

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

6, 37, 17, 13, 16

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 9, 2, 9

Evening picks: 0, 7, 6

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 1, Gold Rush

2nd Place: 4, Big Ben

3rd Place: 11, Money Bags

Race Time: 1:42.23



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

In October, San Francisco artist Jonathon Keats, 32, registered his brain as a sculpture and began selling futures contracts on its 6 billion neurons, offering buyers the rights to any creative products it might produce if science learns how to keep it alive after his death. He also wrote a prospectus for investors, with MRI scans showing the idea-fertility of various brain areas. For now, he is selling inexpensive options (\$10) to buy a million neurons for \$10,000 when he dies. He sold 71 the first day.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Team effort is a lot of people doing what I say."

— Michael Winner



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Rose Bowl matchup leaves SM in the dust

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

With college football's Rose Bowl just two days away, Santa Monica hotels, restaurants and bars normally would be abuzz with school alumni and other boosters.

But not this year.

Neither Michigan State nor the University of California have set up camp in Santa Monica — a traditional destination for Rose Bowl fans. And followers of the two teams, which will face off in the annual Jan. 1 Rose Bowl, appear to be steering clear, too.

The loss is especially painful to local bars, restaurants and hotels, which for years have benefited from a big crowd with an appetite for entertainment.

At Le Merigot Beach Hotel & Spa, more than 100 rooms origi-

"We're very happy for USC to be involved in such a great game, but it has not brought a traveling fan base."

— JOE KURTH

Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel

nally set aside for visiting fans are vacant. The same is true at the Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, used for more than a decade by Rose Bowl team marching bands. And at the Britannia bar on Santa Monica Boulevard, owners are bracing for as much as a 20

See ROSE BOWL, page 5



File photo

Thousands of Nebraska Cornhusker fans descend onto the Santa Monica Pier two years ago before the Rose Bowl. Santa Monica has traditionally been a destination spot for Rose Bowl fans, but not this year.

Penguin swimmers will plunge into new year

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON

Daily Press Staff Writer

The new year will get off to an icy start in Venice for hundreds of people who plan to jump into the frigid Pacific Ocean on Jan. 1.

Without the standard wetsuit usually necessary for the ocean's 50-degree temperatures, a group of hearty, enthusiastic swimmers will ring in 2004 during the 44th annual Penguin Swim at the Venice breakwater on New Year's Day.

The swim has been a tradition for decades, first started by Cecelia Kilger in 1960. The event is dedicated to Kilger, who died two years ago and participated in the swim until she was 93 years old.

"It was a small nucleus of Venice characters and it has grown every year," said Mary McGuirk, the event's organizer, adding that participants range from 5 years old to 90 years old. In the '60s, between 10 and 20 people were involved. Now, more than 100 join in the cold water fun.

Actor Dick Van Patton, widely known as Mr. Bradford from the television show, "Eight is Enough," has been a regular for years, along with his family.

Each year a king and queen are

"It was a small nucleus of Venice characters and it has grown every year."

— MARY MCGUIRK

Event organizer

crowned, as well as a prince and princess for the competitive swim, McGuirk said.

Los Angeles County lifeguards will set the course for the swim, as well as for the competitive race, depending on the surf. Kings and queens are determined by McGuirk on the day of the swim by their past participation and enthusiasm. The prince and princess are determined by results of the competitive race, McGuirk said.

Last year, Spring de Haviland was named Penguin Swim queen and Peter Griswald was crowned king. Robert Ballentine was prince and Kimberly Emerson was named princess.

de Haviland's first experience

See PENGUINS, page 6



Photo courtesy of Pat Preston

Jumping into the freezing cold waters of the Pacific Ocean has become a tradition for hundreds in Venice on New Year's Day.

Town 'sold' last year on eBay back on the block

BY MIELIKKI ORG

Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — A year after the rural town of Bridgeville was apparently snapped up in a frenzied online auction for nearly \$2 million, the town is up for bid again — this time at half the price.

The supposed buyer, who was only ever identified as a nameless West Coast developer, disappeared soon after making the

winning offer on eBay. No check ever arrived. That prompted real estate broker Denise Stuart to offer the property to another bidder. And another. And another.

After a dozen potential deals fell through, including one negotiation with a would-be buyer from Arizona that lasted five months, Stuart posted the property last week on the more standard listings that brokers routinely share.

See TOWN, page 6

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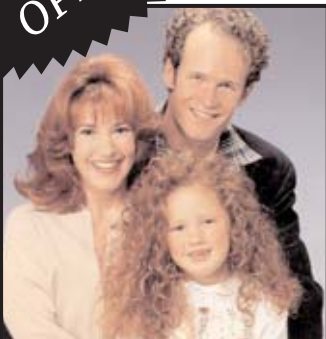
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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 ★★★★★ Though you're still a powerhouse to deal with, you could feel a major planetary swing today, which will last for the next seven years. You could become more introspective as a result. Let go for the moment and become more present with friends. Your instincts work with an authority figure. Tonight: Try something different.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 ★★ Lie back if possible. A surprise could be heading your way when you least expect it. Allow your creativity to emerge, though you might be asked to keep something a secret. An associate or partner suddenly becomes more open. Tonight: Get some extra zzz's before the big night.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 ★★★★★ Friends seem to surround you, even in the work arena. You might need to slow down and head in a new direction, especially regarding a work matter. You might be surprised at a turn of events. Go with the flow. Tonight: Could you be celebrating already?

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 ★★ For whatever reason, you feel pressured. You might feel as if everyone is dropping his or her work on you. You might not be happy about this situation, so ask for help. You could be delighted by the outcome. Others pitch in. Tonight: A force to be dealt with.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 ★★★★★ You might want to take an overview, especially since someone you trusted could be acting up. Get used to the unexpected, but in a different way from in the past. This person reveals more of what motivates him or her. Tonight: Start wishing people a happy New Year's.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 ★★★★★ Those in your daily life could start acting quite differently from how they did in the past. You might be stunned by what you see. Meanwhile, work with a trusted partner or associate. Make plans around the home. Tonight: Love the one you're with.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 ★★★★★ No one doubts your popularity, especially as you have such a nice way of speaking to people. Others cannot help but respond. Be open to new concepts at work that could be quite revolutionary. Talk; don't hold back now. Tonight: Start enjoying yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 ★★★★★ Whether you are throwing a New Year's party or helping someone finish off a project, you're very busy. If single, hold on to your hat — you could be in for a series of wild flirtations. Excitement starts to surround your love life. Tonight: Don't push. Rest up.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 ★★★★★ Your fiery side emerges, and you won't take "no" for an answer. Realize that you could trigger a minirevolution on the home front if you're not careful. Be loving. In the next few years, you will be gaining many new insights. Tonight: Start the celebration, please.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ★★★★★ You cannot deny the significance of a key family member in your life, nor do you want to. Recognize that this person can be impossible. Work on being more independent and less at the mercy of others and events next year. Tonight: You will need every second of sleep you can get.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ★★★★★ Others seek you out en masse, whether to wish you a happy New Year or to ask you to celebrate with them. You could be overwhelmed by what goes on around you. Put a halt to all the activity if you need to. Tonight: Share with favorite people.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 ★★★★★ Today the planet of surprises enters your sign for a little less than seven years. Those born in the beginning of the sign might feel the impact more. Surprises follow you and come from you. Use caution with spending. Tonight: Make sure you know how much money you have.

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LOCAL



Police use tear gas to catch knife-wielding man

By Daily Press staff

A crazed man was arrested this past weekend after threatening a cab driver and police officers with a knife in downtown Santa Monica.

Santa Monica Police on Saturday at 1:41 p.m. responded to Fifth Street and Wilshire Boulevard regarding a man in a vehicle stopping in the middle of the street and yelling at passing vehicles, police said. The man, who is in his 40s, displayed a knife at a taxi cab driver and chased him both on foot and in his vehicle. When officers arrived, they saw the suspect entering his vehicle and eventually stopped him at Fourth Street and Arizona Avenue.

Once the vehicle was stopped, the sus-

pect refused to exit his vehicle and brandished a knife at officers. Officers used police cars and blocked the suspect's vehicle to prevent the suspect from fleeing, police said. While he was being detained, the suspect inflicted several non-life threatening wounds to his arms and upper body. SMPD's Crisis Negotiation Team attempted to talk the suspect into surrendering but he refused to acknowledge their requests. Because of the suspect's refusal to disarm himself and his continued self-infliction of stab wounds, SMPD's Special Entry Team deployed three tear gas rounds into the suspect's vehicle and he was taken into custody.

The man was transported to a local hospital on a 72-hour psychological evaluation.

Police nab drunk drivers

By Daily Press staff

Police arrested three people this past weekend during a DUI checkpoint.

The Santa Monica Police Department on Saturday, along with other westside law enforcement agencies, participated in a nationwide DUI enforcement program entitled "You Drink, You Drive, You Lose" sponsored by the California's Office of Traffic Safety and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The checkpoint was set up in the 3100 block of Santa Monica Boulevard.

The multi-agency traffic program, led by the SMPD, issued 29 citations and

towed eight vehicles for a variety of offenses. Two individuals were arrested for driving under the influence and one individual was arrested for public intoxication. A total of 1,406 vehicles drove through the checkpoint and 271 vehicles were stopped in a six-hour period. Officers from the Beverly Hills Police Department, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and the California Highway Patrol participated in the traffic program.

SMPD officials say the goal of the programs is to educate and bring awareness to the community, while at the same time detecting and removing drunk and irresponsible drivers from the road.

Santa Monica Elks lodge gives to the underprivileged

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Elks hosted a Christmas Party on Sat. Dec. 20 for under privileged children.

Doug Randall, chairman of the event sent 270 invitations to seven different schools. The teachers then selected the students who would benefit.

Each child presented his or her invitation and went to see Santa, played by Bob Jacobs, chairman of the Elks Trustees. Jacobs said it was heart wrenching listening to the children's Christmas list. One 6-year-old girl said that all she wanted for Christmas was a father. The clown, played by Jan Crozer, then gave each child a stock-

ing filled with fruit, candy and nuts. The "Ladies of the Emblem Club," along with Emblem President Toni Broneau, who also is the Drug Awareness Chairman for the Santa Monica Elks, gave each of the children a drug awareness coloring book and sticker that said "SAY NO TO DRUGS."

Each boy or girl was then given one or two wrapped toys. Elks members took extra presents and stockings to the pediatric ward of the Santa Monica-UCLA Hospital. The nurses there said that the Elks presents were the only ones delivered there.

Raedeon Kiesz, exalted ruler of the Elks, said one father told her that the \$6 he received an hour for walking the picket line in front of Albertsons did not pay

the rent, utilities and food for his family. He said the only presents that his children would receive were those given by the Elks. Needless to say, they received two.

surf report

A new WNW storm swell and building SW wind swell peak this morning. Best-exposed breaks have a good chance of seeing shoulder-plus-high surf, although conditions look less than ideal thanks to consistent SE-SW winds and periods of heavy rain.

OUTLOOK: This swell is expected to start slowly dropping late Tuesday and then quickly fade out on Wednesday. Smaller leftover swell is expected on Thursday.

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.

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	LOW TIDE				HIGH TIDE			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	5:35	2.6	6:55	-0.4	12:59	4.0	(11:32)	5.5
SUNDAY	6:54	2.7	7:46	0.2	1:57	4.2	12:32	4.7
MONDAY	8:31	2.6	8:38	0.7	2:54	4.4	1:46	4.0
TUESDAY	10:08	2.1	9:30	1.2	3:46	4.6	3:19	3.4
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LETTERS

What's wrong with you people?

Editor:

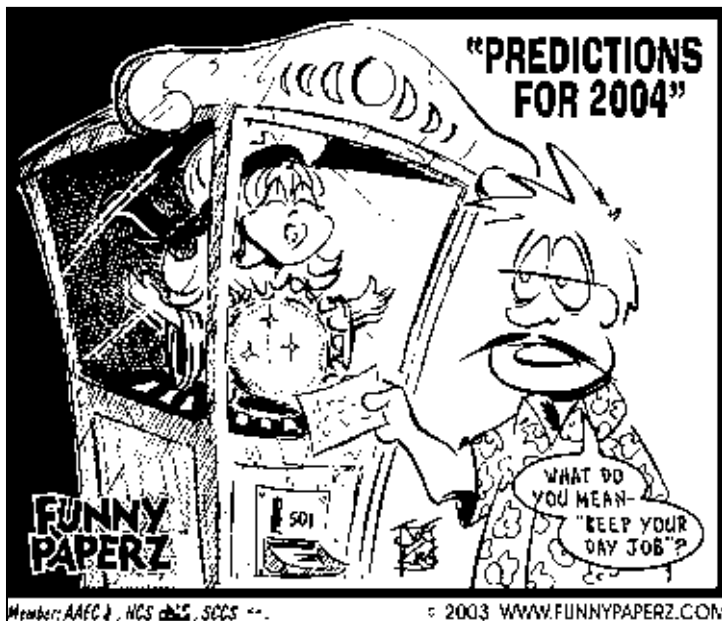
If one's impression of Santa Monica was derived solely from the opinion pages of the Daily Press, one might erroneously conclude that the majority of Santa Monicans are self centered and mean spirited — blaming the homeless for their poverty, supporting inhumane practices such as union busting, decrying the spending of public funds on services including public education, and scapegoating our public servants whose efforts have helped to create one of the most vibrant and livable cities in the world.

Fortunately, as a long time Santa Monica homeowner, I know for a fact that the majority of those who live in this city that I love are decent, caring and compassionate people who feel empathy, not anger, for the less fortunate among us, who are willing to pay increased taxes to fund public education and other services, who support the rights of workers to organize to achieve better wages, benefits, and working conditions, and who appreciate the hard work of our elected representatives and civil servants, who, while only human and therefore imperfect, generally strive to balance and fulfill the many competing needs and goals within our diverse community.

I often suspect that the words I read in the Daily Press are not those of real Santa Monicans but rather of some venomous ghost writer whose goal is to undermine the political and social order by sowing distrust, disdain and dissension.

My wish for the new year is to see more of the kindness, compassion, decency, and civility which is reflective of the Santa Monica I know and love represented on the pages of the Daily Press.

Sonya Fox Sultan
Santa Monica



A U.S. review of 2003: Next year harder than this one?

LEGAL
VIEWS AND
NEWS

By David Pizarra

The end of year is upon us and there are annual reviews being done from all things mundane to sublime. This has been a year of great successes, and great battles have been won. From the Supreme Court finally outlawing the outdated and unrealistic sodomy statutes, to the rather pathetic deposing of a cowardly old man. There also have been painful losses, but most significantly our dignity in the court of world respect. Yes, we captured a madman and it only cost us a measly few hundred billion dollars by the time it's over, as well as the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of service personnel. But how long will it take for us to retrieve our tattered dignity and mend relationships with the other leaders of the world?

This was a year where many lives were destroyed by an elderly driver who lost control of his car in downtown Santa Monica. The ultimate outcome of that tragedy will not be felt for years, and there is no upside for anyone. It is a terrible event to have lost so many. There was the immediate hue and cry that all elderly drivers be tested or restricted. This was the usual overreaction that one can always

expect. There was the noble establishment of a trust fund for the victims. This too was expected. There was minimal sympathy for the driver. For as the main actor in this tragedy, he is to be castigated, spurned by society and sent away as an evilness that we wish to no longer look upon.

But the truth is, we do not wish to look, because we are afraid of what we might see. We might see ourselves there one day. Elderly, feeble, facing the loss of our freedom, either from the denial of a driver's license, or the loss of it after an accident. We do not want to face the fact that we are getting old, that the old man driving ahead of us could be, and likely will be, one day, us.

One man killed millions, intentionally. One man killed about a score, by all appearances unintentionally. I don't know which is the greater tragedy. I also have to wonder why those Iraqis did not rise up, and depose their "leader." Why were they so willing to let their country continue down the path it had been on? But then I wonder why so many are so willing to let our country continue on the path it is on.

The mass public decries the loss of jobs to overseas manufacturing, design, engineering and customer support, but the revenue figures for Wal-Mart are on a steady increase and IBM's aren't. That's probably why they are opening an Indian service center. We cannot expect to continue to spend our money on cheaper products and expect to get paid a higher wage forever.

When we shop at Costco and buy those

European bell peppers, the ones in the nifty six pack of green, yellow and red, we must realize that we are helping the economy of the Netherlands, which is where they are from. Granted, there is a broker in America who sold them to Costco and he will make a small fortune off the bells. And he will likely buy a new car with that money. If it is a Chrysler, that money then goes to Germany. If it is a Cadillac, it will be staying here.

At different times our country seems like the two men above, sometimes intentionally doing damage to itself, such as pursuing weapons of mass destruction where it seems they are not. At other times, we are oblivious to the damage we do by our rampant consumerism and rabid pursuit of the lowest possible price at any cost.

We are historically a country of good people. One that comes to the aid of the downtrodden in times of peril. We sometimes speak intolerantly, but in general we are a tolerant lot. Like any good family, there are battles amongst ourselves. This decade it's the gay rights fight, in the '70s it was women, and in the '60s it was the black civil rights movement, but we tend to provide a united front to the rest of the world when the chips are down. Our leaders, well the Republican ones at least, seem to wax as poetic as a comic book, with their "axis of evil" and "evil doers," but in the end, the world is a better place for our being here, doing the jobs that others do not, or will not, do.

When we strip away the frivolous events of this year, the celebrity scandals and the end of "Friends," we are left with a tough year. A year in which we lost a shuttle and all the personnel aboard. We lost our sense of security in our food supply just last week with Mad Cow Disease finally rearing its ugly head on our soil. Yet with all that, it was a year in which many positive things happened. The economy is improving, though slowly. Cures to diseases were found, reforms to Medicare for our elderly were enacted, and we had a peaceful transition of state government by the will of the people according to the rule of law. That is a miracle.

Locally we saw that as a community, when an event such as the farmer's market tragedy occurs, we can put aside our differences and come together. It was proof that whether we are white, black, straight, gay, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, or atheist, it does not matter to us because we are Americans first, and everything else second.

2004 is shaping up to be harder than 2003, for the battles are getting more personal, the stakes keep going up, but thankfully I live in America, a country that allows me to voice my opinion, especially when it doesn't agree with the leadership.

(David Pizarra is a partner in the Santa Monica law firm of Pizarra & Grist. He welcomes questions, and can be reached at (310) 664-9969 or e-mailed at DPISARRA@PISARRA.COM).

Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

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LOCAL



Local hotel bookings appear to be down this season

ROSE BOWL, from page 1

percent slide in sales over last year. And they're not alone.

"We're very happy for USC to be involved in such a great game, but it has not brought a traveling fan base," said Joe Kurth, executive assistant manager at Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel. Though Kurth declined to say exactly how much business has been lost at his hotel, he called it "a noticeable difference."

City Councilman Bob Holbrook, a pharmacist at USC, said the loss of revenue locally is especially painful because of the controversy surrounding the computer-driven Bowl Championship Series rankings. Rather than pick No.-1 ranked USC to play in the Jan. 4 Sugar Bowl for the national title, the complicated BCS formula pitted Louisiana State University against University of Oklahoma, the second- and third-ranked teams, respectively.

What's left are two teams essentially playing in their own backyards — LSU will play in New Orleans and USC will play in Pasadena.

"Up to 45,000 people would have traveled (had USC gone to the Sugar Bowl)," Holbrook said. "Fifteen thousand going east and up to 30,000 going west. That's, conceivably, 45,000 people needing hotels, restaurants and airfare, now not going anywhere."

Holbrook said the current arrangement means "hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars" in lost revenues to Santa Monica and New Orleans. He said downtown Santa Monica has traditionally been a high-profile partying place for visiting teams and pointed to a recent Rose Bowl when the mayor of Madison, Wisc., and the governor of that state were rumored to both be in line for the same bar and restaurant on the Third Street Promenade.

Reservations weren't recommended during some of those busy Rose Bowl weeks — they were required, Holbrook said.

"That's, conceivably, 45,000 people needing hotels, restaurants and airfare, now not going anywhere."

— CITY COUNCILMAN BOB HOLBROOK

Had USC gone to the Sugar Bowl this year, as was widely expected, Holbrook said the college would have sent thousands of fans to New Orleans. Hotel bookings arranged through school workers were listed at \$1,000 per room for the four-day stay, inexpensive game tickets at \$300 a piece and airfare at \$600 or \$700, Holbrook said. Add to that food, drink, cabs and other entertainment expenses, and the bottom line becomes more substantial.

Francois Khoury, general manager at the Doubletree, where for 12 years one of the visiting marching bands have stayed, said his hotel will miss out on a total of 500 nights of reservations — 100 rooms for five nights. And that doesn't include the family and friends who travel with the band, a number that can't exactly be calculated.

Khoury said because USC is located downtown, its team and fans are staying in downtown Los Angeles and in Century City, where hotel rooms are cheaper and the commute to the Rose Bowl is shorter.

"Why make a longer trip, pay more money and everything else?" Khoury said.

Mark Panelli, sales manager for South LA-based Beauchamp Distributing Company, which delivers beer to bars in Santa Monica, said it's too early to say how much local sales will suffer as a result of the matchup. Currently, local orders seem to be relatively strong, down at the most by 5 percent, he said.

"Whatever trends are going to happen are going to happen in the next three

days," he said. "If they're coming into town, they're going to come this week."

Debbie Lee, communications director for the Santa Monica Visitors and Convention Bureau, an arm of City Hall that promotes tourism, said many fans may choose to stay in Santa Monica even if the teams and others don't. She said the beach and the Promenade, among other things, are a strong draw for tourists.

Her department each year sends out a blast e-mail, contacting the alumni offices and travel agents in the cities of the teams that play in the Rose Bowl. On Monday,

Lee said she didn't know whether that had paid off this year. She added her team will conduct outreach early next year to see how local merchants fared.

In the meantime, Lee said the visitors bureau is working with the Pier Restoration Corp., a nonprofit that manages the Santa Monica Pier, in a project targeting those that do stay in one of Santa Monica's 3,700-plus hotel rooms. They're handing out cheerleader pom-poms — decked out in team colors — as part of promotional packets designed to get tourists out of their rooms and spending their money.

Mayor Richard Bloom said that although the local hospitality industry may suffer from this year's matchup, there is still likely to be a surge on New Year's.

"People are out, celebrating. People are having a good time. And I'm sure, if there is a downturn, to a certain degree it has to do with the economy," he said.



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As the National economy shows signs of recovery, the State is in a period of economic uncertainty. How can Santa Monica best prepare for what lies ahead?

Jack Kyser—Chief Economist at the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC)—will help us peer into Santa Monica's economic future. Jack will give us the short-term and long-term economic outlook for the State and the Region, as well as an in-depth analysis of the unique issues facing Santa Monica. What are the challenges and opportunities that face the community as well as City Hall? How can we best utilize our resources to maintain a solid position in the future?

Don't be left on the pier waiting for your ship to come in! Join other members of Santa Monica's business and civic leadership for continental breakfast and learn how to plan for the future.

When: January 7, 2004 @ 7:30 a.m.

Where: Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, East Wing
1855 Main Street
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Registration: \$15.00 per person, payable at the door

Space is limited. Please RSVP at (310) 458-8281 to guarantee seating!

The Los Angeles Business Journal calls JACK KYSER the “guru of the Los Angeles economy.” As the senior vice president and chief economist at the LAEDC, Jack is responsible for interpreting and forecasting economic trends and analyzing the major industries in the Los Angeles five-county area (L.A., Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura). Utilizing this information, he helps develop job retention and creation strategies for Los Angeles County. The LAEDC is a private, non-profit membership organization whose mission is leadership in the retention and creation of jobs and economic base in the Los Angeles area. Jack's analytical research work and insightful knowledge of the regional economy has helped elevate the LAEDC as the pre-eminent source of economic information and forecasts on Southern California. Jack's advice is frequently sought by business, government and the media.

Continental breakfast hosted by Blue Forest Bakery and Santa Monica Place.
Special thanks to Bayside District Corporation.



Event sponsored by City of
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LOCAL □ STATE



Ocean jumpers will party after Penguin Swim

PENGUINS, from page 1

with the swim was in 1995 — the year she jumped into the surf with a 102-degree fever and combated rip tides, freezing waters and a Pacific storm.

“I was getting over the flu and I was sitting on the couch and said, ‘OK, I’ll just do it,’” de Haviland said. “Afterwards, I felt healed. It was a 180-degree turnaround.”

It's a melting pot variety of thrill-seeking people from master swimmers to very amateur waders. That's what de Haviland loves about it.

“It's a delightful reunion of people every year,” she said. “Everyone is so supportive and the people are such a rush.”

The majority of participants are members of the Southern California Aquatic Club, which is a group of swimmers that regularly train at Santa Monica College. The club's director, Clay Evans, said the average age of participants is about 40 years old, but older people still come out on New Year's Day. Evans this year will bring his 4- and 10-year-old daughters along for the group swim. He's hoping more young people show up this year.

“The young kids are tough but not when it comes to cold water,” he joked, hoping they'll meet the challenge.

It should be a freezing wake-up call for

the swimmers as wetsuits are frowned upon. McGuirk expects this year to be one of the coldest on record. Weather forecasts call for 50-degree air temperatures during New Year's Day and even colder water temperatures. But despite that, it's still expected to be worth it, she added.

“It's a delightful reunion of people every year. Everyone is so supportive and the people are such a rush.”

— SPRING DE HAVILAND
Penguin Swim queen

“It's a nice party and a great way to start the new year,” McGuirk said.

A party is being planned for after the noon swim, complete with hot drinks and food, provided by the Sidewalk Cafe.

Registration begins at 11 a.m. at the beach, just north of Venice Boulevard. There is parking available for \$5 at the beach lot near the breakwater.

Buyer's remorse a likely cause for town's uncertainty

TOWN, from page 1

The asking price for the 82-acre property, set among redwoods about 270 miles northwest of San Francisco and about 30 miles from the Pacific Ocean: \$850,000.

Stuart, who owns California Real Estate in Eureka, said she expects the bidding to be less of an ordeal this time.

“It was crazy,” she said of the online auction, which generated national attention. “It was such a fiasco last time and ate up so much of our time.”

Stuart said neither she nor the town's owner, Elizabeth Lapple, were surprised when the deal never happened.

Bidding opened just before Christmas last year at \$775,000 and catapulted to \$1.78 million on Dec. 27 after 249 buyers decided Bridgeville was the latest must-have item.

“Both Elizabeth and I looked at each other and said, ‘No way. It's not going to go for that. Neither of us expected it to sell for \$1.7 million unless they just have money to burn,’” Stuart said.

Impulse buying and the power of the online image added to the intrigue — and apparently led the winning bidder to wake up under a cloud of buyer's remorse. Still, Stuart said other bidders from the eBay auction seriously considered buying the property but didn't have the funds to close the deal and make immediate improvements the town could use.

“There's a lot of work to owning a

town and running it, and I don't think people anticipated that,” Stuart said.

The town, which dates to the early 1900s, includes a post office, a mile and a half of river bank, a cemetery and more than a dozen cabins and houses. It needs a new well, which would set a new owner back about \$20,000, and several buildings need to be renovated.

In retrospect, Stuart said, selling over the Internet has its drawbacks.

“You have no idea who (buyers) are, if they're for real or they're bogus,” she said. That hasn't stopped other property owners and real estate agents from listing their properties on eBay.

Since Bridgeville's listing, at least eight other towns have been offered on the Web site. They include the town of Carlotta just down the road from Bridgeville and Platina in Shasta County. Neither of those digital listings ever transformed into cash. In Nevada, the ghost towns of Danville and Deeth passed through the eBay engine.

One of the newest listings — Monse, Wash. — is a 60-acre ghost town with a railroad and boat launch next to the Okanogan River.

Juli Doty, the real estate broker who posted the eBay listing for Monse, said she hadn't heard that Bridgeville was never actually sold — but that fact doesn't make her any warier of online bidding.

“It's another avenue,” she said. “It takes one person to sell.”



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Santa Monica Daily Press



STATE



Approaching storm renews threat of floods, slides

By The Associated Press

SAN BERNARDINO — A new Pacific storm churned toward Southern California on Monday, bringing the threat of more flash floods and mudslides along wildfire-denuded mountain slopes where torrents killed 14 people and left two missing last week.

The National Weather Service issued a flash flood warning through Tuesday evening for the San Bernardino Mountains, scene of the Christmas Day tragedies.

One to 3 inches of rain were expected to begin falling Monday night, said weather specialist Stuart Seto at the Oxnard NWS office.

"But the bad news is, it's already rained up there so the soil's already saturated," he said. "It probably can't hold much more."

No evacuations were called, but fire stations passed out sandbags and authorities warned residents to be prepared in the San Bernardino Mountains, which tower over the inland area east of Los Angeles.

Vast swaths of the range were burned bare by the wildfires that swept over nearly 750,000 acres at points in an arc from northwest of Los Angeles south to San Diego in October and November.

Searchers continued to look for two bodies of children still missing since a flash flood swept mud boulders, logs and rubble through St. Sophia Camp in Waterman Canyon on Christmas Day.

The total number of deaths at the camp rose to 12 Sunday with the recovery of five bodies, including the caretaker. Two other people died the same day when a flood swept through a trailer campground

about five miles to the west in Devore.

Jorge Monzon, 41, and his wife, Clara, 40, apparently had invited friends and family to celebrate Christmas at St. Sophia Camp, which serves Greek Orthodox churches in the Los Angeles area. Many of the guests were Guatemalan immigrants who attended a San Bernardino church.

The bodies of Monzon's two daughters were recovered during the weekend. His baby son remained missing, along with a teenage boy.

"To find the other two would be good for the families," said Chip Patterson, a spokesman for the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. "If the rains come before that, obviously we're going to shut this operation down. We can't search in the rain, it's too dangerous."

The bodies of two children found Sunday had washed down from the camp and were tangled in debris more than four miles below, in a cement catch basin in downtown San Bernardino, Patterson said.

The caretaker, his wife and another woman were found closer to the camp but it took a bulldozer and heavy equipment to dig them from the deep mud.

Monzon lived at the camp with his family in a two-room apartment. He did not have permission to hold the gathering or allow his guests to use the facilities, said Father John Bakas, dean of St. Sophia Cathedral of Los Angeles.

The camp will remain closed indefinitely, he said.

New snow gives added boost to water supply

BY DON THOMPSON

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — California water watchers waded through knee-deep blowing snow Monday to conduct the winter's first Sierra Nevada snow survey, a promising one after a series of early heavy storms.

The monthly surveys help gauge how much water will be available for California farms, cities and hydroelectricity next summer.

"There's a lot of snow. We're off to a good start," said Fred Gehrke of the state Department of Water Resources. "Every region of the state is now above average. The thing that's really encouraging is the southern Sierra has really bumped up."

Southern California was dry last year, and had been lagging this winter until the Christmas storm that triggered deadly mudslides in the San Bernardino

Mountains.

With Monday's heavy snowfall, the statewide snow pack is approaching 125 percent of average. It was 135 percent of normal in the northern Sierra, from Mount Shasta to the Feather River; 115 percent in the central Sierra, from the Yuba River and Lake Tahoe Basin to the Merced River; and 120 percent in the southern Sierra, from the San Joaquin River south.

The snow pack matched last year's 130 percent of average at Echo Summit off Highway 50, 90 miles east of Sacramento near Lake Tahoe, when Gehrke skied in to take his measurement at an elevation of about 7,000 feet.

"You were going in at least up to your knees, even on skis," Gehrke said.

The last three winters also started promising, however, until the snow all but stopped in January. All three wound up below average, until a rare series of storms pounded the northern and central

Sierra last April.

"The real key is going to be how the rest of the year plays out," Gehrke said. "There's just no good strong signal: there's no El Nino, La Nina" to influence weather patterns.

It's encouraging that reservoirs are near to above average for this time of year, he said. Lake Shasta was at 117 percent of normal as of Friday; Lake Oroville at 96 percent; and Folsom Lake at 110 percent of average.

More than a third of the state's drinking and irrigation water comes from Sierra snow, while snow-fed hydroelectric plants produce about a quarter of California's power. The amount of water that actually will be delivered to farmers and communities depends not only on the snow accumulation, but on water stored in reservoirs and how much water managers think they need to hold in the event the string of dry winters continues.

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Santa Monica

A weekly look at events and programs for Santa Monica

Is one dose of flu vaccine sufficient for my infant?



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Guest Commentary

By Edward Malphus, M.D.

QUESTION: Because of the vaccine shortage, my 8-month-old baby will not be receiving the second dose of his flu shot. I'm worried. Is one dose still effective against the flu?

ANSWER: The flu season is hitting children particularly hard this season. Unfortunately, due to the nationwide shortage of flu shots, some parents may not be able to obtain the second flu shot for their children ages 6 months and older (the flu vaccine is not given to children under 6 months old).

If your infant receives only one dose of the vaccine, he will still receive some protection from the flu, but it is unknown exactly how much protection a single dose provides to a previously unvaccinated child. In all likelihood, if your child does come down with the flu, it will be a milder case than if he had not received any vaccination at all. In addition, even if he only receives one dose of the flu shot this year, he will need only one dose next year.

However, if your child has any chronic illnesses such as asthma or other respiratory problems, and if this is the first year he is receiving the vaccine under 9 years old, he should receive two doses of the flu shot, administered one

month apart.

If your infant has any siblings who have not yet been vaccinated, please remember that healthy children ages 5 years and older can get the FluMist nasal spray vaccine, which may still be available. If your pediatrician doesn't have it, check with the county health department and your local hospitals.

Unlike the flu shot, which is made of a killed virus, the FluMist nasal spray vaccine is

made of a live, but weakened flu virus. After vaccination, children may suffer mild flu-like symptoms for a day. Once vaccinated, it takes about two weeks for the body to build up protection against the flu bug, so try to keep children away from other sick children during the two weeks following their vaccination.

In light of the severity of the influenza outbreak this year, parents should consider getting flu shots for all of their

children. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends flu shots for all family members and close contacts of children under the age of 2 years old.

(Edward Malphus, M.D. is a pediatrician at Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica. For more information, call (310) 829-5511 or visit the hospital's Web site at www.stjohns.org.)

How to reduce stress as a parent and for your child

Guest Commentary

By Margaret Altman

Most parents will want to begin the new year with a few healthy resolutions. One of these will probably be to reduce their levels of stress. From all the studies out there, we know that stress is not healthy for anyone, and certainly not for parents. Research demonstrates, for example, that stress impairs the human memory and can destroy the immune system. Being pregnant, having a child and raising a child in this hectic world is bound to include a dose of stress. Many parents have written in with questions that are similar to this one:

QUESTION: I am pregnant and expecting my second child. I want this experience to be more positive than my first pregnancy because I was under a lot of pressure at that time. I know that stress is bad for pregnant women, parents and children, and it's stressful trying to think of ways to reduce the stress. What can I do, in practical terms, to deal with the issues I have and still keep my stress level under control?

ANSWER: Parents are under enormous pressures these days and are bombarded with advice on toys, strategies to induce sleeping, feeding tips, discipline guidelines and much more.

In several new and interesting pieces of research, there is a nugget of information that should be passed along to parents because it directly deals with the stress issue.

Parents should know that even before the baby is born, the mother's perception of her situation is going to influence the baby's tem-

perament. A mother's level of anxiety about child-birth and pregnancy issues in general does have an effect upon the infant's emotional and cognitive development at 3 months and at 8 months old. The level of anxiety is a more important factor during pregnancy than daily hassles in terms of the infant's emotional and cognitive development.

The most useful part of all this information is that several things can and will reduce the anxiety, and should be a part of every parent's preparation for having and raising children.

Asking questions during pregnancy and, of course, all the way through child rearing, is an excellent way of reducing anxiety. All you mothers and fathers who seek answers and do your research are actually improving the situation for your child.

Fathers and other family members can encourage the mother-to-be to express her anxieties and seek answers for her questions. An anxious mother is not a "normal" state of being. The myth that a pregnant woman has to be "moody" and fearful is simply a myth. The level of anxiety does impact the unborn child.

For pregnant women, joining support groups and engaging in pleasurable activities is a positive thing to do in terms of sharing your feelings and reducing stress in general.

If you find that you continue to feel on edge or uncertain about pregnancy related issues, seek professional help. It may take only one or two sessions to greatly reduce your anxieties and give you specific strategies for maintaining your emotional health.

Pregnant women can go through daily hassles such as problems with other children, or work-related issues, and not have these hassles impact their pregnancy. The most important thing is how the pregnant woman perceives the situation and if she has good coping abilities, she is less likely to feel stressed. The most

effective coping strategies for life's hassles are to take things one step at a time, ask for help when you need it, and make sure that you have supportive people around you.

*(Margaret Altman L.C.S.W. is the author of *Developing Your Child's Emotional Intelligence* (birth through age 3). The author is in private practice in Sherman Oaks with Dr. A. Korchmarev, M.D. Asst. Clinical Professor, UCLA.)*

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Special Events

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TUESDAY

Movies for Moms
Movies for Moms sponsored by:



"Paycheck" showing December 30 11:00 a.m., Loews Broadway, 1441 3rd St. Promenade - for Moms and babies newborn - 1 year old. Doors open early for socializing and getting comfortable.

"Paycheck" stars Ben Affleck, Uma Thurman and Aaron Eckhart and is directed by John Woo. Affleck stars as an electrical engineer who's been working on a top secret project for two years. Then he wakes to find that the government has erased his memory of the assignment. He tries to collect his paycheck, but learns that he's given up the money to receive a collection of objects that are somehow related. He's determined to solve the mystery, but the bureaucracy soon chases after him, hoping to arrest him for something else he can't remember. Rated "PG-13" for intense action, violence and brief language.

Storytelling

Main Library - Toddler Storytime will resume on January 6th.

Fairview Branch - Call to confirm holiday schedule - 2101 Ocean Park Blvd - 310-450-0443. Twilight Story Time - 7pm - an ongoing program for 3-5 year olds.

Montana Avenue Branch - Call to confirm holiday schedule - 1704 Montana Ave - 310-829-7081. Family

Story Time - 7:00 p.m., all ages.

Ocean Park Branch - Call to confirm holiday schedule - 2601 Main St. - 310-392-3804. Toddler Storytime to resume January 6th.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381. Closed Dec. 22 - Jan. 4 for the holidays. Classes will resume Monday, January 5

Yoga Works - 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal - 12:15 - 1:40 p.m., \$15. Mommy and Me - 1:45 - 3:00 p.m.

Mommy Care - 11870 Santa Monica Blvd, at the Dance Factory, West LA, 310-394-6711. Pregnancy Exercise - 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise - 10:15 - 11:15 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)
Santa Monica YMCA - 1332 6th St., 310-393-2721

Pre-natal Water Work - 10 - 11 a.m. and 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. Free for members. Non-members pay \$15.00 regular YMCA day fee or buy a ten-class card for \$70 (\$7 per class)

Breastfeeding Group The Pump Station, 310-826-5774. No classes/group meetings Dec. 22 - Jan. 4th. Classes resume January 5th.

Other

Magicopolis - 8 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$20 Call 310-451-2241 for info.

Children's Holiday Films and Cartoons - Tuesdays in December on the Third Street Promenade near Wilshire. Just after dark. Visit www.downtownsm.com for more info.

WEDNESDAY

Storytelling Library story times to resume the week of January 5th - 9th.

Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion - 2 pm - ages 2-5 - 310-475-4144

Border's, Westwood - 11am - 310-475-3444.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381. Closed Dec. 22 - Jan. 4 for the holidays. Classes will resume Monday, January 5

Yoga Works - 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150. No pre/post-natal classes on the 31st.

Ocean Oasis Day Spa, 1333 Ocean Avenue, 458-8190. No classes Dec. 24. Classes resume the week of January 5th - 9th.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station - 826-5774. No classes/group meetings Dec. 22 - Jan. 4th. Classes resume January 5th

THURSDAY

Happy New Year to All!

FRIDAY

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works - 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150; Pre/postnatal - 12:15 - 1:45 p.m., \$15.

Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381; Closed Dec. 22 - Jan. 4 for the holidays. Classes will resume Monday, January 5.

Ocean Oasis Day Spa, 1333 Ocean Avenue, 458-8190. Classes resume the week of January 5th - 9th.

Pre/Post Natal Yoga/Gentle Flow - 10:30 - 11:45 a.m.; Yoga for Fitness - noon - 1 p.m. Private sessions available; call Kate Thomas, RN - 408-1717

Other

Magicopolis - 8 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$20 Call 310-451-2241 for info.

SATURDAY

Storytelling Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Prom-

enade - Kid's Story Time - 10am - 310-260-9110

Barnes and Noble, Westside Pavilion - 10:30am - ages 2-5 - 310-475-4144.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381; Closed Dec. 22 - Jan. 4 for the holidays. Classes will resume Monday, January 5.

Mommy Care - 11870 Santa Monica Blvd, at the Dance Factory, West LA, 394-6711; Pregnancy Exercise - 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.; Post Partum Exercise - 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. (babies welcome, includes baby massage and workout at the end)

Other

Puppetolio - 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

Magicopolis - 2 and 8 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$20 for evening, \$15 for matinee. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

SUNDAY

Main Street Farmer's Market - 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., corner of Main St. and Ocean Park Blvd. Pony rides, live music, lots of vendors and great family socializing.

Puppetolio - 1:00 and 3:00pm, 310-656-0483, 1255 2nd St., ages 3 & up, reservations suggested

Magicopolis - 2 p.m., 1418 4th St., Admission is \$15. Call 310-451-2241 for info.

MONDAY

Storytelling

Barnes and Noble, 3rd St. Promenade - Toddler Story Time - 10am - 310-260-9110

Main Library - Lap Time at Jostyn Park, 9:30 a.m. (No meeting on Jan. 19th and Feb. 16th.) Ages 0-24 months with adult.

Ocean Park Branch - 2601 Main Street, 310-392-3804. "Spanish for Little Ones", 11:15 a.m. Rhymes, songs and very simple stories in Spanish for ages 2-5 with adult.

Breastfeeding Group

The Pump Station - 310-826-5774, no pre-reg required, first class free, \$10 fee thereafter. Moms/babies 0-4 months, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Yoga & Exercise

Yoga Works, 2215 Montana Ave, 310-393-5150 Pre/Postnatal - 12:15 - 1:45pm, \$15

Yoga Garden, - Restorative yoga for pre/postnatal - 6:30 p.m., 310-450-0133. www.yogagardenstudios.com

Yoga Baby (Venice) - 310-306-9381 - Mommy & Me (ages 0-5 years) - 10 - 11 a.m.; (infants only) - 1 - 2 p.m. Pre-natal yoga - 11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Ocean Oasis Day Spa, 1333 Ocean Avenue, 458-8190. Pre/Post Natal Yoga/Gentle Flow - 10:30 - 11:45 a.m.; Yoga for Fitness - noon - 1 p.m.

Private sessions available; call Kate Thomas, RN - 408-1717

REGISTRATION IS UNDERWAY FOR MANY WINTER PROGRAMS IN SANTA MONICA

Santa Monica YMCA - Parent/Child Gym and Water Enrichment - 3 months and up. Registration is underway for the winter session beginning January 3. Call 310-393-2721 for information or pick up a registration form at the YMCA at 1332 Sixth St.

City of Santa Monica - the city offers a number of classes for parents and children together, kids and adults including Baby/Toddler classes, dancing, yoga, art and a variety of sports. Registration began December 11, most classes begin the week of January 12th. Class details and registration forms can be found in the current winter issue of Seascapes (in the RecScape insert) or online at www.santamonica.org then follow Seascapes and registration links.

Music Together - a music and movement program for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers. For ages birth to 4 years. Classes begin January 12th. Free demonstration classes are being held on January 7th & 10th. Classes are held in downtown Santa Monica, the Santa Monica Airport and Pacific Palisades. Call 310-396-4436 for info.

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NATIONAL

Energy boom jarring new, outdoors-dependent economies of the West

(Editor's note: Soaring demand for natural gas and a Bush administration push to speed production are creating a new energy boom in the Rocky Mountain West — an area the industry sees as "America's Middle East." In the fourth installment of a five-part series, The Associated Press examines industry's growing clashes with rural economies that have adapted since the last energy bust by drawing retirees and others who prefer pristine vistas to oil and gas rigs).

BY JUDITH KOHLER

Associated Press Writer

NEW CASTLE, Colo. — For 10 years, Garland and Diana Anderson have lived on a mesa in western Colorado and loved nearly every minute — the mountain views, the antelope and elk, the peace.

"We like the view, we like the fresh air, we like the quiet, we like the privacy," Garland Anderson said of the retirement home the couple bought in 1989, when the region was still struggling to recover from an oil-shale bust.

The Andersons are among those who believe the Western economy must undergo a fundamental shift, from the extraction of natural resources to one that encourages preservation and uses its natural beauty to lure tourists. It is a philosophy that is running smack into the government's push to speed up energy development in the Rockies to ease the nation's dependence on foreign sources of oil and gas.

Industry representatives insist they can help meet the demands of an energy-hungry country in a responsible way, pointing to new technology and drilling techniques that have less impact on the environment.

Bev and Sam Sharp hope that isn't idle talk. Four years ago, the retired teachers moved from Southern California to a house atop a bluff in Pinedale, in the western foothills of Wyoming's Wind River Mountains. They live along a migration route for mule deer and pronghorn antelope. It is thought to be one of the longest such corridors in the Western Hemisphere.

But hundreds of gas wells have been drilled in the Pinedale area and more are in the works.

"People are moving this way for beautiful landscapes and wildlife, and we're afraid that's going to be taken out at an alarmingly quick rate," Bev Sharp said.

The Sharps and the Andersons are "lone eagles," generally home-based entrepreneurs or retirees who, along with tourists, have become key players in an economy tied to the quality of the natural surroundings. They are clear about their desire for responsible development.

Others, however, are eager to cash in on the new energy boom. Drilling is expected to raise \$11.6 million in property taxes and \$1.6 million in other taxes for Colorado's Garfield County this year alone.

"We are basically pro-energy," said Don Davis, a commissioner in nearby Rio Blanco County. He said the industry, from coal mining to gas drilling, contributes as much as 80 percent of the county's revenue.

Still, more than 100 economists this month voiced concern about the government's environmental policies. In a letter to President Bush and Western

governors, they said the environment is arguably the region's "greatest, long-run economic strength."

They also said the energy bust in the mid-1980s forced communities from Montana to New Mexico to diversify their business base — progress they fear might be erased by a return to oil and gas.

One of those economists was Tom Power, chairman of the University of Montana's Department of Economics. In an interview, he criticized the drive to increase energy production in the Rockies, calling it an effort to "recreate an economy built around intensive exploitation of the natural landscape for commercial purposes."

"It directly threatens the source of growth and prosperity this region has had," he said.

Industry representatives say the huge gas reserves will keep them in the Rockies for a long time. The U.S. Energy Information Administration predicts the nation's gas use will skyrocket at least 50 percent by 2025, and production is declining in older fields such as the Gulf Coast. In the Rockies, gas production in the Rockies increased 162 percent from 1980 to 2001, according to the National Petroleum Council and nonpartisan U.S. Potential Gas Committee research group.

"In a national sense, the Rockies have the most undeveloped potential that we can access," said Joe Jagers, vice president of exploration and production in the Denver office of the Oklahoma-based Williams energy company.

Energy officials are already scrambling to hire workers. San Juan College in Farmington, N.M., home to the Regional Energy Training Center, has received a \$2 million federal grant to boost oil and gas training.

So far, 1,600 people have registered for classes at the college, which is expanding the programs through Colorado Mountain College in Glenwood Springs.

All the energy companies in northwest New Mexico's gas-rich San Juan Basin are facing severe labor shortages, said Jay Metzler, who works at the training center. He said the companies are begging for workers, offering starting salaries of \$13 to \$18 an hour in newspaper and radio advertisements.

Power of the University of Montana sounded a more skeptical note. He said federal labor figures show that mining and energy accounted for less than 2 percent of the jobs in much of the Rockies in 2000. Technological advances also mean oil and gas companies employ fewer people, and most good-paying jobs go to nomadic, highly trained workers.

Oil and gas drilling can also dampen other parts of the economy, said Josh Joswick, a commissioner in southwest Colorado's La Plata County. He said as much as 60 percent of the county's property tax revenue comes from oil and gas, but tourism is also a major revenue source.

"That is affected by oil and gas development," he said. "All of a sudden your beautiful little tourist area is not quite as beautiful, and people will probably start reconsidering whether to spend as much time here as you would hope."

Keith Goddard of Rifle said he questions whether some of the hunters he has guided for years in western Colorado will return if there is widespread drilling on the Roan Plateau, home to some of the area's largest deer and elk herds.

"Guys paying \$2,500 to \$3,500 don't want to be sitting down, and then here's a gas rig going," Goddard said. "That puts me out of business."

"But even if I weren't a hunter, I'd be concerned. What price do you put on wildlife?"

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WORLD BRIEFLY

Bombs kill U.S. soldiers, Iraqi children

By The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Roadside bombs killed two U.S. soldiers and two Iraqi children in central Iraq, a day after strikes in the holy city of Karbala targeted America's coalition partners and underscored how the insurgency remains strong despite Saddam Hussein's capture.

The Karbala attacks — multiple, coordinated strikes involving mortars, machine guns and a car bomb — claimed six more lives Sunday, raising the death toll to 19.

In central Baghdad on Sunday, a bomb planted beside a road killed two Iraqi children and an American soldier and wounded 14 people, said U.S. Army Sgt. Patrick Compton of the Army's 1st Armored Division. The wounded include five American soldiers, their Iraqi interpreter and eight members of the Iraqi civil defense corps.

Attackers detonated another roadside bomb later Sunday as a U.S. convoy was traveling on a road near Fallujah, west of Baghdad, killing another American soldier and wounding three, the U.S. military said. The latest deaths bring the number of American combat deaths since the invasion in March to 325.

Despite the attacks, U.S. military officials say the number of rebel assaults has dropped from about 50 a day in mid-September to an average of 14 or 15 a day, rising to 18 on Christmas Day.

Chinese residents return home

By The Associated Press

BEIJING — Thousands of evacuees were returning Monday to villages in China's southwest following the sealing of a burst gas well that spewed toxic fumes and left the area strewn with bodies of adults and children, the government said.

The death toll from the disaster last Tuesday near the city of Chongqing rose by 35 to at least 233, the government said.

On Monday, some 20,000 people were returning to homes within three miles of the gas field in the town of Gaoqiao, state television reported on its national noon newscast.

Thousands more residents returned to outlying areas Sunday, a day after technicians wearing respirators and protective suits dumped tons of sealant down the well to plug it. The government says the burst well spewed a toxic mix of natural gas and hydrogen sulfide.

A total of 64,000 people fled the remote, mountainous area after the disaster, according to the government. Many have been sleeping on floors in schools and government buildings in nearby towns.

Emergency crews were searching the remote, mountainous area for survivors and more bodies, and scientists tested the water and plants for poison residue.

Jews stand firm on their soil

By The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Jewish settlers on Monday vowed to oppose Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's order to dismantle four unauthorized West Bank outposts, warning they will resist if soldiers come to evacuate their communities.

Meanwhile, Israeli security officials warned that militant groups are planning a major attack on New Year's Eve, possibly targeting holy sites, kindergartens, apartment buildings and hospitals.

Police have been told to prepare for the possibility of an attack by air, sea or land involving simultaneous suicide bombings, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Police declined to comment.

Sharon signed the settlement evacuation order on Sunday, a move that his justice minister called encour-

aging but only the start of what must be a wider push to get rid of the outposts. Only one of the four, Ginnat Arie, is inhabited.

Israel is required to dismantle more than 100 West Bank outposts under the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan, but has not fulfilled its obligation.

Oren Brund, the secretary of Ginnat Arie, said the 10 families who live in the hilltop neighborhood would appeal to the High Court. Settlers will oppose the evacuation if the court rules against them.

"They YESHA (Settlers) Council will bring thousands of people here and we will not move," Brund told Israel Radio. "There will be a clash ... there will not be a violent confrontation."

Boarder talks about surviving avalanche

By The Associated Press

PROVO, Utah — J.D. Settle was panicked — buried by an avalanche, he frantically dug himself out only to be slammed by another wave of snow that left him trapped up to his neck in Provo Canyon.

"What it looked like when it comes off that horn is just pure white coming at you. There's nothing but white," Settle said.

Two days later, he joined rescuers searching for his three friends who perished in that same avalanche.

The body Mike Hebert, 19, of Orem, was found in four feet of snow in Provo Canyon on Sunday afternoon. He was identified by his driver's license and cell phone, which were with the body, Utah County Sheriff Jim Tracy said.

Officials said a snow storm that hit the area Sunday night and early Monday would prevent the search for Adam Merz, 18, of Orem and Rod Newberry, 20, of Pleasant Grove, from resuming Monday.

Settle, Hebert, Merz and Newberry were among five snowboarding friends swept away Friday by the avalanche, in a remote area with no avalanche control. Settle and a fifth man survived. Settle, 20, also of Pleasant Grove, said he was told he spent an hour trapped in the snow before he was dug out. He was treated for a knee injury and hypothermia.

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ACROSS

- 1 Writer James
- 5 Page of music
- 10 Armistice
- 12 Slugger Hank
- 13 Western convoys
- 15 Had supper
- 16 Bill stamp
- 17 Compete
- 18 Depict
- 20 Milk buy
- 21 Showed over
- 22 Falls behind
- 23 Sports spot
- 25 Indian gown
- 28 Had supper
- 31 Prayer end
- 32 Kind of band
- 34 Medico
- 35 Wish undone
- 36 Paid player
- 37 Transmission connections
- 40 Mass language
- 41 Bender
- 42 Vote in
- 43 Hotel furniture

DOWN

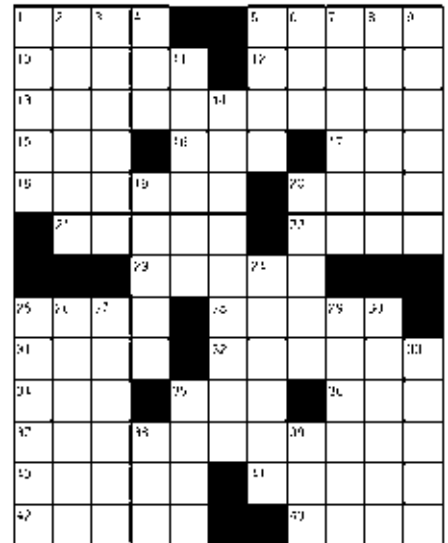
- 1 Fight- ing
- 2 Kitchen gadget
- 3 Play- wright O'Neill
- 4 Writer Umberto
- 5 Do a KP chore
- 6 Bond rating
- 7 Quiz show fodder
- 8 Getting into shape
- 9 Small maps
- 11 Make beloved
- 14 Assembled
- 19 Shower part
- 20 Runway sight
- 24 S.F. players
- 25 Rider's need
- 26 Unconcerned with ethics
- 27 Speak from memory
- 29 Realm
- 30 Fixed socks
- 33 Plane parts
- 35 Budget amount
- 38 Actor Morrow
- 39 NYPD alert

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Yesterday's answer

- 14 Assembled
- 19 Shower part
- 20 Runway sight
- 24 S.F. players
- 25 Rider's need
- 26 Unconcerned with ethics
- 27 Speak from memory
- 29 Realm
- 30 Fixed socks
- 33 Plane parts
- 35 Budget amount
- 38 Actor Morrow
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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Pete Townshend: 'If I had a gun, I would have shot myself'

By The Associated Press

■ **LONDON** — Rock guitarist Pete Townshend considered suicide after his arrest on suspicion of possessing child pornography, a newspaper quoted him as saying.

"If I had had a gun, I would have shot myself," The Who co-founder said in The Observer Sunday newspaper. "And if I had shot myself, it would have been ... awful because it would have confirmed what everybody thought."

He reportedly said that low point came after his arrest in January as part of Operation Ore, an FBI-led crack-down on Internet child pornography.

Townshend was cleared in May of possessing pornographic images of children but still was placed on a national register of sex offenders. That registration was part of a formal police caution he received for accessing a Web site containing images of child abuse.

London's Metropolitan Police said after a four-month investigation that Townshend "was not in possession of any downloaded child abuse images" but had accessed a site containing such images in 1999.

The 58-year-old musician acknowledged using his credit card to enter a Web site advertising child pornography but said he was doing research for his autobiography and a campaign against child pornography. He denies being a pedophile.

The Observer quoted him as reiterating that denial, although he acknowledged that his actions were "wrong" and "stupid."

■ **NEW YORK** — Ellen DeGeneres actually thought her career was over.

She became a hero to gays in 1997, following the most highly publicized coming out in modern history. But she soon lost her NBC sitcom "Ellen," and her girlfriend, actress Anne Heche. A second sitcom, "The Ellen Show" came and went in 2001.

But since the September premiere of her syndicated talk show, "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," on NBC,

DeGeneres has become a hot commodity and the show's ratings continue to climb.

"Now it seems like everything is so flattering and positive. I'm savoring this," DeGeneres told The New York Times in Sunday's editions.

Guests on her show have included Tom Cruise, Gwyneth Paltrow and Diane Keaton, and DeGeneres, 45, is an expert at getting to the heart of things in a playful and good-natured manner.

■ **STOCKHOLM, Sweden** — Former chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix was named the winner of the \$50,000 Olof Palme Prize Monday for his work in trying to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

"He has under circumstances of strong external pressure demonstrated an independence and a commitment to principle which have inspired respect and admiration throughout the world," the Olof Palme Memorial Fund for International Understanding and Common Security said.

The award is endowed by the family of the slain Swedish prime minister and the governing Social Democratic Party. The memorial fund board, which chooses recipients, said Blix "worked throughout his life for the benefit of international law, peace, and the United Nations."

Blix is a former Swedish foreign minister who led the International Atomic Energy Agency from 1981-97 and retired from the United Nations in June.

A prize ceremony in the Swedish capital Jan. 30 will mark the birthday of Palme, who was shot to death Feb. 28, 1986, on a Stockholm street as he and his wife walked home unguarded from a downtown movie theater.

■ **SAN FRANCISCO** — Nick Cannon is so busy these days he sometimes has a hard time keeping his roles straight.

The 23-year-old star of "Love Don't Cost a Thing" has his own Nickelodeon show, has just released a self-titled album featuring the single "Gigolo," and has a role

in the upcoming "Garfield" movie based on the comic strip cat. He also is executive producer of the action-adventure film, "Underclassman."

"Last time I was on Nickelodeon I was performing live, and usually when I perform I take my shirt and throw my clothes out into the audience," Cannon told the San Francisco Chronicle on Sunday.

"I guess I kind of forgot I was doing a show for kids, and the fire marshal jumped onstage in the middle of the show and told me I couldn't be throwing stuff in the audience because they might get hurt."

Cannon said he plays the voice of Louis the Mouse in the "Garfield" movie.

■ **FAIRBANKS, Alaska** — U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens has sent his pair of six-month-old husky pups to Alaska for a little education.

The pups — named Taz and Keely — are learning about sled dog racing from four-time Iditarod winner Susan Butcher and her husband, Dave Monson, a Yukon Quest champion.

Stevens, an Alaska Republican, grinned when reporters in his Washington office asked about the dogs recently.

"I understand that one of them has made the team," the senator said with a laugh.

Well, almost. At this age, the puppies' muscles aren't developed enough to run far, said Monson. Six miles has been the longest outing to date, Monson said.

But Taz has shown promise as a leader. "I just threw Taz up in lead to see what would happen," Monson said. "He didn't look right or left."

Keely is "a little less focused," Monson said, but it's still early.

"Actually, I'm getting kind of enthusiastic about their potential," Monson said.

The senator said he didn't want to keep the dogs at his Washington, D.C., home full-time. They needed some space to run, he decided. So he contacted Butcher and Monson.

Stevens, 80, said he missed his new charges, to a point.

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