to respond is a sign of cover-up."

Phil Plait, a Sonoma State University astronomer who picks apart the moon hoaxers' claims on his "Bad Astronomy" Web site, agrees that NASA should have followed through with the book but understands why it didn't.

"It became, as things like this do, a media circus. And by circus, I mean more like carnival," Plait says, toot-tootling like a calliope. He warns, "There's a lot of antiscientific thinking and if this stuff is allowed to continue, it's going to spell doom for our country."

Apollo 13 commander Jim Lovell does not know what else, if anything, can be done to confront this moon madness.

"All I know is that somebody sued me because I said I went to the moon," says the 74-year-old astronaut. "Of course, the courts threw it out."

The authorities also threw out the case involving Apollo 11 moonwalker Aldrin in September.

Parents of slain woman want to stop Internet brokers

Cloned baby coming home to U.S. on Monday, officials say

couples, including the lesbians, were expected to give birth to Clonaid-created clones by early February.

The United States has no specific law against human cloning. But the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which regulates human experiments, says its regulations forbid human cloning without prior agency permission, and it has launched an investigation into whether Clonaid illegally performed any work on U.S. soil.

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NATIONAL

Supreme Court reveals some drama in 2002

BY GINA HOLLAND
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — An injury to the chief justice, an emotional discussion of racism and a rare tie vote provided some drama at the Supreme Court before its winter break, but the real action comes next year.

Justices return to work in January to take up cases including a landmark challenge to college affirmative action and a gay rights case that asks if same-sex couples can be fined for having sex.

And decisions are expected by June in several high-profile cases that the court has already debated over the past three months, including how states punish cross-burners, sex offenders and revolving-door criminals. They also considered the copyright protection of Mickey Mouse and other creations, and the trademark of Victoria's Secret in a case pitting the lingerie giant against a man named Victor who runs his own lingerie shop.

It's considered a good bet Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, 78, will end his 31-year career at the court in June, when the court's term concludes.

Rehnquist, hobbled by a knee injury suffered in a fall at his home last month, missed all of December's arguments. Surgeons repaired a torn leg tendon, and Rehnquist is working at the court, just not sitting on the bench.

Already, the term has proved emotional. In one of the session's most intently watched arguments, the court considered a First Amendment test of Virginia's cross-burning law. The state prosecuted two white men who tried to set a cross on fire in the yard of black neighbors and a man who burned a large cross during a Ku Klux Klan rally. The men say cross burning is constitutionally protected free speech.

Justice Clarence Thomas, who rarely speaks, used the case to condemn a history of lynchings in the South. "This was a reign of terror, and the cross was a symbol of that reign of terror," said Thomas, the only black justice.

Among other cases the court will consider next year:

—Whether race can be a factor in college admission. At stake are race-conscious admissions policies at most top public and private colleges. The Supreme Court banned racial quotas in 1978, but allowed schools to consider race in admissions. The justices could use a case

this term involving the University of Michigan to impose more limits on affirmative action.

—If public libraries that receive federal funding can be forced to install filters on computers to block sexually explicit Web sites, a case that affects more than 14 million people who use library computers. Critics say filters block Internet sites that offer helpful information about such things as health and science.

—If it's an unconstitutional for states to punish gays and lesbians for having sex, and if any couples can be penalized for privately engaging in sex acts that states deem abnormal.

Appeals also are anticipated in the next few months in challenges of a new campaign finance law and the government's post-Sept. 11 intelligence-gathering tactics. Justices could receive those in time for arguments this spring.

Tom Goldstein, a Washington lawyer who argues often before the Supreme Court, said the justices are getting involved in a broad range of major issues.

"These cases will remind the public of the Supreme Court's immense power to shape American life," Goldstein said.

Of some 80 cases the court hears each year, so far justices have issued rulings in just a handful of cases, and most of those were settled on unanimous votes. One exception came Dec. 16 in a major wetlands protection case. Justices, on a tie vote, affirmed a decision in favor of the government.

Environmental activists had feared the court would use the case to give farmers and developers more freedom to work in environmentally sensitive areas without getting government permission first.

Justice Anthony M. Kennedy knew the California developer who filed the appeal, so he sat out the case. The remaining eight justices were deadlocked.

So far, the Supreme Court has not agreed to hear any major death penalty cases. Justices will debate the visitation rights of inmates, punishments of dishonest charity telemarketers, and the forced medications of mentally ill people facing criminal trials.

Vikram David Amar, a former Supreme Court clerk and law professor at the University of California, Hastings, said the justices have jumped into some controversial cases that they could have ducked, guaranteeing an interesting spring.

FBI looking for five Arab illegal immigrants

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The FBI said Sunday it is looking for five men of Arab ancestry who may have entered the country illegally last week.

The agency said the five men are believed to have arrived in the United States on or before Christmas Eve.

The five men are: Abid Noraiz Ali, Iftikhar Khozmai Ali, Mustafa Khan Owasi, Adil Pervez and Akbar Jamal, all born between 1969 and 1983. The FBI warned that the names and birth dates may be false.

The FBI said it had no indication the men were linked to terrorist activities, but still wanted to question the five "based upon information developed in the course of ongoing investigations."

The FBI said it was working with the Customs, Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Transportation Security Agency to find the men.

INTERNATIONAL



President-elect Kibaki to end autocratic style in Kenya

BY MATTHEW ROSENBERG
Associated Press Writer

NAIROBI, Kenya — President-elect Mwai Kibaki promised Kenyans on Sunday an end to the government's authoritarian style and sweeping changes to battle corruption and staggering economic problems after his landslide victory over the party that ruled the East African nation for nearly four decades.

After Kibaki's opponent conceded defeat in the face of lop-sided 63 to 30 percent results, hundreds of the president-elect's supporters in trucks Sunday evening cruised down Nairobi's Moi Avenue, named for the outgoing president. Many waved leafy green branches — an African symbol of a new beginning — and chanting "Kibaki!"

Governing "is not a matter of promoting the ego of a president," the 71-year-old economist said to enthusiastic cheers from supporters who gathered at his colonial-era mansion. "A president should prove himself by things he's going to do which change the life of ordinary Kenyans."

He said he would propose legislation that would require top officials to declare their wealth and break with longtime traditions like hanging the presidential photo in shops and offices throughout the country.

Kibaki and his National Rainbow Coalition — an alliance of opposition parties that won a majority in parliament in Friday's election — intend to begin proving themselves soon: He will be sworn in Monday as Kenya's third president since independence from Britain in 1963.



Karel Prinsloo/Associated Press

Supporters of the National Rainbow Coalition carry posters of their leader Mwai Kibaki as they celebrate in Nairobi after the news that the National Rainbow Coalition had won Kenya's elections, Sunday.

However, there are no formal procedures for the mechanics of handing over power in Kenya, which has been run by one party, the Kenya Africa National Union, since independence. Outgoing President Daniel arap Moi has been in power since 1978.

Officials in Kibaki's alliance have been vague about what is actually involved in the transfer. A Western diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said no formal arrangements for the transition have been made with Moi; he said a hasty inauguration

could lead to some administrative chaos.

Moi had an autocratic style befitting the primary school teacher he once was, treating Kenyans as he may have treated his pupils — he often told people KANU was their "mother and father." During the first 13 years of his rule, KANU was the only party allowed in the country, until multiparty politics were introduced in 1991. He also had a tendency to issue impromptu edicts that were rarely followed up, like declaring AIDS a national disaster but doing little to stem the spread

of the disease.

Kibaki's promise of an economic revival — and numerous other pledges, like free primary school education — have raised hopes among ordinary Kenyans.

"It's like we've won our independence again," said George Owino, an unemployed 33-year-old from one of the sprawling slums that ring Nairobi, the largest city in eastern Africa.

Some say that such unbridled optimism is bound to give way — "politicians will disappoint you, mark my words," Rev. Lucy Waruinge told parishioners at the All Saints Anglican Cathedral.

Moi was unable to run again because of constitutional limits. The KANU candidate he picked to try to succeed him, Uhuru Kenyatta, conceded defeat Sunday.

"KANU and I will respect him in his position in accordance with our constitution," said Kenyatta, the 41-year-old son of Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta. He will be the leader of the official opposition after winning a seat in parliament.

Soon after, the Electoral Commission officially declared Kibaki the winner. With all but 14 of 210 constituencies reporting, Kibaki had won 63 percent of the vote, the commission said. Kenyatta had 30 percent.

The Institute for Education in Democracy, an independent monitoring group, put turnout at 56 percent of the country's 10.5 million registered voters.

Out of 192 seats confirmed so far from the 210-seat legislature, the Rainbow alliance captured 122 to KANU's 52. The remaining seats were divided among smaller parties.

Al-Qaida leader said to have sought help on nuclear bomb

BY KATHY GANNON
Associated Press Writer

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — A leading Pakistani nuclear scientist, barred by his government from talking to reporters, has made it known through his son that Osama bin Laden approached him before the Sept. 11 attacks for help in making nuclear weapons.

The al-Qaida leader was rebuffed, the son, Azim Mahmood, said in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

"Basically Osama asked my father, 'How can a nuclear bomb be made and can you help us make one?'" he said. "My father said, 'No, and secondly you must understand it is not child's play for you to build a nuclear bomb.'"

The scientist, Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood, is under a gag order from Pakistani intelligence officials, but his conversations with bin Laden in meetings in 2000 and as late as July 2001 were reconstructed for the Associated Press by his son.

The conversations as described by Azim Mahmood clearly show bin Laden was interested in developing nuclear weapons. They don't, however, shed any light on whether the terrorist mastermind had taken even the first steps on that complex technological challenge.

The U.S. Embassy declined to discuss Mahmood's story. American officials in Washington also would not comment.

There has been previous evidence of al-Qaida's interest in nuclear weapons.

Computers found by journalists and U.S. troops at a variety of facilities in Afghanistan indicated al-Qaida had

sought to obtain and develop nuclear and other potent weapons. An AP reporter saw anthrax and other chemical concoctions at an al-Qaida laboratory outside Kabul.

During a New York trial two years ago stemming from bombings at two U.S. embassies in Africa, a former bin Laden aide testified he was ordered in 1993 to try to buy uranium on the black market for an effort to develop a nuclear weapon. Jamal Ahmed Al-Fadl said al-Qaida was prepared to spend \$1.5 million, but he didn't know if a purchase was ever made.

In addition, U.S. officials have said captured al-Qaida lieutenant Abu Zubaydah told American interrogators the terrorist network was working on a "dirty bomb," a conventional bomb that would scatter radioactive material. Such a radiological weapon would be far less deadly and damaging than a nuclear explosion.

Authorities also have said that Jose Padilla, the former Chicago gang member charged with plotting with al-Qaida, attended two meetings in Karachi, Pakistan, at which senior al-Qaida operatives discussed the possible use of a "dirty bomb."

A United Nations report issued by experts monitoring al-Qaida movements warned that al-Qaida has the potential to obtain nuclear material and build "some kind of dirty bomb."

"Our concern is you can actually get the stuff," said Michael Chandler, the British expert who heads the monitoring group.

The conversations related by Azim Mahmood confirm bin Laden's nuclear ambitions. But they also offer a glimpse at the nexus of science and conservative Islam at a high level in Pakistan, one of the

world's newest nuclear powers along with neighboring India, whose own leaders follow a Hindu fundamentalist philosophy.

The elder Mahmood, who has been questioned by the FBI and is under close Pakistani surveillance, is a deeply conservative Muslim who espouses the same puritanical brand of Islam as Afghanistan's former Taliban rulers.

Enraged over Pakistan's plans in 1998 to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, he resigned from the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and devoted his time to his charity, the Holy Quran Research Foundation.

Last December, President Bush labeled the charity a terrorist group and Mahmood a terrorist. His assets and those of his charity were frozen.

"Even my father's pension is blocked. At the moment he has nothing," said Azim Mahmood, a physician in his 30s who also adheres to a strict Islam.

For years, Pakistani peace activists and liberal academics have fretted about Islamic hard-liners in Pakistan's nuclear organization.

"We have always expressed our fear that a large number of people in the nuclear establishment would be ideologically motivated to share Pakistan's nuclear weapons technology," said Dr. A.H. Nayyar, a nuclear physicist and research fellow at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, an independent Pakistani group.

Azim Mahmood said his father met with bin Laden in Afghanistan several times, "and definitely this question of building a nuclear bomb came up."

The father was detained in November 2001, questioned and freed in February, but has to carry a mobile phone at all times so Pakistani intelligence can track his movements, the son said.

He said his father's American interrogators were particularly intrigued by one of his books, "Doomsday and Life After Death," and wanted to know whether it meant he had some kind of inside knowledge of what al-Qaida was planning.

Mahmood first met bin Laden in 2000 while visiting Afghanistan to build a school, the son said. He wanted to help the Taliban, because he was angry at the international criticism of the regime's brand of Islam, the son recalled.

"My father shared the Taliban thinking. He liked their system of government. He wanted to help them."

When bin Laden learned a nuclear scientist was in Kabul, he sent an al-Qaida operative, Abu Bilal, to the Pakistani's hotel to arrange a meeting, the son said.

"My father went to meet him and he said, 'Why don't you come and help us build these things?'" Azim Mahmood said, adding that the two men met several times in the Afghan capital and the discussion invariably returned to nuclear weapons.

The al-Qaida leader wanted a nuclear device, Azim Mahmood said. "Al-Qaida also wanted a person who could train their people, and who could get them enriched material for their weapons."

Experts say, however, that making a nuclear bomb requires a cadre of highly trained, experienced scientists and technicians.



SPORTS

Slammin'



Mark J. Terrill/Associated Press

Golden State Warriors' Jason Richardson goes up for a dunk as Los Angeles Clippers' Corey Maggette watches during the first half Saturday night in Los Angeles.

Defending NFC champs prepare for last game

BY R.B. FALLSTROM
AP Sports Writer

ST. LOUIS — It's the end of the line for the defending NFC champions, a month earlier than they had expected.

The St. Louis Rams have a chance to go out on a positive note in Monday night's regular-season finale against playoff-bound San Francisco 49ers. No matter what happens, they'll have a bitterly disappointing sub-.500 record to think about all offseason, coming on the heels of 14-2 dominance in 2001.

"It's rough, but you have to realize that we are professionals," wide receiver Isaac Bruce said. "We get paid to play 16 games and this is our 16th game."

The result is a meaningless windup to the regular season instead of a showdown.

The 49ers (10-5) have what the Rams (6-9) owned for three dominant years — the NFC West title. They will open the playoffs at home next week.

"We certainly anticipated this game maybe coming down to the division championship, and I think that's what ABC felt," San Francisco coach Steve Mariucci said. "But injuries can change everything."

The Rams lost their first five games before the Rams woke up and won five in a row, but then injuries to Kurt Warner, Marshall Faulk, Aeneas Williams and

Orlando Pace finished them off.

Warner is on injured reserve with his second broken hand of the season, Faulk is crawling toward 1,000 yards on a sprained ankle that's bothered him for almost two months, Williams is on IR with ankle and leg injuries and Pace has missed almost half the season with calf and hamstring woes, although he'll play in the finale.

"The team that's going to win the Super Bowl this year is the healthiest team," wide receiver Troy Edwards said. "If you don't have healthy players you just can't compete, and we had a lot of injuries — the most injuries I've seen all my life."

"But life is all about adversity and you've got to deal with it."

Mariucci has sympathy for the Rams' plight as his team prepares for the playoffs. Wide receiver Terrell Owens will miss his second straight week with groin and foot injuries that have bothered him the past month, but that's about the extent of the 49ers' injuries.

"Every team is just a handful of injuries away from being a completely different team," Mariucci said. "Nobody really has enough depth right now because the talent is spread so relatively evenly."

"The injury bug can hit you fast and they've gone through that."

This is still a rivalry.

Raiders show off running game

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND — The Oakland Raiders never questioned whether they had a decent running game — they just didn't need to depend on it because Rich Gannon's arm was always enough.

Until Saturday.

The Raiders ran the ball a season-high 60 times in the pouring rain and deep puddles to beat Kansas City 24-0 in their regular-season finale. The victory gave Oakland the home-field advantage throughout the playoffs and a bye next week.

Sometimes, Gannon throws almost 60 times a game, so the 60 run plays were definitely a big change.

"We put personal statistics aside," running back Charlie Garner said. "We only had one focus, and that was the Super Bowl."

Garner ran for 135 yards and a touchdown on 29 carries, and for the first time the Raiders

unleashed him to carry the ball without being limited in his touches. Garner has been wanting that ever since joining the Raiders before last season from the San Francisco 49ers.

Oakland ran for 280 yards, only the team's second game over 200 this year and the first since its season-opening win against Seattle. The Raiders have only run for more than 100 yards in five games this season, a stat that shows just how much they've relied upon their passing attack.

In a win over Denver last weekend, Oakland used six straight running plays in one touchdown drive.

The Raiders (11-5) believe with their recent accomplishments on the ground, they will be even tougher to stop in the playoffs — and teams will have a harder time preparing for this high-powered offense.

On Saturday, Oakland's top three running backs all seemed satisfied. Coach Bill Callahan

spoke recently of the importance of Garner, Zack Crockett and Tyrone Wheatley each being proud of the others and accepting their offensive roles.

"We're the committee, and we came out and held it up," said Crockett, who carried 11 times for 72 yards.

Wheatley had 69 yards on 17 carries.

"Our offensive line did a tremendous job," Callahan said. "Our running backs by committee, they ran the ball physically. Garner had some darting runs, Wheatley came in and there and had some violent runs, and Zack Crockett came in and had some finishing runs. I thought there was outstanding balance in the running game."

Gannon didn't seem to mind he threw only 14 times for a season-low 79 yards. It was the nature of the game, he said. Throwing the slippery ball and having receivers catch it was a difficult task.

Georgia carried by little brothers

BY PAUL NEWBERRY
AP Sports Writer

NEW ORLEANS — Terrence Edwards always looked up to his big brother.

When Robert headed to the football field, Terrence wasn't far behind. When Robert went to Georgia, Terrence figured that would be a good school for him, too.

"We were close," Terrence Edwards said Sunday. "I never played with my age group. I was always smaller, but I wanted to play with (Robert). That made me the player I am today."

But the little brother did something his big brother couldn't during his Bulldog career — win a Southeastern Conference championship.

Terrence Edwards, a senior receiver, wasn't the only Georgia player who one-upped a distinctive older sibling. Jon Stinchcomb and Boss Bailey also arrived at Georgia in 1998, following Matt Stinchcomb and Champ Bailey.

In time, each of the younger siblings carved out his own distinctive legacy.

Edwards will leave as the leading receiver in school history. Stinchcomb and Bailey were both second-team All-Americans in their senior season, helping the third-ranked Bulldogs (12-1) win their first Southeastern Conference title since 1982.

Oh, brother.

"They have a lot of respect for their brothers and what they did," said Georgia coach Mark Richt, whose team meets No. 16 Florida State in the Sugar Bowl on Wednesday night. "But they got something their brothers will never get: an SEC championship ring. It validates their career."

They all had some big, big shoes to fill.

Indeed, the three older brothers set a very high standard for their siblings.

Matt Stinchcomb was an All-American lineman who finished with a near-perfect 3.96 grade-point average. Champ Bailey played both offense and defense, also making the All-America team. Robert Edwards rushed for more than 2,000 yards in his college career, despite being plagued by injuries. When college was done, all three were picked in the first round of the NFL draft.

The older brothers played on a 10-2 team in 1997, but they always fell short of a championship.

"Matt put in four great years of work, like most of us here at Georgia, but he didn't accomplish some of his goals," Jon Stinchcomb said. "I'm sure he's a little jealous, but I also know he's extremely proud. He feels like he's part of this, too."

Matt, now a backup guard for the playoff-bound Oakland Raiders, conceded that he has no intention of trying on his little brother's championship ring.

"I don't want to end up being any more jealous than I already am," the older Stinchcomb said after Oakland closed the regular season with a victory over Kansas City. "I've got to tell you: you go to school trying to win championships. So, when you don't get it done and others are able to, you really wish you had."

Boss Bailey called his brother — a Pro Bowl cornerback for the Washington Redskins — shortly after the Bulldogs won the SEC title. Since then, he's made sure to keep Champ updated on every step it takes to get a champi-

onship ring.

All in good fun, of course.

"I've been bragging about how we designed them," said Boss Bailey, who also followed another older brother, Ronald, with the Bulldogs. "I definitely can't wait to show it off. It's for my finger only."

Robert Edwards now plays for the Miami Dolphins, having made a remarkable comeback from a knee injury that almost cost him his left leg. He doesn't feel left out of Georgia's championship season, even though he hasn't taken a handoff at the school in four years.

"We're on top of the SEC," Robert said Sunday in a telephone interview from New England, where the Dolphins lost to the Patriots. "I feel like I was part of that. We were able to raise the bar and help get us back on top."

He's especially happy for his little brother, who broke all of Georgia's major career receiving records — and even the SEC mark for yards with 3,033 — but still had plenty of ups and downs.

As a junior, Terrence Edwards was benched for several games because he wasn't taking practice seriously enough. He bounced back as a senior to have the best year of his career (56 receptions, 944 yards, 10 touchdowns), but many will remember the catch he didn't make.

In the waning minutes against Florida, Terrence dropped a potential touchdown pass. The Bulldogs wound up with only loss, 20-13, costing them a chance to play for the national title.

Edwards was condemned by many in the Bulldog faithful, prompting a strong rebuke from his family against fair-weather fans.

COMICS



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 - 16 Of a group of digits
 - 17 Three on a clock
 - 18 Typewriter bars
 - 19 Stinky's pal
 - 20 Parking place
 - 21 Cheese turn
 - 22 Writer Albert
 - 23 More national
 - 26 Mince native
 - 27 Greek letter
 - 28 Knight's address
 - 29 Tuque, e.g.
 - 33 Collection
 - 34 Drink cooler
 - 35 Start for Des Moines
 - 37 Shrinking sea
 - 38 Position
 - 39 Roadster
 - 40 Good quality
- DOWN**
- 41 Drugs
 - 1 Makes progress
 - 2 Confess
 - 3 "—"
 - 4 Singing group
 - 5 Harsh field
 - 6 Milky stones
 - 7 Warri ahead
 - 8 Pinewood holder
 - 9 Assuage
 - 12 Director Rob
 - 16 Old autos, e.g.
 - 21 Event for overseas
 - 22 Current
 - 23 Short solo
 - 24 —
 - 25 Vineyard
 - 26 Oxford, e.g.
 - 27 Waller holder
 - 28 Record
 - 29 Science's Marie
 - 31 Lower
 - 32 Furs
 - 33 Those with power



Saturday's answer

edge city

by TERRY & PATTY LEBAN



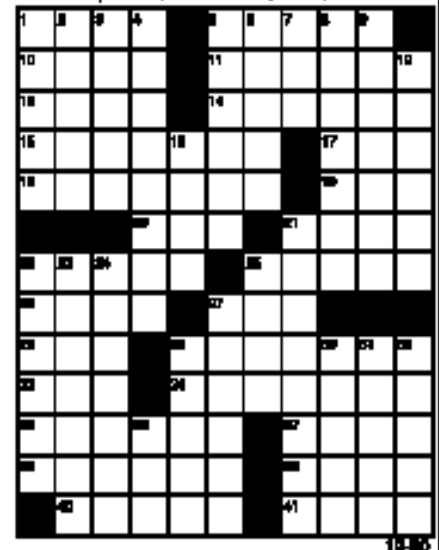
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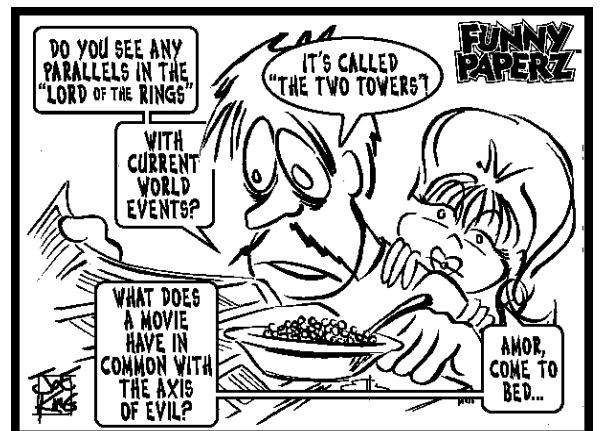
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NEWS OF THE WEIRD by Chuck Shepard

Woman loses custody breastfeeding son

- The Urbana, Ill., mother who was still breastfeeding her 8-year-old boy lost partial custody of him to the state (November).
- New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg said he was considering purchasing out-of-service cruise ships to alleviate the nightly overcrowding at the city's emergency shelters (November).
- Prominent, board-certified Independence, Mo., psychiatrist Donald Hinton, who seriously swears that he has been treating Elvis Presley for the last five years, was put on probation in November by the state for overprescribing a painkiller to a patient (not Elvis).





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SANTA MONICA SCENE °CALENDAR EDITION

MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2002

TODAY

The annual Santa Monica Nativity Scenes is on display at Palisades Park along Ocean Avenue near Arizona. The 14 lighted scenes with life-size figures depicting events surrounding Christ's birth will remain on display through January 1. For more information please call (310) 453-4445.

Toddler Time, 10 a.m. Barnes & Noble at the Promenade and Wilshire. (310)260-9110.

Santa Monica Strutters, a FREE program sponsored by UCLA Healthcare's 50-Plus Program! Walking programs for adults 50 or older looking for safe, low-impact exercise in a comfortable environment. The Santa Monica Strutters meet Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 8 a.m. To 10 a.m., at Santa Monica Place, Fourth St. and Broadway Ave. in Santa Monica.

Senior Suppers - Discounted meals for people AGE 55 or older are served daily, from 3:30 p.m. To 7 p.m., in the cafeteria at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, 1250 16th Street in Santa Monica. \$3.69 Info only: (310)319-4837.

Harvelle's Blues Club present Sports Happy Hour, 5pm to 8pm. 100 inch movie screen with high definition LCD projector, JBL surround sound, drink specials, \$3.00 Happy Hour Buffet. 1432 4th Street. Between Broadway and Santa Monica Blvd. (310)395-1676

Unurban Coffee House presents Hot Topics Night hosted by Ali every Monday evening. Signup is at 8pm. Open panel discussion and open forum. 3301 Pico Blvd. (310)315-0056.

TUESDAY

The annual Santa Monica Nativity Scenes is on display at Palisades Park along Ocean Avenue near Arizona. The 14 lighted scenes with

life-size figures depicting events surrounding Christ's birth will remain on display through January 1. For more information please call (310) 453-4445.

Ongoing support groups for people 55 and older. Current openings in, So, What Are You Going to Do With the Rest of your Life? Tuesdays, 10:00 to 11:30am. Center for Healthy Aging, 2125 Arizona Avenue. Sliding scale fee. Not drop-in groups. Phone interview required. Call Information and Referral. (310)576-2550.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS AT SMC'S EMERITUS COLLEGE. Santa Monica College offers free bereavement support groups in the summer session through it's Emeritus College, a widely praised program designed for older adults. Two support groups will meet Tuesdays on an ongoing basis. One group will meet from noon to 1:50 p.m. and the other from 7 p.m. to 8:50 p.m. For information and registration, call Emeritus College at (310) 434-4306.

Crossroads Schools in Santa Monica invites local musicians (grades 3-7) to join orchestra rehearsals. Rehearsals are ongoing and are held each Tuesday of the school year, from 3:15 to 4:15. Students may join at anytime. Cost is free, students must bring their own instruments. 1714 21st Street, SM. For more information please call (310)829-7391

Senior Suppers - Discounted meals for people AGE 55 or older are served daily, from 3:30 p.m. To 7 p.m., in the cafeteria at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, 1250 16th Street in Santa Monica. \$3.69 Info only: (310)319-4837.

Santa Monica College Emeritus College Band invites adult musicians who play a band instrument to join the band. Rehearsals are held each Tuesday evening in the Band room at Lincoln Middle School, 14th and California Streets from 7pm to 9:15pm. Concerts are given during the year. For more information call (310)474-5271.

Unurban Coffee House presents Stitch 'n' Bitch every Tuesday evening. Chicks, yarn, coffee & chat. 7:30pm to 9:30pm. 3301 Pico Blvd. (310)315-0056.

MOVIE °GUIDE

LOEWS CINIPLEX BROADWAY CINEMA

1441 Third St. at Broadway

About Schmidt (R) 12:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40. Two Weeks Notice (PG-13) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:10. Antwone Fisher (PG-13) 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:20. The Hours (PG-13) 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00.

MANN CRITERION

1313 Third St.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (PG) 11:30, 3:15, 7:05, 10:30. Treasure Planet (PG) 12:00. The Hot Chick (PG-13) 2:30, 5:00, 7:45, 10:10. Gangs of New York (R) 11:15, 12:15, 3:00, 4:15, 7:10, 8:15, 10:40. Narc (R) 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00.

AMC THEATRE SM 7

1310 3rd Street

Die Another Day (PG-13) 11:35, 9:50. Drumline (PG-13) 10:30, 4:40. Maid in Manhattan (PG-13) 11:45, 2:20, 4:55, 7:35, 10:05. Star Trek: Nemesis: with Captions (PG-13) 12:05, 2:45, 5:15, 8:00, 10:40. The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (PG-13) 11:15, 2:20, 3:05, 6:15, 7:05, 10:15, 11:00. Catch Me If You Can (PG-13) 10:15, 12:00, 1:20, 3:20, 4:35, 6:45, 7:50, 10:00, 11:00.

LANDMARK NU-WILSHIRE

1314 Wilshire Blvd.

Bowling for Columbine (R) 1:30, 4:15, 7:30, 10:15. Far From Heaven (PG-13) 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30.

LAEMMLE MONICA

1332 2nd St.

Pinocchio (NR) 1:45, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40. Frida (R) 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:05. Sonny (R) 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50. Max (R) 1:30, 4:35, 7:25, 10:05.



BACK PAGE

Poll shows Americans most admire President Bush

BY ELIZABETH WOLFE

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Hillary Rodham Clinton, Laura Bush and J. Lo have something in common: Americans like them.

A Gallup poll found the nation divided in the contest for "most admired" woman. Among men, President Bush remained the clear favorite for the second year in a row.

Clinton, the former first lady who now represents New York in the Senate, and her successor in the White House, Laura Bush, topped Gallup's list of women along with talk show host Oprah Winfrey. Clinton was favored by 7 percent of those surveyed; Bush and Winfrey had 6 percent each.

Among men, the president had a commanding 28 percent for men — well ahead of the runner-up, former president Jimmy Carter who was in single digits.

Jennifer Lopez's new movie and album, along with heavy media coverage of her pending wedding nuptials to actor Ben Affleck, boosted her to the sixth spot with 2 percent. That put her on par with incoming Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C., and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice. Former first lady Barbara Bush and former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher each got 3 percent.

Among younger respondents, Lopez outpolled them all with 10 percent.

Party lines had some bearing on results. Clinton pulled 15 percent among Democrats; the first lady led among Republicans, with 13 percent. They remain no match for Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who won 60 percent of Americans' vote in 1963 following her husband's assassination.

President Bush had earned 39 percent in the wake of last year's terrorist attacks, a record high among men since the survey began in 1948. His dip in Gallup's 2002 poll mirrors his sliding approval ratings over the last several months.

Events also pushed up Carter's standing, with the

recent Nobel Peace Prize winner rising from just 1 percent in 2001. He was the favorite among Democrats polled.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, Pope John Paul II, former President Bill Clinton and the Rev. Billy Graham each earned 2 to 4 percent.

The telephone survey of 1,009 adults was conducted Dec. 16-17 and has a sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. Respondents were asked to name the

two people they admire most.

Only one man, Academy Award winning actor Denzel Washington, from the entertainment world made it into the men's top-10. He rounded out that list along with former South African President Nelson Mandela, former Vice President Al Gore and former President Reagan.

Poet Maya Angelou and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright also made the top-10 women's list.

Study offers evidence that random drug testing is effective in schools

BY JULIA SILVERMAN

Associated Press Writer

PORTLAND, Ore. — Student-athletes subject to random drug testing at an Oregon high school were almost four times less likely to use drugs than their counterparts at a similar school who were not tested, a study shows.

The one-year pilot study by researchers at Oregon Health & Sciences University compared Wahtonka High School in The Dalles, where all student-athletes were subject to random testing, and Warrenton High School, a demographically similar school near Astoria, where they were not.

Of the 135 athletes subject to the random testing at Wahtonka, only 5.3 percent said they were using illicit drugs by the end of the school year, versus 19.4 percent of the 141 athletes at Warrenton.

They also were three times less likely to use performance-enhancing substances like steroids, according to the survey responses, which were anonymous.

The study, conducted during the 1999-2000 school year, was funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, an arm of the National Institutes of Health. The results are published in next month's Journal of Adolescent Health.

"The differences between the schools were dramatic," said Dr. Linn Goldberg, a lead researcher in the study. "And the differences between the non-athletes (who were not tested at either school but who filled out questionnaires about drug use) were not significantly there" — 32.2 percent at Warrenton and 26.6 percent at Wahtonka.

The study comes six months after the issue was thrown into the spotlight by the U.S. Supreme Court. In June,

the court ruled that children attending public schools can be required to participate in drug testing if they join any competitive after-school activity, from football to chess.

Merry Holland, principal at Wahtonka, said the school has continued to test athletes since the study ended.

She said she believes the program has helped curb drug use. But, she said, the drug testing has also led some students to switch to substances that are more difficult to track, like beer.

"There are a lot of parties with alcohol," she said. "If they want to stay with sports, and participate, they might switch to something they think is harder to detect."

Over the past few years, about 5 percent of schools nationwide have required that athletes be drug tested. About two percent have tested students in other activities.



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