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Happy trails

LOCAL HORSE TRAINER LISA KAY RECOVERS FROM LENGTHY ILLNESS TO RETURN TO HER FOUR-LEGGED FRIENDS

SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS



OUR 156TH YEAR

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011

75¢

Cameras coming to SB cop cars? Mayor says workshop will highlight funding options

By SCOTT STEEPLTON
NEWS-PRESS CITY EDITOR

In response to News-Press coverage of alleged misconduct on the part of Santa Barbara Police Officer Kasi Beutel and other stories raising questions about department procedures and practices, Mayor Helene Schneider on Tuesday said cameras and other recording devices could be coming to police cars.

The mayor said in a statement that a budget session in three weeks will include discussion on "the budget implications of placing this

equipment in all patrol cars," perhaps through grants.

"I can share with you at this time that the SBPD and city administrator's office have been reviewing specific recording and storage technology options," Mayor Schneider said in the 1:15 p.m. emailed statement, a copy of which was obtained by the News-Press.

The Santa Barbara Police Officers Association had yet to respond to the mayor's comments late Tuesday.

Allegations of a trumped-up injury claim, manipulating a breathalyzer, witnessing forged DUI blood-test waivers and going into

the field with photocopied pre-filled-out DUI reports by five-year department veteran Kasi Beutel have been detailed in numerous reports by the News-Press. Chief among the reports have been the accounts by investigative journalist Peter Lance, who was arrested on suspicion of DUI by Officer Beutel on New Year's Day and whose case is pending in Santa Barbara County Superior Court.

His reporting uncovered discrepancies in the officer's on-scene report of a DUI stop about which she first stated she had no injuries and later filed a workers compensation claim.

Mr. Lance also first reported that, like himself, other people arrested by Officer Beutel claim that their signatures were forged on documents where they supposedly gave up their right to provide a blood sample for retesting in their DUI cases.

And in yet another revelation, Mr. Lance first reported that Officer Beutel would go into the field armed with DUI report forms photocopied from at least two masters on which she had filled in some of the observations in advance, although they were intended to be made on scene.

The mayor's statement comes as the Lance defense team is gearing up to ask a judge to find Officer Beutel in contempt of court for what appears to be a deliberate pattern of ducking subpoenas intended to have her testify in court and at DMV hearings pertaining to Mr. Lance's misdemeanor case.

According to her superiors, Officer Beutel has been too ill to appear for the hearings — even by telephone.

Subpoenaed to appear by phone for a DMV hearing Sept. 7, the embattled officer got out of

Please see VIDEO on A8

UCSB, Westmont rank among nation's best

By NIKKI GREY
NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

U.S. News & World Report recently ranked two Santa Barbara higher education institutions — UCSB and Westmont College — in the top tier of the country's best colleges.

UCSB ranked 10th in the report's annual listing of the "Top 50 Public National Universities" and No. 42 on the list for "Best National Universities."

Westmont tied for 90th out of 252 in the ranking for best liberal arts colleges.

According to the magazine's website, national universities differ from the liberal arts colleges because they offer a full range of undergraduate majors and provide master's and doctoral programs, while also emphasizing faculty research.

The liberal arts colleges focus almost entirely on undergraduate education.

Indicators used to capture academic quality for both universities and liberal arts colleges include: assessment by administrators at peer institutions, retention of students, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources, alumni giving and high school counselor ratings of colleges and graduation rate performance, according to the magazine's website.

Private institutions usually monopolize the "Best National Universities" list (with Harvard, Princeton and Yale taking the top three spots). UCSB tied with the University of Washington and the University of Wisconsin-Madison for No. 42.

"UC Santa Barbara is proud to be ranked among the top ten public universities in the nation," UCSB Chancellor Henry Yang told the News-Press in a written statement. "In just six decades as a campus of the University of California, we have become internationally recognized as a leading center for teaching and research, distinguished by our interdisciplinary programs and a commitment to innovation... We have a reputation for emphasizing both undergraduate and graduate programs in a friendly and collegial environment in which students, staff, and faculty members from diverse backgrounds and perspectives explore and learn together."

Additionally, UCSB's undergraduate program in the College of Engineering ranked 38th on the list of "Best Programs at Engineering Schools Whose Highest Degree is a Doctorate," tying with Yale, Iowa State, and Washington University in St. Louis.

In the "America's Best Colleges, 2012 Edition" list, Westmont improved nine spots from its previous ranking, moving up in the areas of undergraduate academic

Please see RANKINGS on A8

90-year-old pedestrian killed in crash



NIK BLASKOVICH / NEWS-PRESS

Investigators examine the intersection of Calle Real and Kingston Avenue where a Goleta woman was hit and killed by a car Monday. The victim's body is beneath the tarp and the car that hit her is visible at left.

By ANGEL PACHECO
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

A 90-year-old Goleta woman was fatally struck by a vehicle as she was crossing at the Calle Real-Kingston Avenue intersection Monday.

Mary Manuela Robles was pronounced dead at the scene after being hit by a car driven by Isla Vista resident Carlin Paige Canter, 18, said Drew Sugars, Santa Barbara

County Sheriff's Department spokesman. Authorities received a report of the collision at 8:28 p.m.

Investigators are still working to determine the cause of collision, and it was unknown Tuesday whether drugs or alcohol played a role.

The car was westbound on Calle Real, heading toward Fairview Avenue.

Authorities shut down the intersection for six hours as they conducted an investigation.

Authorities will try to determine the speed of the vehicle and how the victim was crossing the roadway, Mr. Sugars said.

Goleta Community Services Director Steve Wagner said, based on reports he has seen, the pedestrian appeared to be in an area of the street between the Holiday Inn and the Valero gas station rather than in the crosswalk on the west side of the

Please see FATAL on A12

Target aims at Goleta site for store

By MORGAN HOOVER
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

Target has its sights set on southern Santa Barbara County once again.

Just 14 months after the Santa Barbara City Council voted down Target's effort to develop near the airport, the retailer has approached the city of Goleta about the northeast corner of Los Carneros Way and Hollister Avenue.

The request comes despite the fact that traffic impacts on Goleta were cited to explain Santa Barbara's no vote.

City staff in Goleta were approached in mid-March by representatives of Target about a proposal to site and develop a store at the location, according to an email obtained by the News-Press to the Goleta City Council from City Manager Dan Singer.

According to that email, the site location includes properties that formerly housed a Chevron gas station and the FedEx distribution building and currently houses the Goleta Valley Athletic Club.

The email explains that "staff has since met with Target representatives numerous times to better understand their 'concept' site plan and advise them of due process considerations."

Though Eddie Baeb, Target spokesman, told the

Please see STORE on A9

Shopping center leases store to Western Dental

By STEVE SINOVIC
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

From lentils to dental, the landlord at Calle Real Shopping Center will soon have just about every consumer need covered.

Western Dental, one of California's oldest dental and oral health maintenance organizations, will open its first clinic in the Santa Barbara area after signing a long-term lease at the shopping center in Goleta, according to Traci Tait, vice president of commercial properties with The Towbes Group.

Western Dental is taking over the space formerly occupied by Rudy's Mexican Restaurant, which expanded to larger quarters in the shopping center. The clinic is set to open at the end of 2011. Calls to media representatives at Western Dental to inquire about the number of staff members that will be employed at the facility were not returned Tuesday.

The new business owners will fund tenant

Please see DENTAL on A12

Government building dedicated to Centeno

By NORA K. WALLACE
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

North County's main facility for government business now has a new name: The Joseph Centeno Administration Building.

The building, a crucial hub of the sprawling Beteravia Government Center, is the site of the northern Board of Supervisor's meeting room, as well as offices and other services.

On Tuesday, prior to its meeting, the Board of Supervisors met outside of the building with Mr. Centeno to honor his service to the county. He served as 5th District Supervisor from 2003 to 2010 and previously was both the mayor and police chief of Santa Maria.

Board Chairwoman Joni Gray, 4th District Supervisor, called her longtime friend a "fine, fine man," and laughed and joked that Mr. Centeno had served the county for eight years and had served "Santa Maria for 108 years."

With his wife, Sylvia, and friends nearby, Mr. Centeno noted that he was usually on the giving end of such honors.

"It humbles me to death to see what I see on that building," he said, gesturing to the large block letters spelling out his name.

His time as a government official, he said, "was about serving the people, not about this up here."

But, he admitted, "it validated what I did serving Santa Barbara County."

As the board gathered for a photograph, 2nd District Supervisor Janet Wolf looked at the building lettering and remarked, "That's beautiful."

The Joseph Centeno Administration Building is at 511 E. Lakeside Parkway.

Last year, the board also surprised Mr. Centeno by unveiling the "Joseph Centeno Cuyama Pool and Aquatic Center" in rural Cuyama.

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NORA K. WALLACE / NEWS-PRESS

Supervisors join Joseph Centeno as Santa Barbara County's administration building in Santa Maria is named in his honor. From left, Janet Wolf, Steve Lavagnino, Joni Gray, Mr. Centeno, Doreen Ferrero and Salud Carbajal.

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Recognition helps student, parents make selections

■ RANKINGS

Continued from Page A1

reputation, smaller class sizes, improved SAT scores and the percentage of freshmen who graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school class, according to a Westmont news release.

Westmont's dean of admissions, Silvio Vazquez, said that although he thinks it is difficult to pinpoint the sole catalyst for a higher ranking, he thinks the school is fulfilling its mission of providing a quality liberal arts education balanced with Christian commitments, and that it will be noticed for that.

"I think it means for us recognition that Westmont does what it says it's going to do," Mr. Vazquez said. "(We provide) a strictly undergraduate liberal arts education with a Christian worldview foundation. For a school to foster that kind of community and at the same time to prepare students for a global marketplace, you stand out for that and I think the larger academy

recognizes that."

The recognition from the ranking, he says, will help perspective students and their parents decide if Westmont is the right school for them.

"It's important to be part of an institution that demonstrates a return on investment like that," Mr. Vazquez said. "When you get a ranking in the top 100 consistently and you see it moving up, I think for us as a college that's an affirmation that we are doing things right and that we are continuing to do so."

Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula also made the upper tier for American liberal arts colleges, ranking 78th.

U.S. News gathers data from colleges and universities on up to 16 factors of "academic excellence," assigning weight to each factor based on the magazine's judgment on its importance. Based on the overall scores, U.S. News ranks institutions of higher education against each other in their respective categories.

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State treasurer wants to maintain automatic cuts in budget process

By JUDY LIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SACRAMENTO — The state treasurer's office on Tuesday urged Gov. Jerry Brown to reject a bill that would require the governor to consult lawmakers about midyear budget cuts they already have approved.

The move comes as the treasurer began offering \$5.4 billion in short-term borrowing notes to the public so California will have enough cash to cover its immediate operating needs. The two-day sale was expected to offer interest rates ranging from 0.40 percent to 0.55 percent that will mature in June 2012.

Treasurer's spokesman Tom Dresslar said the bill, SB1X6, forced the state to modify its disclosure statement to investors. The budget passed this summer contained automatic midyear cuts to be triggered if tax revenue fails to meet projections.

"When you have a requirement that the Department of Finance check in with legislative leaders and look at alternatives, it's just a complication that does not serve the best interest of the taxpayers," Mr. Dresslar said.

Last week, Mr. Brown said he did not want to signal any uncertainty to credit-rating agencies.

"If people can show me better ways to save money, if we have to, I'll certainly look at that," the governor said. "But

If revenue falls short by more than \$1 billion, it will trigger about \$600 million in additional cuts, including \$100 million each to the University of California, California State University and the Department of Developmental Services. If revenues fall short by more than \$2 billion, it would prompt a \$1.5 billion cut in K-12 school funding, as well as other education cuts.

right now, the law is what it is."

Under the budget passed in late June, the state balanced an \$86 billion spending plan through June 30, 2012, by relying on strong revenue growth but including triggers for spending cuts if the additional revenues do not materialize.

The state assumed \$4 billion more in tax revenue than was anticipated in the governor's May budget revision. Additional cuts would be triggered in December if tax revenue falls short of assumptions. The state controller's office reported last week that general fund revenues are running behind budget estimates by \$403.8 million so far for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012.

If revenue falls short by more than \$1 billion, it will trigger about \$600

million in additional cuts, including \$100 million each to the University of California, California State University and the Department of Developmental Services.

If revenues fall short by more than \$2 billion, it would prompt a \$1.5 billion cut in K-12 school funding, as well as other education cuts.

The treasurer has said the provision for automatic triggered cuts provided stability for investors.

"Triggers were one of the strongest parts of the budget, and they're just fine the way they are," Mr. Dresslar said. "Hopefully, the governor will veto the bill."

Sen. Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, chair of the Senate budget committee, said the Legislature was simply asking for flexibility and transparency from

the state's executive branch.

He said the bill should not concern investors because it doesn't undermine the governor's authority to make midyear cuts if necessary. It requests the administration consult legislative leaders by Dec. 9, prior to the trigger deadline of Dec. 15.

"The needs of the state shift often and quickly... this bill would allow for that kind of conversation to happen prior to that cut..." Mr. Leno said. He added, "I prefer to remain hopeful and optimistic that the triggers will not be necessary."

The bill also included a provision requested by community colleges to delay implementing a \$10 per unit increase until the 2012 summer term if the trigger has to be pulled.

Some lawmakers suggested the bill would allow advocates to oppose the cuts, all of which were difficult as the state struggled with a budget shortfall and a 12-percent unemployment rate.

"This is an incremental step at edging away from those cuts," Sen. Bob Huff, R-Diamond Bar, said in opposing the bill last week.

Mr. Brown's spokesman, Gil Duran, said the budget moved the state's rating from negative to stable by providing certainty for investors.

"The trigger cuts are integral to the state's fiscal balance, and Gov. Brown will act to maintain the integrity of this responsible budget," Mr. Duran said.

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Mayor cites privacy laws when referring to DUI cases

■ VIDEO

Continued from Page A1

yet another day of questioning by the defense after Lt. Paul McCaffrey stated in a declaration dated Aug. 25 that Officer Beutel suffered an on-the-job injury and was on extended medical leave and unavailable until at least today.

But the injury, about which the city has yet to provide even basic details like when it happened and how, apparently wasn't so severe that it prevented Officer Beutel from slipping into the District Attorney's Office on Sept. 6 — the day before the Lance matter was to be heard in Ventura — to help the prosecution with its case against Mr. Lance.

Officer Beutel started testimony in the DMV portion of the Lance matter on June 30, but had to stop so she could get back to court on a separate matter. A new hearing was scheduled, but the officer was a no-show.

On Aug. 25, defense attorney Darryl Genis issued a subpoena to her to finish testimony Sept. 8. A week before that hearing was to take place, Lt. McCaffrey served Mr. Genis with a declaration stating the officer was injured and unavailable.

Then on Sept. 8, Lt. David Whitham sought a continuance in another DMV hearing for which Officer Beutel was

undersubpoena to appear, this time in Oxnard, based on her extended illness.

Unlike the earlier declaration, on this one the section pertaining to the officer's anticipated date of return is marked "unknown."

In documents to be filed with the DMV, Mr. Genis seeks to have a Superior Court judge find the officer in contempt based on the facts of the DMV no-shows.

Mayor Schneider says in her statement that the News-Press has published some serious allegations about Officer Beutel "understandably leading to some residents contacting my office asking for more details and for a response from City Hall."

She cites government code, including the Public Safety Officer's Bill of Rights, as reasons the city won't get into specifics about the officer and allegations raised in the News-Press series.

"I appreciate and share the frustration many people have expressed to me that we have not responded to these allegations in detail either in a public statement or at a City Council hearing," she said. "On the surface, it appears easy to just explain, confirm or refute the allegations made to date. Unfortunately, this is not the case, and in fact, responding to these allegations in detail will take time and doing so could prematurely and improperly have serious negative ramifications to

current court proceedings and even result in a violation of state and federal laws."

The judicial process "must be able to move forward without obstructions or any perceived influence from City Hall," she added. "The city has and will continue to respond to requests from the court and District Attorney's office on this and all cases that involve an arrest by a Santa Barbara Police Officer and will continue to cooperate fully with all court proceedings."

The mayor goes on to say, "Finally, some of the articles over the last few months have also questioned some police department policies and practices, such as the lack of cameras in all patrol cars."

She doesn't address how the police officers union might react to adding cameras to patrol cars, instead focusing on the financial implications.

"The council will begin looking into the financial implications on purchasing and installing such equipment at the budget work session, scheduled for Oct. 6."

Mr. Genis sent a response to the mayor urging her to get video going and offering a way to do it.

"As you know, the (state Office of Traffic Safety) will gladly provide all of the money necessary to fully equip all SBPD patrol cars with digital audio/video systems. The only work involved is filling out a grant application, and the SBPD is most expert at filling out

those applications, as they have been applying for, and receiving OTS grants to the tune of about a quarter of a million dollars per year for many years now."

Mr. Genis calls the use of video a tremendous tool. "It makes the system more accurate, fair and safe. Go to any industry where cameras are an accepted standard in the daily work place like a bank or a casino, and you will find that the camera is the honest employee's friend."

Video can offer protection for the police officer.

"People who might be inclined to victimize a police officer by assaulting or battering him/her would normally hesitate to do so if they knew it would be caught on video," said Mr. Genis. "Indeed many police officer murders have been solved and justice brought to the family of the fallen officers through on board video."

"You have a chance to be a true leader in this regard," Mr. Genis tells the mayor.

"A video that clearly shows a suspect is guilty as charged is a powerful tool for a defense attorney to convince his/her client that a trial is an exercise in folly. Similarly, a video that rebuffs the claims of the officer and exonerates the accused will cause any reasonable prosecutor to abandon thoughts of pursuing a trial that is destined to fall short of a conviction."

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