



FREE

Santa Monica Daily Press

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A newspaper with issues

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DAILY LOTTERY

FANTASY 5

3 5 24 29 37

DAILY 3

Daytime: 7 6 5

Evening: 5 7 6

DAILY DERBY

1st: 02 Lucky Star

2nd: 04 Big Ben

3rd: 07 Eureka

RACE TIME: 1:41.12

NEWS OF THE WEIRD
BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ No "Professional Courtesy": Marsha Watt, a graduate of Northwestern University School of Law and formerly an associate at the prestigious Winston and Strawn law firm in Chicago, was disciplined in 1997 by the Illinois Bar over her then-recent conviction for prostitution (i.e., the kind involving sex, for which her published rate, according to a personals ad cited in her conviction, was roughly three times what the law firm was billing for her services).

TODAY IN HISTORY

■ **ONE YEAR AGO**, on Aug. 14, 2003, a huge blackout hit the northeastern United States and part of Canada; 50 million people lost power.

■ **In 1848**, the Oregon Territory was established.

■ **In 1917**, China declared war on Germany and Austria during World War I.

■ **In 1935**, the Social Security Act became law.

■ **In 1973**, the U.S. bombing of Cambodia came to a halt.

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Ax to grind



Nicky Five Aces/Special to the Daily Press
Lead singer Lady P and bassist Don Verde of the LA band Los Abandoned rocked the pier on Thursday night. Three Latin rock 'n' roll bands with female lead singers were featured as part of the annual Latin American Music Conference, as well as the weekly Twilight concert series, which continues each Thursday through Sept. 2.

Samohi band director busted on sex charges

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
AND JOHN WOOD
Daily Press Staff Writers

A band director at Santa Monica High School was arrested last week on two felony counts of allegedly performing "lewd and lascivious" sex acts upon a child.

Carl Hammer, 37, who's married with young children, turned himself in to authorities on Aug. 6 after months of investigation. He posted \$40,000 bail and

was freed the same day.

Hammer has worked in the local school district for nine years — at Samohi, and Lincoln and John Adams middle schools, officials said. Students said Hammer seemed happy with his wife and young children.

"He's very serious about the band. He's got a nice family. I never thought this was anything he would do," said Sam Cieply, 16, a tenor saxophone player who

See SEX CHARGES, page 7

The dog days of summer: Council sniffs out new law

BY JOHN WOOD
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Peanuts, bread crumbs, bird seed and dog diets were at the heart of a recent, often heated, debate between Santa Monica's elected leaders.

What started out as a discussion among members of the City Council over where local residents should be allowed to feed and walk their pets quickly expanded into a disagreement over the feeding of wild birds and squirrels. In the end, the council passed a law intended to clarify the city's

position on public feeding and park access for dogs.

"I'm reminded of the dilemma that one faces visiting a national park and being bitten by a mosquito," City Councilman Kevin McKeown said. "Tempted to slap — you're not supposed to harm the wildlife, but you're not supposed to feed them either."

On one side of the debate were council members hoping to preserve a popular form of recreation. On the other, council

See DOGGONE IT, page 7

'Starr' is born: SM filmmaker getting 'er done

(Editor's note: This is the first installment in a series following the efforts of local resident Matt Stanton to produce an independent feature film).

BY MICHAEL J. TITTINGER
Daily Press Staff Writer

SOMEWHERE IN WESTERN TEXAS

— As the rented blue minivan hiccuped its way along the dirt roads that define this stretch of God's country, side door slung open and videotape rolling, it didn't take long for budding filmmaker Matt Stanton to realize he was a long way from home.

With the tattered, rustic landscapes of such towns as Baird, Clyde and Putnam, Tex., rolling away as unassumingly as they had come into focus, the region's timeless simplicity had him perched on seat's edge.

"It's perfect," he remarked. "We fly two

hours and we're a world away, another time and era."

That era left behind, albeit just for a four-day scouting trip last week in Western Texas, is modern-day Santa Monica, where Stanton tends bar nightly at the House of Billiards on Wilshire Boulevard. Serving up cold beers and billiard balls, the lanky, longhaired Ohio transplant is recognized throughout the city, if not by name than as the quick-witted "black cowboy."

Bartering, however, is just a means to an end for Stanton, a theater major who graduated from Loyola Marymount in 2001 after a seven-year hiatus from school. His passion is "North Starr," the screenplay he wrote as an acting

See HORSIN' AROUND, page 8



Michael J. Tittinger/Daily Press
MEETIN' AND GREETIN': Budding filmmaker Matt Stanton takes a break from scouting film locations in Texas last week to cozy up to one of the locals of the Sand Hills Ranch.

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