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## Weekend



MELINA MARA/TWP

Sen. Bill Frist aims for a quick vote on Alito.

**Forced Vote:** GOP pushes for speedy decision on Alito | **4**

**Shot Fired:** Va. delegate sets off gun accidentally in office | **9**



**On the Record:** Williams closes in on Maryland's high mark for wins | **25**

### ENTERTAINMENT

**'Big' Idea:** *Martin Lawrence* gets back into the dress for 'Big Momma's House 2.' Also, 'Bubble'; 'Annapolis.'

>> **11-24**



**Weather** >> Mostly Sunny



**48 | 29**

FULL FORECAST ON PAGE 37

**BOLD GOLD**

**SHINER:** Put heavy metal in your closet >> **Inside**



MASSER SHYUQUHI/AP

**SHOCKER:** Palestinians in the West Bank celebrate Hamas' victory in parliamentary elections on Thursday. The militant group said it has no plans to negotiate with Israel. ♣ **Reeling:** Israelis fear the worst | **Page 7**

## Hamas in Stunning Landslide

Militant group's election win upends Mideast peace plans

**RAMALLAH, WEST BANK** | Islamic militant Hamas' landslide victory in Palestinian elections unnerved the world Thursday, darkening prospects for Mideast peace and ending four decades of rule by the corruption-riddled Fatah Party.

The parliamentary victory stunned even Hamas leaders, who mounted a well-organized campaign but have no experience in government. They offered to share power with President Mahmoud Abbas, the Fatah chief, who said he may go around the new government to talk peace with Israel.

Abbas, who was elected last year to a four-year term as president of the Palestinian Authority, has yet to decide how closely to work with a group that built its clout through suicide bombings. But his Fatah Party decided not to join a Hamas government, Fatah legislator Saab Erekat said.

Hamas captured 76 of the 132 seats in parliament, according to near-complete results released Thursday. Leaders around the world demanded that Hamas, which is branded a terror group by the U.S. and European Union, renounce violence and recognize Israel. (AP)

**WARMTH | Lining-Item Veto** Underwear with fur lining has been banned in Uzbekistan for being too sexy, the Ferghana newspaper reported. After temperatures as low as -4 degrees hit the country, sales of the fur-undergarments soared — but the government

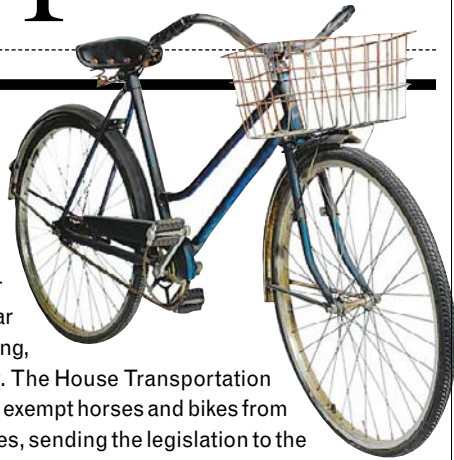


said the lingerie went a little too far, citing the need to protect citizens from "unbridled fantasies" that could result. Collapse, a company that makes such underwear for both sexes, has lodged a protest against the decision. (EXPRESS) **EyeOpeners** | **Page 2**

# eye Openers

## BALANCE Skinned-Knee Injuries Soar

Intoxicated South Dakotans should be able to ride horses or bikes home from bars without fear of being arrested for drunken driving, legislators decided Wednesday. The House Transportation Committee voted 10-1 for a bill to exempt horses and bikes from the statutory definition of vehicles, sending the legislation to the House floor. One politician said people who have been drinking and choose not to drive cars or trucks should not be punished for using alternate transportation. (AP)



## TAXES The IRS Meth-Stash Audits are a Real Pain

The first year of Tennessee's illegal-drug tax brought the state more than \$2 million in extra revenue, WBIR-TV reported. The so-called "crack tax," which went into effect last January,

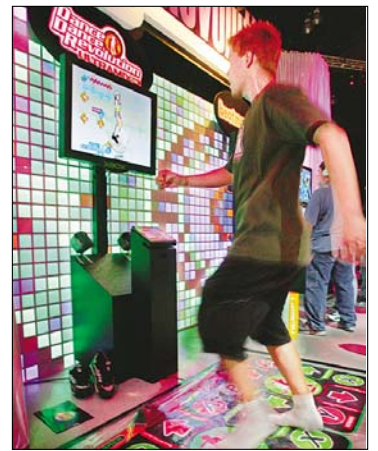
must be paid by drug dealers. After the dealers make the payment — confidentially — they receive a stamp indicating that the taxes have been paid. If they're caught without the stamp, they are not only prosecuted for dealing drugs but also for tax evasion. The money from the "crack tax" goes into the state's anti-drug efforts. (EXPRESS)



JUNG YEON-JE/AP/GETTY IMAGES

## WINTER Freeze Monkey

A couple hundred-thousand years of evolution, and it'll be prepared for Olympic luge competition. South Korean children enjoyed themselves while ice skating with an orangutan — that would be the one wearing a red winter coat — at a shopping district in Seoul on Tuesday. This simians were allowed to show off on the ice as part of a promotion for an upcoming animal show. (EXPRESS)



Kids learn important cyber-dance skills.

## VIDEO GAMES Gym Class Obsolete

West Virginia is expanding a project that uses a video game to boost students' physical activity. All of the state's 157 middle schools are expecting to get the video game "Dance Dance Revolution," and officials hope to put it in all 753 public schools within three years. A pilot project began in 20 schools last spring. (AP)

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—La. Gov. Kathleen Blanco, on the White House's rejection of \$30 billion in aid to her state



## Nation

### In Brief



RACHEL DENNY CLOW/AP

Authorities suspect the pickup truck was being used for human smuggling.

#### FALFURRIAS, TEXAS

##### 6 Killed After Pickup Truck, 18-Wheeler Collide on Road

Six people died and eight were injured Thursday when a pickup truck that authorities suspect was being used for human smuggling smashed into an 18-wheeler on a remote two-lane highway north of the Mexican border. The accident occurred just after 6 a.m. (AP)

#### MORGANTOWN, W.VA.

##### Sago Mine Survivor Moved Into Rehabilitation Center

The sole survivor of the Sago Mine disaster was transferred Thursday to a rehabilitation hospital, where his family expects him to undergo weeks, or possibly months, of therapy. Randal McCloy Jr., 26, remained in fair condition, no longer in a coma but still unable to speak. (AP)

#### Mapping Bird Flu

→ Scientists have made a big leap in unraveling the genetic code of bird flu viruses and found a clue that sheds light on why some strains are so deadly. | **Today, A Section**

**IN** The Washington Post

# Bush Says Wiretap Program Is Legal

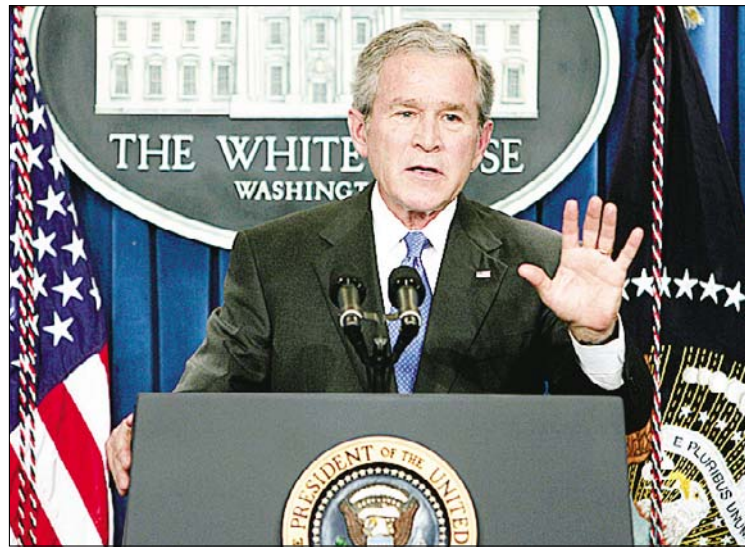
## President may resist Congressional efforts to curb surveillance

WASHINGTON | President Bush said Thursday he may resist any congressional move to change his controversial program of warrantless surveillance for terrorist threats, adding: “There’s no doubt in my mind it is legal.”

Bush told a White House news conference that the domestic spying program “is designed to protect civil liberties” and declared that “it’s necessary.”

Democrats have accused the president of breaking the law in allowing eavesdropping on overseas communications to and from U.S. citizens, and even some members of his own party have questioned the practice.

It was the president’s first full-



PAUL J. RICHARDS/GETTY IMAGES

President Bush took questions on national security, domestic wiretaps and the investigation into lobbyist Jack Abramoff at a press conference on Thursday.

scale news conference of the new year, and the 10th since he was re-elected in 2004. He previewed his upcoming State of the Union

address and fielded questions on former lobbyist Jack Abramoff, the stunning victory of the radical group Hamas in Palestinian

elections and the administration’s cooperation with Congress on its investigation of Hurricane Katrina.

Questioned about a criminal investigation involving disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff, Bush said he would cooperate with federal prosecutors investigating Abramoff and his alleged influence peddling activities, if necessary. Otherwise, the president said he saw no reason to release pictures that he acknowledged were taken of him and Abramoff.

He said that federal investigators should pursue all leads and “look into all aspects of his influence on Capitol Hill,” and that if the path also leads to the White House, he was sure they would “come knock on the door.”

He was asked if he meets with lobbyists. “I try not to,” Bush replied. TERENCE HUNT (AP)

## Md. Inmate Shoots Guard in Escape

HAGERSTOWN, MD. | A hospitalized prisoner shot a corrections officer guarding his room Thursday, hijacked a taxi and led police on a car chase before he was caught several miles away, authorities said. The 44-year-old guard, who was shot in the face, was in critical condition.

The inmate, Brandon Morris, 20, had been taken from prison and admitted to Washington County Hospital on Wednesday for an undisclosed condition. Before



RICHARD T. MEAGHER/AP

Brandon Morris, right, is escorted from the Maryland police barracks Thursday.

daybreak Thursday, he grabbed the officer’s gun and shot him, authorities said. (AP)

## Union to Join in W.Va. Mine Probe

ELKINS, W.VA. | Breaking an impasse that had briefly held up the investigation of the Sago Mine disaster, a federal judge ruled Thursday that officials with the United Mine Workers union can accompany state and federal investigators while they gather evidence underground.

The investigators were expected to venture into the mine in the afternoon — one day later than

planned — to try to pinpoint the cause of the explosion Jan. 2 that led to the deaths of 12 coal miners.

Also Thursday, Gov. Joe Manchin signed into law new safety rules prompted by the Sago disaster and a coal mine fire Jan. 19 that killed two men. Among other things, mine companies must stockpile emergency oxygen canisters underground, and miners must wear electronic tracking devices that can be used to find them in an accident. VICKI SMITH (AP)

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The amount the deficit will reach for the current budget year, estimates the Congressional Budget Office. Tax cuts will likely grow this year's amount.

**Nation**

# GOP Pushes Vote on Alito

## Two more Democrats back controversial high court nominee

WASHINGTON | Die-hard Democratic critics of Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito refused on Thursday to allow a vote on his confirmation, and Republicans countered with a move designed to force his approval by early next week.

"It is time to establish an end point" in the debate over President Bush's selection to replace Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, said Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., said he and other Democrats had refused to agree to a timetable for ending debate.

"There's some division in our caucus," he conceded.

Democratic Leader Harry Reid signaled as much in remarks on the Senate floor. He offered no support for Kennedy, John Kerry and others whose filibuster represents a last stand against Alito's ascension.

"There's been adequate time for



Alito

people to debate," Reid said.

Alito, 55 and a 15-year veteran of the federal appeals court, has well over 50 votes for confirmation.

He gained the support of Democrats Tim Johnson of South Dakota and Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia during the day, and has the backing of at least 52 of the Senate's 55 Republicans.

The Senate will vote Monday on cutting off debate.

If Alito's supporters get 60 votes in the 100-member body, the confirmation vote will follow on Tuesday.

JESSE J. HOLLAND (AP)



Barbara Mann, center, is comforted at the scene where seven of her relatives were killed in a fiery car crash on interstate near Lake Butler, Fla., on Wednesday.

# Families Mourn Youths Killed in Fla. Bus Crash

## Fatal heart attack only adds to tragedy following fiery wreck

LAKE BUTLER, FLA. | Barbara and Terry Mann were supposed to complete their adoption of a 20-month-old boy on Thursday. Instead, they were planning funerals for him and six young relatives — all killed in a fiery car wreck.

After hearing of the accident, Barbara Mann's grief-stricken father suffered a heart attack and died.

Friends and family came together to mourn the deaths as investigators

tried to piece together how the three-vehicle accident happened.

A tractor-trailer rear-ended the children's car and crushed it against a school bus that had stopped to drop off students, authorities said. The car burst into flames, and everyone inside was killed, including 15-year-old Nicky Mann, and soon-to-be-adopted Anthony Lamb.

The other victims were identified by authorities and friends as three children adopted by the Manns — Elizabeth, 15; Johnny, 13; and Heaven, 3 — and the couple's nieces, Ashley Keen, 13, and Miranda Finn, 8. KELLI KENEDY (AP)

# Gunman Seized After Standoff At Calif. Bank

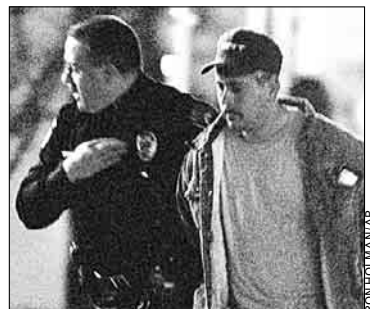
EXETER, CALIF. | Ending a 10 1/2-hour standoff, SWAT officers stormed a bank early Thursday and seized a robber who had taken eight hostages with what turned out to be a pellet gun, authorities said.

The officers moved in after using a pack of cigarettes to trick him into letting go of his last hostage. They left the cigarettes just outside the front door, and when he let the hostage retrieve them, officers pulled her to safety.

No injuries were reported.

Jess Martinez, 47, an unemployed car salesman, was jailed on suspicion of bank robbery and hostage-taking.

Martinez entered the Bank of America branch Wednesday afternoon and demanded money, police said. JULIANA BARBASSA (AP)



A police officer escorts a hostage released during a bank standoff.

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## Nation



**POT LUCK:** Authorities said they discovered more than 2 tons of marijuana in a cross-border tunnel going from Tijuana to a U.S. warehouse. The 5-foot-wide drug tunnel was equipped with a pulley system on the Mexican side.

# Counsel Sought in Abramoff Case

## Senate Democrats urge independent probe amid lobbying scandal

WASHINGTON | Two Senate Democrats called Thursday for the appointment of a special counsel to take over the investigation of the corruption scandal spawned by lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

The switch "would ensure that the investigation and prosecution will proceed without fear or favor and provide the public with full confidence that no one in this country is above the law," Sens.

Charles Schumer of New York and Ken Salazar of Colorado wrote Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.

Abramoff pleaded guilty earlier this year to several felony charges, some of them involving his dealings with members of Congress and their aides. His one-time business partner, former congressional aide Michael Scanlon, pleaded guilty last year as part of the same investigation.

Politicians of both parties moved quickly to shed campaign donations from Abramoff or his former clients in the wake of the lobbyists' admission of guilt.



Sens. Charles Schumer and Ken Salazar call for an independent probe Thursday.

The scandal also has thrust congressional reform toward the top of the legislative and political agenda in the opening days of an election-year Congress.

Schumer and Salazar wrote that the "highly political context" of the allegations may "lead some to surmise that political influence may compromise the investigation."

They cited allegations that the former acting U.S. attorney for Guam and the Northern Marianas, Frederick Black "was replaced, perhaps improperly, as a result of his investigation of Mr. Abramoff."

DAVID EPSO (AP)

## Judge Increases Sentence for Vt. Sex Offender

BURLINGTON, VT. | A judge vilified as soft on crime by bloggers, TV commentators and politicians for giving a child molester just 60 days in jail increased the sentence Thursday to three to 10 years behind bars.

Vermont District Judge Edward Cashman said he decided to impose the longer sentence because state officials reversed course and agreed to provide sex-offender treatment to Mark Hulett in prison.

When the original sentence was imposed, Hulett had been ruled ineligible for treatment. (AP)

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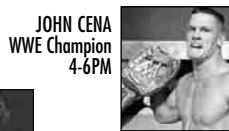
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“A political party that articulates the destruction of Israel as part of its platform is a party with which we will not deal.”

— President Bush, urging Hamas to chart a course toward peace after its victory at the polls

## World

### In Brief

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

#### Court Tells U.S. Makers Of Agent Orange to Pay \$62M

A South Korean court ordered two U.S. manufacturers of the defoliant Agent Orange to pay \$62 million in medical compensation Thursday to local veterans of the Vietnam War and their families. The court ordered Dow Chemical Co. and Monsanto Co. to compensate about 6,800 people. It was the first time a South Korean court has ruled in favor of people seeking compensation from the makers of Agent Orange. (AP)



Soldiers carry the coffin of late Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova on Thursday.

#### PRISTINA, SERBIA-MONTENEGRO Thousands Mourn as Kosovo President Rugova is Buried

A volley of ceremonial gunfire rang out as Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova — the man who embodied ethnic Albanians' quest for an independent state — was laid to rest Thursday in a white marble tomb. Tens of thousands of ethnic Albanians threw flowers and wept as Rugova's flag-draped coffin made its way to his final resting place. Rugova died Saturday of lung cancer at age 61. (AP)

KHARTOUM, SUDAN

#### Aid Workers Flee as Clashes Erupt Among Troops, Rebels

Troops and rebels battled Thursday in a resurgence of violence in Sudan's war-shattered Darfur province that has forced the evacuation of more than 100 aid workers, the U.N. said. African peacekeepers came under fire and a U.N. helicopter crash killed a Sudanese aid worker during the evacuations Wednesday, prompted by fighting that erupted two days earlier when rebels attacked the government garrison town of Golo. (AP)

# Palestinians Step Into the Unknown

## Fear, elation, shock after Hamas claims stunning election win

GAZA CITY, GAZA STRIP | A policeman fears a Hamas vendetta against security forces. A merchant worries that Israel will now seal the borders. A Hamas supporter celebrates, expecting prosperity.

The three men provide a glimpse into the mixed feelings of exhilaration, uncertainty and fear that swept the Palestinian territories Thursday after Islamic Hamas militants won 76 seats in the 132-member parliament.

Across Gaza and the West Bank, thousands of Hamas supporters, marched in the streets, firing guns in the air in celebration.

But in Gaza City, policeman Refaat Ayoub, a Fatah backer, said the party's trouncing left him dazed.

“This is a shock. I don't know how to react,” said Ayoub. “Fatah is the Palestinian Authority. It established Palestine and defended Palestinian rights.”

On Wednesday, when an exit poll predicted a Fatah victory, Ayoub took to the street, triumphantly firing in the air. But as word of Hamas' lead emerged,



**VICTORY:** A Palestinian man holds a rifle while another holds a Koran as Hamas backers celebrate their electoral victory in the West Bank city of Nablus Thursday.

fear replaced happiness.

“Hamas has an old vendetta with some of those in the Palestinian Authority and especially members of the Preventive Security,” who had clashed with Hamas over

the years, he said. “This may cause fighting between Hamas and the Preventive Security.”



**Political earthquake:** Post reporter Scott Wilson, who is based in Jerusalem, takes questions on the Palestinian election | [washingtonpost.com/liveonline](http://washingtonpost.com/liveonline) at noon

## Pollsters Fail to Call Hamas Win

JERUSALEM | Two usually reliable pollsters were wrong about the Palestinian election, both predicting narrow but solid wins for the ruling Fatah, when the actual vote gave Hamas a landslide victory.

An exit poll by Khalil Shekaki, probably the most reputable Palestinian public opinion expert, indicated Fatah would win 63 of the 132 parliament seats, and Hamas would get 58.

The discrepancy may have been due to a reluctance by some voters to admit to pollsters that they were abandoning the ruling party. The errors appeared especially glaring in district races, where smaller numbers of voters were surveyed. (AP)

## Israel Reeling Over Hamas' Triumph

### Palestinian shift may have profound impact on election in March

JERUSALEM | Israel was shocked to the core Thursday over the landslide Palestinian electoral victory for Hamas, a group that has killed hundreds of Israelis and advocates the destruction of the Jewish state.

Three weeks after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffered a stroke, an Israel bereft of its strongman faces a profound crisis with the prospect of a Hamas government in the Palestinian territories.

Leaving the Middle East and West reeling, the result is likely to radically alter the course of Israel's



Acting Israeli leader Ehud Olmert convened a crisis meeting on Thursday.

own election at the end of March, as an outraged right wing flexes its muscles and the centrist government plots its response.

Acting leader Ehud Olmert convened a crisis meeting and the government duly confirmed it

### THE ROAD AHEAD

Among the next steps in the Palestinian political process:

- **Final vote results** are to be certified within two weeks. During that time, candidates may file challenges to the vote counts.
- **Mahmoud Abbas** begins consultations with factions that are to enter the next parliament, then will tap a party to put together a government.
- **The new Palestinian parliament** is to be sworn in for a four-year term in March. (AP)

Hamas official Naji al-Serhi dismissed such worries.

“We want to reassure all the brothers in the police and the security forces that we will not fire anyone unless they break the law,” he said.

On Gaza's Omar al-Mukhtar street, Ayad al-Ejl fretted over Hamas' inexperience and the group's opposition to talks with Israel.

“People are worried. No one is reassuring us. No one knows what will happen in the coming days,” said al-Ejl. MARIAM FAM (AP)

would refuse any negotiation with a Palestinian power that includes “an armed terrorist organization” advocating its destruction.

Olmert, who heads the newly formed centrist Kadima party, is keen to define the permanent borders of Israel and even make further territorial concessions in the West Bank. He faces a critical challenge which could have a dramatic impact on his party's hitherto positive ratings in the polls.

Any perceived leniency towards Hamas could play directly into the hands of Benjamin Netanyahu, the hawkish leader of the Likud party, who last year warned that Israel's pullout from Gaza was a prize for Hamas violence. HAZEL WARD (AFP)

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## World

# 51%

The number of single Britons polled in a Europe-wide survey on dating who admitted to being often lonely. Spaniards came out tops as the biggest party-goers.

# 400 Iraqi Detainees Freed

## Release of 5 female prisoners stirs hopes for kidnapped reporter

BAGHDAD | More than 400 Iraqi detainees, including five women, were freed on Thursday in a move that could help secure the release of a kidnapped American reporter.

The release of the detainees — all held without trial — has raised hopes for the fate of Jill Carroll, a U.S. reporter seized in Baghdad on January 7 by insurgents who had threatened to kill her unless U.S. forces released Iraqi women in their custody. Another four women are still held in U.S.-run prisons.

Carroll, 28, is one of the nearly 250 foreigners seized in Iraq since the March 2003 U.S.-led invasion, and one of the victims of a recent spate in hostage-takings.

While Iraqi and U.S. officials have denied that the releases have anything to do with Carroll's case, there is hope the move might help her regardless.

"Let me assert that there is no



**EMBRACED:** An Iraqi man greets a relative freed from Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad Thursday. Officials deny the release is tied to the abduction of Jill Carroll.

connection between the release and kidnapping of the U.S. reporter," a U.S. spokesman said.

Meanwhile, the commander of multinational forces in Iraq, General George Casey, acknowledged that U.S. military strength around the world is stretched.

"The forces are stretched. I don't think there is any question about that," he said in response to ques-

tions about two recent reports on U.S. military strength.

He was speaking in the city of Diwaniyah as responsibility for the security of a wide part of the south was turned over to Iraq's 8th army division.

"Folks are stretched and they are doing an excellent job and they are certainly accomplishing their mission," he added. (AFP)



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# China Endorses New Iranian Nuke Proposal

## Plan to allow Tehran to enrich uranium in Russia gaining steam

BEIJING | China on Thursday expressed support for a proposal to allow Iran to enrich its uranium in Russia as Tehran's top nuclear negotiator met with Chinese officials in Beijing in an apparent effort to shore up support from its key ally.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said at a regular news briefing that the proposal to enrich uranium in Russia "could be helpful to break the current stalemate."

Iran, which insists its program is peaceful, has welcomed Moscow's suggestion that uranium could be enriched in Russia, then returned

to Iran for use in the country's reactors. But haggling has continued over the specifics.

Iran's High Council of National Security Secretary Ali Larijani suggested Wednesday it would take time to work out details of



Larijani

the proposal — a Western-backed compromise that could provide more oversight and ease fears that Tehran is using its pursuit of atomic power as a front for a nuclear weapons program.

Russian officials have said more talks on the proposal would be held in Russia around Feb. 16 — two weeks after an emergency IAEA board meeting in Austria. (AP)

# Russia Says UK Spy Rock Is a Hi-Tech Marvel

MOSCOW | Russia's main KGB successor agency said Thursday that a spy gadget hidden in a fake rock that allegedly had been used by a purported British spy ring in Moscow was a highly sophisticated device, as complex as space technology.

Sergei Ignatchenko, a spokesman for the Federal Security Service, said that the device intended to help exchange information between agents and their handlers had cost tens of millions of British pounds.

"It's a space-level technology," Ignatchenko said in televised remarks, adding that the device retrieved by the FSB from a Moscow street had several degrees of protection. "This rock can be tossed from the ninth floor (of a building); it can remain in water for a long time," he said. (AP)



64

**Total hours of community service** a woman in Frederick County must perform as punishment for letting her 3-year-old daughter, 9-year-old son and his 8-year-old friend ride around in the trunk of her car while she ran errands in June.

Local



STEVE HELBER/AP

Last week, Del. Jack Reid showed off his bulletproof vest to his colleagues.

## Delegate's Firearm Discharges

Va. lawmaker apologizes after gun goes off in his office

RICHMOND, VA. | A Virginia lawmaker's handgun accidentally discharged in his Capitol Square office Thursday as he tried to unload it, sending a bullet zinging across the room before it was stopped by a bulletproof vest hanging on the door.

"That absorbed the entire thing," said Del. Jack Reid, a 63-year-old Republican.

He later apologized to both the Democratic and Republican caucuses before Thursday's floor session, and then made another apology on the House floor.

Reid said he had taken the tiny automatic handgun out the breast pocket of his jacket, removed it from a thin pouch and was ejecting the ammunition clip from its handle when it discharged. BOB LEWIS (AP)

## Md. Boy Said to Like Guns

Prosecutors allege violent video game influenced 8-year-old

ROCKVILLE, MD. | An 8-year-old boy who shot a 7-year-old day-care classmate in the arm had previously made threats of violence involving guns, including shooting police and killing another person, prosecutors said Thursday.

The boy also was influenced by a violent video game given to him by his father, whom prosecutors allege introduced the boy to guns. John L. Hall Sr. is accused of showing his

son how to use the .38-caliber handgun used in the shooting the night before the incident. He is charged with several crimes, including leaving the gun in a closet within reach of his son.

"The father was basically grooming the son toward having a propensity for guns," said Montgomery County State's Attorney Douglas Gansler.

During a bond hearing on two of the five charges he faces, Hall adamantly denied that he was responsible for the shooting and that he taught his son about the gun.

"This was an accident," he said,

appearing by closed circuit television from the county jail.

District Court Judge Louis Harrington set a \$50,000 bond for Hall on two gun charges, which will be added to the \$75,000 bond set Wednesday for counts that include being a felon in possession of a firearm. Another man, Clyde Colmes Jr., faces charges of illegally providing the gun to Hall.

Prosecutors claim the boy, who has not been identified because he is a minor, carried the gun to a day-care center in Germantown in his backpack Tuesday morning.

STEPHEN MANNING (AP)

## In Brief

WASHINGTON

### Adams Morgan Assaults Worry Officials, Businesses

Local officials and business owners said Thursday they hope an increased police presence in Adams Morgan provides more safety in one of the city's popular entertainment districts. Five assaults have been reported in recent weeks, compared with two during the same period last year. And since early December, two victims have been left comatose by head injuries. "I don't want Dodge City or Bourbon Street," said Council member Jim Graham, D-Ward 1. (AP)



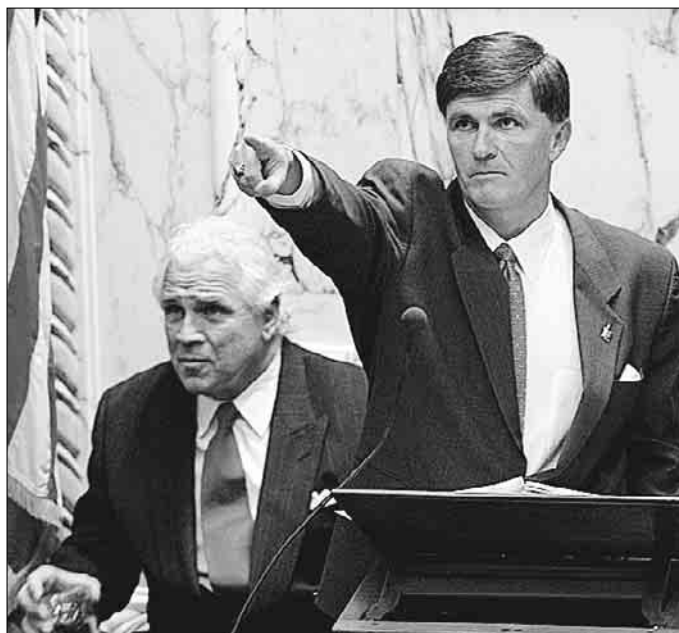
Graham

WASHINGTON

### Boy Riding Bus Is OK After Being Hit By Stray Bullet

The Metropolitan Police Department said Thursday that a 14-year-old boy was hit by a stray bullet while riding a Metrobus just after 1 p.m. at Rhode Island Avenue and 20th Street NE. The boy, who was treated and released from a hospital, was hit after a liquor store owner shot at a robbery suspect leaving the store, police said. (AP)

ANNAPOLIS, MD. | STATE OF THE STATE



CHRIS GARDNER/AP

**SINGLED OUT:** Gov. Robert Ehrlich points to a colleague in the audience in the Maryland state House chamber Thursday as he delivers his State of the State address. Ehrlich said it is "a time for everybody to take a deep breath and to celebrate that Maryland is enjoying a vibrant economy right now."

## Metro Voice Contest Down To 10 Finalists

WASHINGTON | Ten finalists to become the next voice on Metro announcements endured one more hurdle Thursday as the agency tried to whittle down the competition to just one. Three men and seven women made professional recordings of the transit agency's new "doors closing" messages. The winner will be announced next week. (AP)

## The Lotteries

Thursday, Jan. 26

DISTRICT	
Mid-day Lucky Numbers	7-5-4
Evening Lucky Numbers	4-2-6
Mid-day DC 4	3-0-2-9
Evening DC 4	0-2-4-5
Rolling Cash Five	29-13-16-22-07
Daily 6	24-25-08-04-27-21 Bonus: 37
Hot Lotto (Wed.)	12-16-32-38-39 (17)

MARYLAND	
Mid-day Pick 3	5-9-4
Evening Pick 3	5-2-6
Mid-day Pick 4	1-6-7-6
Evening Pick 4	1-6-1-7
Match 5	04-11-23-34-37 Bonus: 05
Lotto (Wed.)	07-14-19-20-37-46
VIRGINIA	
Mid-day Pick 3 (Thurs.)	7-7-2
Evening Pick 3 (Wed.)	0-8-9
Mid-day Pick 4 (Thurs.)	5-2-9-3

Evening Pick 4 (Wed.)	0-3-2-0
Mid-day Cash 5 (Thurs.)	01-03-07-12-25
Evening Cash 5 (Wed.)	05-07-17-22-31
Lotto South (Wed.)	05-06-20-23-24-34

MULTI-STATE GAMES	
Powerball (Wed.)	10-37-43-50-52 (14)
Power Play	5X

All winning numbers are official only when validated at a lottery ticket location or a lottery claims office. Drawings that occur after Express's deadline will be published two days later.

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# Money

## GM Reports \$4.8B Loss

Worse-than-expected figures put automaker \$8.6B in the red for '05

DETROIT | General Motors Corp., which is planning big job cuts and plant closings as it fights to avoid bankruptcy, said Thursday it lost \$4.8 billion in the fourth quarter and \$8.6 billion in all of 2005, dragged down by losses and charges in its North American division.

It was the fifth-straight quarterly loss for the world's largest automaker and the worst annual loss since 1992. GM's North American operations alone posted adjusted losses of \$1.5 billion for the quar-

ter and \$5.6 billion for the full year, as unit sales fell 3 percent in North America in 2005. The dismal results were far worse than Wall Street expected.

GM Chairman and CEO Rick Wagoner said 2005 "was one of the most difficult years in GM's history."

"Two significant fundamental weaknesses in our North American operations were fully exposed — our huge legacy cost burden and our inability to adjust structural costs in line with falling revenue," Wagoner said



Wagoner

in a statement.

GM's latest loss compares to a loss of \$99 million in the October-December period of 2004. Revenue was \$51.2 billion for the quarter and \$192.6 billion for the full year, both down just slightly from 2004.

GM sold 9.2 million vehicles worldwide in 2005, the second-largest volume in the company's history. The automaker also set sales records in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, and sales also were up a modest 1.3 percent in Europe. But North American losses overwhelmed those gains, and GM's worldwide market share was down slightly, to 14.2 percent from 14.4 percent in 2004. DEE-ANN DURBIN (AP)

## ChoicePoint Fined \$15M for Breach

ATLANTA | ChoicePoint Inc. agreed Thursday to pay \$15 million to settle Federal Trade Commission charges that the data warehouse's security and record-handling procedures violated consumers' privacy rights when thieves infiltrated the company's massive database.

But another investigation of the company's top two officers by the Securities and Exchange Commission looms, and some

lawmakers in Washington say tougher regulations still need to be implemented to prevent another breach.

The FTC said it had fined the Alpharetta-based company \$10 million — the biggest the agency has ever imposed — and that Choicepoint would pay an additional \$5 million to compensate consumers.

Choicepoint had revealed last

year that thieves posing as small business customers gained access to ChoicePoint's database, possibly compromising the personal information of 163,000 Americans, according to the FTC. The company discovered the breach more than four months before disclosing it to the public in February 2005. ChoicePoint has said authorities asked it to keep the information secret initially. HARRY R. WEBER (AP)

## Market Action

### New York Stock Exchange

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
EagMatB	162.20	+37.27	+29.8
EagleMatI	163.37	+34.40	+26.7
KemetCp	9.01	+1.35	+17.6
FurnBrds	24.95	+3.15	+14.4
UtdRentl lf	28.80	+3.50	+13.8
<b>Losers</b>			
CatalMktg	21.71	-3.87	-15.1
Cott Cp	11.31	-1.92	-14.5
Brunswick	36.04	-5.40	-13.0
Allilmag	4.60	-.36	-7.3
StanlWk	48.07	-3.78	-7.3

### NASDAQ Stock Market

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
ChinaNRes	10.00	+4.60	+85.2
ChinaTDev	3.15	+.97	+44.5
Plexus	30.79	+7.31	+31.1
TridMic s	26.54	+5.08	+23.7
Tweeteter	8.05	+1.52	+23.3
<b>Losers</b>			
Intgph	38.07	-12.68	-25.0
GigaTr	2.72	-.78	-22.3
JnprNtw	17.06	-4.46	-20.7
CNS	20.50	-5.06	-19.8
Gentex s	16.13	-3.79	-19.0

### Rates

	CURRENT	PREVIOUS WEEK
Prime Rate	7.25	7.25
Fed Funds close	4.375	4.25
3-month disc	4.34	4.27
2-year	4.48	4.37
10-year	4.52	4.38
30-year	4.70	4.55

### Currency (Dollars in foreign currency)

	TODAY	PREVIOUS DAY	YEAR AGO
British Pound	.5617	.5606	.5314
Canadian Dollar	1.1502	1.1514	1.2337
European Euro	.8191	.8165	.7651
Japanese Yen	116.33	115.64	102.97
Mexican Peso	10.4910	10.4940	11.2590
Taiwanese Dollar	31.96	31.97	31.89

DOW	NASDAQ	S&P 500
+99.73	+22.35	+9.15
+0.93	+0.99	+0.72
10809.47	2283.00	1273.83

### Pharmacy Stocks

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	YEAR TO DATE PERCENT CHANGE
Allergan	113.25	-.54	+4.9
AstraZen	47.86	+.18	-1.5
BarrPhm	63.65	+.12	+2.2
BrMySq	22.62	+.65	-1.6
ForestLab	44.57	+.67	+9.6
Hospira	44.35	+.55	+3.7
IvaxCorp	25.98	...	-17.1
JohnJn	58.64	+.14	-2.4
KingPhrm	18.16	+.07	+7.3
LillyEli	56.93	-.24	+6
Merck	33.95	+.76	+6.7
Pfize	25.05	+.22	+7.4
SchergPl	19.63	+.04	-5.9
Sepracor	48.45	-.61	-6.1
Wyeth	46.64	+.17	+1.2



## TELEVISION

**A Little Learning:** Disney tries to parlay a six-year-old animated film into a TV series with "The Emperor's New School" | 21

# Entertainment Weekend

## Mystery in a 'Bubble'

**Steven Soderbergh's drama focuses on three ordinary lives**

**FILM** | It seems Steven Soderbergh is a filmmaker who never will forget his indie roots.

The director of "Traffic," "Erin Brockovich" and "Ocean's Eleven" is back with another low-budget experiment, one meant to gauge audience appetites for near-simultaneous release on screen, TV and DVD.

"Bubble" is a fine little movie, a stark, minimalist drama of the mundane that takes a frightening turn into tragedy, events and revelations hitting with all the more wallop for the serene, humdrum way Soderbergh lets them unfold.

The cast of nonprofessional actors, shooting around their home turf along the Ohio-West Virginia state line, propels the story with great poise and authenticity.

The first 10 minutes of this taut film establishes the commonplace lives of Martha (Debbie Doebereiner, in real life a recently retired manager of a KFC restaurant) and Kyle (Dustin James Ashley, who is studying to become a computer technician).

Fortysomething Martha is old enough to be Kyle's mother, yet the two have forged a quiet, sturdy friendship based on mutual loneliness and a simple need to connect



**BURSTING THE BUBBLE:** Steven Soderbergh's bold but low-budget experiment in marketing succeeds on every level.

with another human at the doll factory where they work.

Kyle lives with his mom, Martha tends to her elderly father at home. Martha picks Kyle up in the morning, they stop for doughnuts, discuss dreams of beach vacations over lunch, and she drops him off at his second job at night.

Bursting this unassuming bubble is Rose (Misty Dawn Wilkins, a hairdresser in real life), a single

mother who comes to the work at the doll factory, begins a flirtation with shy Kyle and imposes on Martha by asking for favors here and there.

Without ever letting go of the drowsy, deliberate pace established at the outset, Soderbergh and screenwriter Coleman Hough introduce a horrific twist.

The remainder of "Bubble" peels back the veneer of somber order that

guides Martha and Kyle's relationship, exposing murky shadows and hinting at motivations about which even they are unaware.

An alternate ending (included on the DVD) offers a tidy, rational explanation for all that happens, but Soderbergh wisely left it out of the film — it's so painfully literal it would have spoiled what proves an ambiguously poetic conclusion. DAVID GERMAIN (AP)



**'BIG' MISTAKE:** Martin Lawrence squeezes laughs out of a tired drag act.

## An Unhappy Homecoming

**Martin Lawrence puts on the dress for 'Big Momma' again**

**FILM** | Here's the kindest thing that can be said about the sequel "Big Momma's House 2" — It's Martin Lawrence's best movie in years. Probably since the original "Big Momma's House," and that came

out back in 2000.

Then again, his films since then have included "What's the Worst That Could Happen?," "National Security," "Rebound" and his dud of a concert film "Runteldat."

Something about putting on that fat suit, that blond wig and those big, floral-print dresses, though, brings out the qualities that made him a star in the first place.

You won't see anything new here, just more of the same broad physical gags as Lawrence's FBI agent goes undercover as Big Momma to work as a nanny in a suspect's house. It's a one-joke character in a one-joke movie. But while he's in disguise, he manages to be grotesque and vaguely endearing at the same time. CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)

### Got Plans?

FOR COMPLETE WEEKEND LISTINGS SEE WASHINGTONPOST.COM/ENTERTAINMENT

**I'm taking my boyfriend to Oasis Winery. Can you recommend a restaurant near the winery?**

While you're out and about in greater Va., how about trying Ashby Inn, Rail Stop or Apartment 2G?

*Ashby Inn & Restaurant, 692 Federal St., Paris, Va.; 540-592-3900.*

*Rail Stop, 6478 Main St., The Plains, Va.; 540-253-5644.*

*Apartment 2G, 206 S. Royal Ave., Front Royal, Va.; 540-636-7306.*



An idyllic view from a tent at the Oasis Winery in the Virginia countryside.

**A friend's birthday is coming up. We'd like to take her to play pool, preferably either Cleveland Park, Adams Morgan or Bethesda. There will probably be about 10-15 people total. Any suggestions?**

In Cleveland Park, you can try Atomic Billiards or there's Angles in Adams Morgan, but that might be a little cozy for that many people. You'll have more room to spread out at Union Jack's in Bethesda, so long as you can ignore the faux-British decor.

*Atomic Billiards, 3427 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-363-7665.*

*Angles, 2339 18th St. NW; 202-462-8100.*

*Union Jack's, 4915 St. Elmo Ave., Bethesda; 301-652-2561.*

The Going Out Gurus think you should get out more. Join the discussion Thursdays at 1 p.m. | [washingtonpost.com/liveonline](http://washingtonpost.com/liveonline)



## Weekend | Entertainment

THIS Friday, January 27th

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# Magical Touch

Dark British humor lends an edge, laughs to 'Nanny McPhee'

FILM | As a magical governess charged with whipping seven unruly children into shape in "Nanny McPhee," Emma Thompson serves up spoonfuls of an ingredient that's not nearly as sweet as sugar. But having also whipped up the script, she makes the movie go down easily.

Nanny McPhee swoops down out of nowhere to help a widower (Colin Firth) and his mischievous brood. The children reluctantly learn life lessons and find that behaving themselves and functioning as a cohesive family isn't so bad after all.

It's a story that could have been treacly, but Thompson and Jones' twisted, dryly British sense of humor often makes "Nanny McPhee" surprisingly funny.

The esteemed supporting cast also does wonders to elevate this beyond just a colorful, high-energy children's movie, including British stage veteran Derek Jacobi, Imelda Staunton and Angela Lansbury.

McPhee won't be scared off as easily as her predecessors; her appearance is scary enough in itself, and distractingly so. Her stray front



HOUSE RULES: Despite the dumb donkey, this "Nanny" takes good care of viewers.

tooth alone draws away attention from what's happening on screen.

Nanny accomplishes the kids' transformations with the bang of her gnarled walking stick on the ground, an act that sets her spells into motion. Unfortunately, the

resulting visual effects look cheesy and jerkily sped-up. But considering that "Nanny McPhee" gets most everything else right, watching a stupid-looking dancing donkey isn't the worst medicine to swallow. CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)

# Far From 'Annapolis'

Will the underdogs win against all odds in this cliched drama?

FILM | The location is the U.S. Naval Academy, but you've been to "Annapolis" before, several times over. This rousing, crowd-pleasing drama crams in every underdog cliché, as well as every boxing-movie cliché and military-movie cliché.

James Franco stars as an unlikely Annapolis freshman (or plebe) who comes from a blue-collar back-



James Franco faces Tyrese Gibson.

ground where no one expects him to succeed — not his friends or the stoic father who never showed him any love, and especially not himself. As he and his classmates go through

the requisite training and hazing, Franco's Jake Huard repeatedly brings everyone else down. But the one thing he can do is fight — how's that for a heavy-handed metaphor? — which allows him to square off against his demanding commanding officer (Tyrese Gibson).

Justin Lin's film has some unexpected humor, though, and Franco has decent chemistry with Vicellous Shannon as his overweight roommate and Donnie Wahlberg as the lieutenant commander who becomes his ersatz fight trainer. CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)

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# Entertainment **Weekend**

## Now Playing

**BLOODRAYNE** (R, 95 minutes) The great mystery of this horrible vampire flick, set in 18th-century Romania, is how director Uwe Boll (he of "House of the Dead") conned Sir Ben Kingsley, Geraldine Chaplin, Michael Madsen and Kristanna Loken — in fact, any sentient biped — to appear in this movie (inspired by a video game). It's prime material for an Ed Wood-style camp affair, with atrocious acting, maladroit scripting and bad hair. (DT)

**BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN** (R, 134 minutes) From the moment Ennis Del Mar (Heath Ledger) and Jack Twist (Jake Gyllenhaal) meet, it's just a matter of when, not if. As a tragic evocation of the costs of homophobia, the film is indeed a watershed. But as a testament to the importance of following one's passion, it's devoid of passion. (AH)

**CAPOTE** (R, 98 minutes) It is a comical image: mincing, piping little Truman Capote in his cashmere scarf tiptoeing around the bleak wheaty burg of Holcomb, Kan., in the wake of some horrific murders about which he admits he doesn't really care. As Capote, Philip Seymour Hoffman makes you believe in the man: an artist's personality, ruthless and shrewd; a hysteric's delicate grasp of his emotions; a charmer whose wiles could wear down even wary Kansas lawmen. (SH)

**CASANOVA** (R, 108 minutes) Poor Casanova — expelled from a seminary, forced out of Rome, exiled from Venice. He was also afflicted with sexual diseases, hounded by the Inquisition and sentenced to five years in a stifling, lead-lined cell. All this retribution, however, was nothing compared with the indignity the 18th-century lothario would suffer three centuries later. (DT)

**CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2** (PG, 100 minutes) Tom (Steve Martin) persuades his close-knit clan to make a last sentimental trip to Lake Winnetka, where they discover that their dear, old lake house is more decrepit than they remembered, while their rivals, an eight-kid family called the Murtaughs, have installed a McMansion across the water. This is a family trip to skip. (DT)

**CHICKEN LITTLE** (G, 78 minutes) Based on the old tale, and the image of ardent, mythological stupidity — the chicken who thought the sky was falling when an acorn fell on its head — this computer-animated gee-whizzer takes the story



**GOOD TASTE:** In the confusing "Underworld 2," Kate Beckinsale plays a vampire.

one more crank toward the literal. When the thing hits Chicken Little, it turns out it is a piece of the sky: The sky is falling. The movie then wittily finds a way to morph into a fabulous parody of "War of the Worlds," possibly a bit intense in parts for the smallest of beings. The animators are fabulous and full of mischief, weaving enough ironic amusements into the story for the longer of tooth. (SH)

**DERAILED** (R, 120 minutes) This film is fast, slick, stupid, violent fun and, despite the cynically high body count, without serious intention in this world. It is set in motion when Charlie (Clive Owen) has an affair with Lucinda (Jennifer Aniston), whom he has met on a train. They're trysting the night away when suddenly a feral man enters, in the form of Philippe Laroche (Vincent Cassel). He pistol-whips Charlie, rapes Lucinda, takes money, credit cards, cell phones, dignity and any sense of the universe as rational. Then Philippe calls Charlie: He wants money. What can Charlie do? Eventually, the movie waltzes toward the absurd, the unbelievable, then veers back toward some sort of just-marginal believability. (SH)

**END OF THE SPEAR** (PG-13, 108 minutes) In 1956 five American missionaries were speared to death by Ecuadorean tribesmen they had hoped to convert. Anyone

who wants to see honorable men martyred should be satisfied. The film reprises the events that led to the tragedy and the moral victory that followed: The families of those slain prevailed upon the natives to stop infighting. The most powerful moments are documentary excerpts of a son's friendship with the man who killed his father. (DT)

**THE FAMILY STONE** (PG-13, 102 minutes) Braying, self-righteous, predictable, morally superior and, worst of all, loud, the Stones are the subject of this film, which means to celebrate them but only denigrates. There are many ways to define the shrieking awfulness of this movie, from the general lack of wit to the cheap exploitation of cancer to its casual cruelty, but it's the casting that really goes haywire. (SH)

**FUN WITH DICK AND JANE** (PG-13, 90 minutes) This remake of the 1977 comedy stars Jim Carrey and Téa Leoni as Dick and Jane are McMansion millionaires who lose it all. It takes a few months before Dick hits on the idea of stealing. Though instantly forgettable, it lives up to its title: It's fun, and that's fine. (AH)

**GLORY ROAD** (PG, 109 minutes) In 1966, Don Haskins led the first all-black starting lineup to victory in the NCAA basketball championships, along the way becoming a sports legend and a political hero. He wants his team at Texas Western University in El Paso to win, and in order to recruit winners, he goes where the strong players are — on the streets of Detroit, the South Bronx and Gary, Ind., where young black men are playing their own highly expressive, individualized style of basketball. The movie consists of the usual sports movie clichés, but they are executed with terrific assurance. (AH)

**GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK** (PG-13, 93 minutes) George Clooney, who directed and co-wrote, retells the story of crusading journalist Ed Murrow, who stood up to braying political bully Joe McCarthy. The stylizations of '50s TV drama, including black-and-white cinematography, are terrific. Clooney casts himself as Murrow's producer, Fred W. Friendly, but hardly registers. Neither do any of the other CBS minions, even though they're played by such names as Jeff Daniels, Robert Downey Jr. and Patricia Clarkson. Only two people register: David Strathairn as Murrow and Joe McCarthy as Joe McCarthy. Strathairn dominates the movie with furious intelligence, guts, will and nobility. (SH)

**GRANDMA'S BOY** (R, 97 minutes) This is a silly but nonetheless amusing stoner comedy about a 40-ish dude (Allen Covert, a co-writer of the film) who

Continued on page 16

## Sunday in The Washington Post



**Shows and Tell:** Patty Duke virtually grew up on television. The former child actress — and Oscar winner — talks about her life on the small screen. | *TV Week*

**Stage Left:** Looking for fringe theater in Washington? There are plenty of off-center spaces and productions if you know where to look. | *Sunday Source*

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THU 2	<b>THE BEATINGS, PUP TENT</b>
FRI 3	<b>LILYS</b> (THE SOUNDS OF) KALEIDOSCOPE FRENCH TOAST
SAT 4	<b>LOW</b> HIS NAME IS ALIVE DEATH VESSEL
TUE 7	<b>SKELETON KEY</b> THE GIRAFFES
WED 8	<b>FEIST</b> JASON COLLETT
THU 9	<b>MARY TIMONY BAND</b> THE AQUARIUM
FRI 10	<b>SHORTSTACK</b> REVIVAL, GUN
SAT 11	<b>THE MOUSETRAP</b> BRITPOP DANCE NIGHT
SUN 12	<b>LIVING THINGS</b>
FRI 17	<b>SHARON JONES &amp; THE DAP-KINGS</b>
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# Weekend Entertainment

## Now Playing

Continued from page 15

coasts through life stuck in frat house mode, smoking pot and working as a video-game tester. After he gets evicted, he moves in with his grandmother Lilly (Doris Roberts), who already has two roommates Grace and Bea. Hijinks ensue. (JANE HORWITZ)

**HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE** (PG-13, 160 minutes) This is probably the most engaging Potter film of the series thus far. Readers of the J.K. Rowling novels may be disappointed that many details from the book have been altered or omitted. But as long as those readers appreciate large-scale action and smaller-scale interaction, they'll be happy. (DT)

**HOODWINKED** (PG, 81 minutes) The angle taken by this unnecessary variant of the

"Little Red Riding Hood" story seems to have more to do with marketing than storytelling: It's to reinvest the Grimm Brothers story in the idiom of the television series "Dragnet." Who will be familiar with these stylizations? The answer: grandparents. And as animation, it's far from state of the art; the creatures seem more like rubber toys, and their faces are without nuance or vividness. (SH)

**HOSTEL** (R, 95 minutes) Three young sex-crazy guys traveling through Europe end up in Amsterdam, where a greasy local flashes some cell phone pics of three-ways with buxom Eastern European chicks and points the way to a youth hostel in Slovakia. We soon learn that the management there supplies gullible guys 'n' girls to an "art exhibit" where rich businessmen fork over thousands of dollars to torture and kill the pretty young people. You won't be bored. You will be grossed out. (TERESA WILTZ)



**DANCING IN THE DARK:** Ralph Fiennes blindly romances "The White Countess."

**JUST FRIENDS** (PG-13, 94 minutes) In high school, Chris (Ryan Reynolds) was perennially cast as "best friend," never "coolest guy." Thus he could not ever become romantic object to "school's coolest girl," Jamie (Amy Smart). She liked him just the way he was: fat, clumsy, funny, unthreatening. Ten years later, Chris, who has shed a thousand or so pounds, tries to face his past — Jamie, now a bartender. What Chris seems most interested in might be called a revenge tryst: Now cool, he thinks he can sweep her off her feet and get out of town having achieved a lifelong goal. Of course he falls in love again. The movie gets surprisingly better as it progresses. (SH)

**KING KONG** (PG-13, 187 minutes) Sticking close to the original, both in story and milieu, this film features Jack Black as energetic film entrepreneur Carl Denham, who hires a tramp steamer, tricks playwright Jack Driscoll (Adrien Brody),

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**Now Playing**

movie star Bruce Baxter (Kyle Chandler) and untested actress Ann Darrow (Naomi Watts) into joining him on Skull Island, where he plans to shoot a film against a heretofore unseen background. There he discovers a 25-foot-tall ape whom the natives call Kong and to whom they offer apparently virgin-bride sacrifices. But Kong sees Darrow and falls in hot monkey love. The movie is full of mesmerization, astonishment, thrills, chills, spills, kills and ills, a big monkey picture show that's certainly the best popular entertainment of the year. (SH)

**LAST HOLIDAY** (PG-13, 112 minutes) A good-hearted, kind-spirited, if mild pleasure. Queen Latifah plays Georgia Byrd, who works in a department store. Then, a CAT scan suggests that she has three weeks to live. She quits, cashes in and heads to the Czech Republic, where she puts in at a five-star joint. Amid the splendors, Georgia's fundamental decency and good sense soon win converts among the rich and famous. The movie is never terribly funny or terribly dramatic, but Latifah's quiet solidity and common sense root it in ways that larger, louder pictures never achieve. (SH)

**LOOKING FOR COMEDY IN THE MUSLIM WORLD** (PG-13, 98 minutes) Albert Brooks plays "Albert Brooks" who, despite his comic reputation, isn't doing well. Depressed, "Brooks" is flown to Washington, where the government wants to learn what makes people of the Third World laugh. The melancholy, unsure "Brooks" is sent to India: It turns out what's funny is Brooks flailing desperately to get Muslims to laugh. (SH)

**THE MATADOR** (R, 96 minutes) Pierce Brosnan plays a middle-age sleaze bag with a gold neck chain, a gut and a pornstar mustache who kills for a living. In a hotel bar in Mexico City, he meets Danny Wright (Greg Kinnear), a traveling salesman. Their chance encounter is the beginning of a darkly fascinating relationship. This noirish movie is constantly couched in quotation marks and takes a tentative approach. (DT)

**MATCH POINT** (R, 124 minutes) In Woody Allen's new film, Jonathan Rhys-Meyers plays Chris Wilton, a retired tennis player who has given up the pro circuit to teach the rich and untalented. When one of his students — easygoing Tom Hewett (Matthew Goode) — invites him to the opera, a new world opens before him. But no sooner has Chris started dating Tom's sister Chloe (Emily Mortenson) when he meets Nola (Scarlett Johansson), Tom's sultry fiancée. This British-made film



**IS THIS FUNNY?** In "Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World," Albert Brooks finds humor for American audiences.

is elegant, uncompromising and oh-so nasty. (DT)

**MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA** (PG-13, 120 minutes) This movie is everything you'd expect it to be: beautiful, mesmerizing, tasteful, Japanese. It's just not very hot. It stars three of the world's most beautiful women — Zhang Ziyi, Gong Li and Michelle Yeoh — and it's set in the inner world of the geisha. Yet it just sits there, glorious but never remotely enticing. (SH)

**MRS. HENDERSON PRESENTS** (R, 102 minutes) From the first few moments, it's clear what this film will be: a whimsical period piece that, despite some quietly bawdy double-entendres and a lovely performance from the always dignified Dame Judi Dench, can't escape being a bit twee. It's based on the true story of Laura Henderson, who as a widow in the early 1930s bought a defunct London theater and made it a smashing success with nonstop vaudeville revues featuring completely naked women. (AH)

**MUNICH** (R, 140 minutes) Steven Spielberg's film focuses on a small Israeli killing team tasked with hunting and destroying the Palestinian Black September planners of the Munich massacre of 1972 across Europe and the Middle East. Give the movie credit for its rigor in facing the depressing problem of vengeance. But the film uses memories of the Munich Olympics massacre. Those events should be more than just fodder for ginning up tension at the end of a commercial movie. (SH)

**THE NEW WORLD** (PG-13, 135 minutes)



## Man, Machines & The Red Planet

➔ **OPENING WIDE — AND TALL —** at the National Air and Space Museum's Imax Theater, "Roving Mars" gets down and dusty with the two little machines that gathered and transmitted information about the Red Planet on a 2003 expedition. Watch as literally thousands of scientists and technicians labor to bring Spirit and Opportunity — for such are the rovers' names — into being. We're with the little guys so long they start to take on human characteristics. Anyone who wept at the tragic end of Huey, Dewey and Louie in "Silent Running" knows what it's like to emotionally invest in a space-voyaging robot. ARION BERGER (EXPRESS)

This movie attempts to rescue the founding of Jamestown from kitsch. In the beginning, forest creatures — graceful, beautiful, magical — contemplate the stumbling invaders from Olde Englande. The Native Americans are amused until it dawns on them that the furry boys mean to stay. Q'orianka plays Pocahontas, Colin Farrell is John Smith. Is it love? Hard to say. The movie's distance from emotional engagement results in something close to the thin dead line. (SH)

**PRIDE & PREJUDICE** (PG, 128 minutes) This version of Jane Austen's fabled story, in which Lizzie Bennet and Mr. Darcy begin as fiery opponents and end up as married lovers, is not quite the taming of a shrew, because in Austen's worldview, leading ladies of beauty and wit weren't shrews and never had to be tamed, but merely loved and respected, and good things would follow. That's the main trajectory of this film, starring Keira Knightley as Elizabeth and Matthew MacFadyen as the initially dour, snotty Mr. Darcy. Knightley takes control of a scene, radiating power and personality unto the rafters. It's a great performance. (SH)

**THE PRODUCERS** (PG-13, 134 minutes) So how good is the movie of the musical of the movie? It's pretty good. It's too long to be great and it's too square to be great and it's too loud to be great and it finds homosexual effeminacy too funny to ever be called great, but no one will come out sadder than they went in. (SH)

**THE RINGER** (PG-13, 99 minutes) On the one hand, the movie wants credit for its audaciousness as it stoops to lampoon the athletes of the Special Olympics and uses that worthy entity in the cruelest and most cynical of ways by postulating a normal fellow faking mental retardation to cop an easy victory. On the other hand, it is terrified of going too far, so even as it advances, it retreats, hastily assuring viewers not to take it seriously. (SH)

**SARAH SILVERMAN: JESUS IS MAGIC** (R, 72 minutes) When it comes to Sarah Silverman, the best thing to do is simply sit back and listen. The fact that she shouldn't be saying those things and you shouldn't be laughing at them makes it even more deliciously painful. There are song parodies, trips backstage, but it's all just filler to stretch 40 golden minutes of inspired stand-up to 72 minutes. You sit there thinking, good lord, does she mean it? She can't mean it! Can she say that? Can we laugh? (SH)

**THE SQUID AND THE WHALE** (R, 81 minutes) Set in Brooklyn in 1986, this movie is piercing and forthright. When Bernard (Jeff Daniels) and Joan (Laura Linney) Berkman inform their children they're

Continued on page 19

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## Now Playing

Continued from page 17

getting a divorce, it's the beginning of an emotional whirlwind for four very different people. The movie is so brutally honest at times, you can almost sense the real Baumbachs squirming and maybe even nodding their heads. (DT)

**SYRIANA** (R, 126 minutes) George Clooney plays CIA operative Bob Barnes, an avuncular career agent who used to know where all the bodies were buried — mainly because he did most of the digging. In the 1980s, the Cold War made things morally easy, bifurcating the world into black fur hats and white Stetsons. But the CIA no longer needs seasoned agents like him; it's all satellite reconnaissance and missile button pushing these days. So what becomes of an obsolete foot soldier? This is a premium-octane thriller about a society that has become insidiously dependent on oil. What's so powerful about the film is the rich stories it tells and how it leads them like so many human tributaries to one black, bubbling source. (DT)

**TRANSAMERICA** (R, 103 minutes) As Bree Osbourne, a preoperative male-to-female transsexual, Felicity Huffman dives down the rabbit hole as a woman, pulling the challenge off with skill, aplomb and deep compassion. (AH)

**TRISTAN & ISOLDE** James Franco plays this guy Tristan who sees his whole family murdered in England, except it isn't England yet because all the tribes are warring. Anyway, over in Ireland, there's this princess named Isolde (Sophia Myles). So, there's all this fighting and brogues and torch-lit angst and stuff, and Tristan falls in love with Isolde. But even though you can see tragedy coming, the whole thing drags on and on and on. (AH)

**UNDERWORLD 2: EVOLUTION** (R, 106 minutes) This sequel to 2003's "Underworld," starring Kate Beckinsale as a vampire, is a confusing horror flick. Vampires and werewolves have long, heated exchanges about who killed whose father, who's been imprisoned for centuries and so on. You'll never keep up. Appreciate the special effects and Beckinsale, who's in fine form and body-hugging leather. (DT)

**WALK THE LINE** (PG-13, 136 minutes) This movie gets off to a promising start, sure to raise goose bumps, at the gates of Folsom Prison in 1968. The camera makes its way slowly into the jail, and finally, after an excruciating, exhilarating eternity, we see Johnny Cash — played, in an uncanny performance, by Joaquin Phoenix — as he drinks a glass of water and contemplates a buzz



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## Guilt Hidden In Plain Sight

→ **"CACHE (HIDDEN)"** is another superb, challenging film from "The Piano Teacher" writer-director Michael Haneke. Daniel Auteuil stars as the host of a TV book program, who with his wife (Juliette Binoche) and 12-year-old son (Lester Makedonsky) live an enviably comfortable life in their Paris town house, which suddenly comes under surveillance by an unknown videographer. Harassment and suspense mount as an incident in the TV celebrity's privileged childhood opens up implicitly the question of France's debt to colonial Algeria and its bitter struggle for independence and by extension the individual citizens of world powers who so easily evade responsibilities for horrors inflicted on Third World nations. "Cache" is provocative filmmaking at its finest — taut, terse, brisk, suspenseful and, above all, charged with ambiguity. (LOS ANGELES TIMES)

**"'Live Freaky! Die Freaky!' turns into a narcissistic exercise in filthy language, out-of-control drug use and explicit sexuality that can only be described as puppet porn."**

Ann Hornaday on John Roecker's midnight movie opening at the Avalon Theatre | **Weekend**

**IN The Washington Post**

saw. We're hooked, and he hasn't sung a note. Unfortunately, for all its good music and admirable vocal impersonations, the movie slides — very, very slowly — downhill from there. (AH)

**YOURS, MINE & OURS** (PG, 88 minutes) Dennis Quaid plays Frank Beardsley, a Coast Guard officer, widower and loving father of eight. At a high school reunion, he meets and falls back in love with former sweetheart Helen North (Rene Russo), who has 10 children and, like Frank, is widowed. When Frank and

Helen impulsively get married, parenting systems collide. The storyline is so familiar, the audience can practically call out scenes ahead of time. (DT)

**ZATHURA** (PG, 102 minutes) Based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg, this movie introduces us to 6-year-old Danny (Jonah Bobo) and 10-year-old Walter (Josh Hutcherson). One day when his father is at work, Danny discovers Zathura, an old-fashioned board game with a windup key, a "Go" button and a miniature spaceship that whirs along the game board. That little spaceship springs to life and — ding! — up pops a card with a message: "Meteor Shower — Take Evasive Action." The movie has an almost antique charm, which recalls the 1950s sci-fi movies. (DT)



REVIEWS BY THE WASHINGTON POST'S ANN HORNADAY, STEPHEN HUNTER, MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN, DESSON THOMSON AND TERESA WILTZ. FOR MORE CAPSULES AND FULL REVIEWS OF THESE AND OTHER FILMS SEE [WASHINGTONPOST.COM/ENTERTAINMENT](http://WASHINGTONPOST.COM/ENTERTAINMENT)

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# Television

# Beginner's Witchcraft

The newest witch on 'Charmed' is slowly earning her pointy hat

**SPELLING** | Kaley Cuoco says she's still struggling to get the hang of tumbling through the air as the newest witch on the WB's "Charmed."

"I thought it was going to be easy, but it wasn't. I got tangled in the wires so many times doing my flips I almost strangled myself," said the 20-year-old actress.

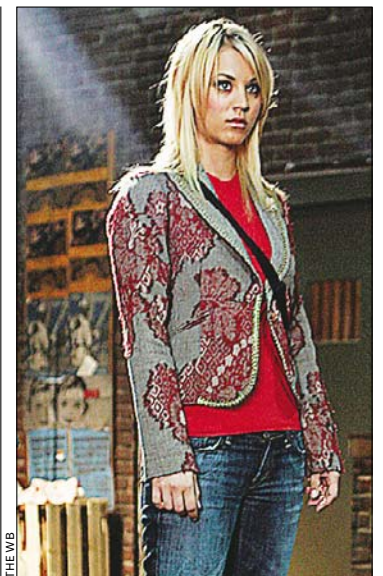
Cuoco joined the cast of the supernatural drama series this season as Billie Jenkins, a college student with telekinetic powers.

Now in its eighth season, the show stars Alyssa Milano, Holly Marie Combs and Rose McGowan as sisters who are duty-bound to use their powers to protect the world from evil demons.

"They've taken my character on as their little sister. I think they are training me so I can do the dirty work," said Cuoco, best known as Bridget Hennessy, one of the daughters on the sitcom "8 Simple Rules."

Cuoco occasionally watches reruns of "Rules," now airing weekdays at 4 p.m. on the WB.

Cuoco is still getting used to the start-stop, one-camera world of dramatic television. Sitcoms are



New "Charmed" cast member Kaley Cuoco is getting the hang of flying.

typically shot with multiple cameras in real time.

"Sitcoms are much easier to understand," she said. It's only when she sees "Charmed" episodes cut together with the special effects included that she realizes "what took so long."

"It turns out cool, but when you are working, you are waiting and waiting. Things are invisible, things are being thrown and nothing's in your hand. I'm so confused and always asking everyone, 'What's happening?'" BRIDGET BYRNE (AP)

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**READING, WRITING, CHEATING:** It's a measure of how annoying Disney's spin-off is that it suffers from a lack of David Spade.

# Lesson Is More

## With 'The Emperor's New School,' Disney goes back to the well

**LESSON PLANS** | January has not run its course, but those compiling a list of the most annoying new programs of 2006 should keep "The Emperor's New School" (7:30 p.m., Disney) in mind. A spin-off of the 2000 theatrically released cartoon "The Emperor's New Groove," this cartoon features the voice of J.P. Manoux as Kuzco, the provisional

teen leader of a fictitious cartoon kingdom.

But before he can take his place on the throne, he must graduate from high school. This is not as easy as it sounds, because Kuzco is shallow, self-centered and given to rattling on endlessly about everything that's on his empty mind. Manoux appears to be doing a very manic, very obvious David Spade impersonation. (Spade provided Kuzco's voice in "Groove.") Like Kuzco, most of the other characters are loud, frazzled, over the top and never speak

when they can shriek.

This is the kind of kids' cartoon that gives kids' cartoons a bad name. The kind that gives parents a headache as it drives them from the room. That make Moms and Dads rue the day they had kids who would inflict cartoons like "The Emperor's New School" upon them.

Patrick Warburton provides the voice of Kronk, the rival to the teen emperor. Other contributors include Eartha Kitt and Wendie Malick. KEVIN MCDONOUGH (UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE)

# NBC Closes Its 'Book'

## 'The Book of Daniel,' found controversy, but not an audience

**SUDDEN DEATH** | NBC cancelled the new series "The Book of Daniel," Wednesday after airing a mere four episodes. Though the show received a great deal of critical praise, the fury it aroused among the religious right helped to ensure its swift demise.

"Daniel" focused on the life of an Episcopalian rector — with a twist. Played by Aidan Quinn, Daniel had



"Daniel" portrayed a troubled priest.

a dope-dealing daughter, a brother-in-law who stole from the church, a homosexual son, a kinky sister-in-

law and a taste for Vicodin. Groups such as Focus on the Family successfully pressured sponsors not to advertise on "Daniel," and several NBC affiliates declined to carry the show.

The case demonstrates that courting controversy is not a sure-fire way to earn ratings: Industry insiders agree that it wasn't the fuss, but rather the absence of viewers that did "The Book of Daniel" in.

The series' creator, Jack Kenny, made the best of it, calling the short-lived show a "success" on NBC's Web site. TIM FOLLOS (EXPRESS)

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**SWENGALI**  
**Case for Monk:** The numbers don't lie — legendary Redskins wide receiver Art Monk belongs in the pro football Hall of Fame | 27

# Sports Weekend

## TV Lineup

→ **GAME OF THE WEEK, PART I:** No. 21 Georgetown goes for its fourth win in a row when hosting Cincinnati on Saturday (Noon on ESPN2) in a Big East battle.

→ **GAME OF THE WEEK, PART II:** After the Hoyas play on national TV, No. 18 Maryland takes the court against Temple on Saturday (2 p.m. on ESPN2) looking for its fourth-straight win.

→ **HOT START:** Sean Singletary and the University of Virginia can improve to 5-1 in the ACC if they beat No. 2 Duke on Saturday (7 p.m. on ESPN).

→ **TEE TIME:** Need a Tiger Woods fix? He's playing in the Buick Invitational this weekend — his first tournament of the 2006 season — which wraps up on Sunday (3 p.m. on CBS) in La Jolla, Calif.



**EXPRESS YOURSELF:** Maryland coach Gary Williams has never been shy about his feelings while leading the Terrapins to 349 victories since he took over in 1989.

# Garyland

Set to attain wins record, coach is the face of the Terps

**TERPS HOOPS** | He's that man you've seen frantically pacing the sideline — screaming, sweating, gesturing — always seemingly on the verge of a coronary.

With a win on Saturday against Temple, that man, Gary Williams, will become the all-time winningest coach at the University of Maryland.

He's been a Washington-area fixture for much of four decades, first as a player at Maryland, then as a coach at American University and eventually as the man who guided his alma mater from basketball purgatory to the national championship.

A win over Temple will give Williams 349 victories as the Terps

coach, passing Lefty Driesell.

When he was named coach in 1989, Williams inherited a program still reeling from the death of Len Bias and the academic scandal and probation that followed.

"When I got here it wasn't in good shape," he said. "There were times during those first four years where I wasn't sure I was going to be here because people have very short memories. If you don't win some games, eventually somebody else is going to be in here to do it."

But the coach persisted. He returned the team to the NCAA Tournament in 1994, the first of 11-straight trips. The resurrection

### RENAISSANCE MAN

**1989:** Williams named head coach.

**1994:** Terrapins ranked in AP poll for first time since 1985.

**2001:** Terps reach first Final Four in school history.

**2002:** Terps win first regular season ACC title since 1980.

**2003:** Maryland defeats Indiana to win first national title.

**2004:** Terps win Williams' first ACC Tournament title.

**2006:** Williams' 349<sup>th</sup> victory — secured Wednesday vs. Ga. Tech — ties Lefty Driesell for most wins as Maryland coach.

was complete in 2002 when he cut down the nets on the program's first national championship.

This season has been trying for Williams. He's had one senior brought up on criminal charges and his team captain ruled academically ineligible. "No matter what I do — and it's not just me, it's everybody in this locker room — no matter what you do he's always got your back," said Chris McCray, just days before an insufficient grade point average ended his career at Maryland.

Williams stood by his former captain, voicing confidence in the person and player, despite the misstep. But life goes on for the coach and the team.

Two days later, the 18th-ranked Terps went out and defeated Georgia Tech for win No. 348. But as Williams has pointed out, there's a time to focus on the past. It's called retirement.

"I think you can waste a lot of time thinking back at what's gone on in your coaching career," he said. "It's better to just look ahead and try to get ready for the next game. Someday, hopefully I'll have time to see how it looks." **DEREK TURNER**



Woods is playing his first event of the year at this week's Buick Invitational.

→ **BULL MARKET:** The Washington Wizards have two winnable games coming up: Friday (8:30 p.m. on CSN) against the Bulls and then Saturday (7 p.m. on WB50) vs. the Bobcats.

→ **LIGHTNING STRIKES:** The Capitals play host to a Sunday matinee (3 p.m. on CSN) against the Tampa Bay Lightning.

→ **FINALLY:** The women's final in the Australian Open is Friday (9:30 p.m. on ESPN2) and the men's championship is Sunday (3:30 a.m. on ESPN2).

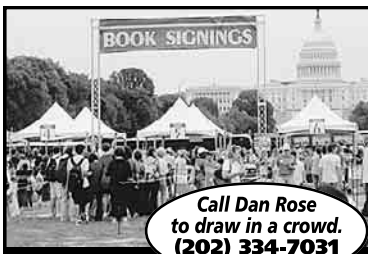


**PENALTIES | No Sup(er Bowl) for You** The fan who ran onto the field at Cleveland Browns Stadium during a Steelers-Browns game earlier this season was sentenced this week to spend Super Bowl weekend in jail. Nathan Mallett, 24, will begin his three-day sentence on Feb. 3 and won't be allowed to watch the Feb. 5 game on television or listen to it on radio. Municipal Court Judge Joan Synenberg ordered Mallett not to attend Browns games in Cleveland or any other city for five years as a condition of his probation. (AP)

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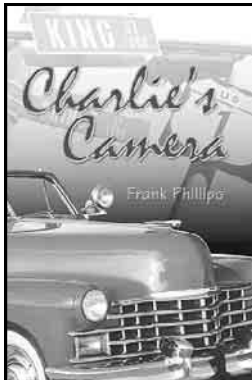
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## Weekend Sports

# Hoyas' Balanced Attack

Offense hits its stride at a crucial time for No. 21 Georgetown

**HOYAS HOOPS** | After having a full year and a half of learning their new coach's offensive system — a new approach from the Hoyas of old — Georgetown's players are finally comfortable with it. And the result couldn't be more encouraging.

The Hoyas have scored 172 points in their last two games, both outputs higher than any previous one in coach John Thompson III's career. As the buckets have sunk, the players' stats have inched upward — across the board. The Hoyas have an amazing five players averaging more than 10 points a game, while none averaged more than 12 points a game. Such roster-wide balance is not often found in college basketball.

"Anybody can score," guard Darrel Owens said. "With five or six guys all pulling in double figures, it shows the teamwork out there, that we're playing together."

That playing together means players realize when the game plan calls for them to take a back seat, and wait for a game when they'll be the guy with the mismatch.

"Every night it's going to be a different person stepping up. Sometimes I'm amazed when all of us are on the same page we can [put] points in consistently, like we've done in the past couple games," guard Ashanti Cook said.



Jeff Green and No. 21 Georgetown have topped 80 points in their last two games.

"Hopefully we can do that against Cincinnati."

The Bearcats come to Washington Saturday with their own high-powered offense, led by forwards James White and Eric Hicks, and guard Devon Downey, which has the Hoyas more worried

about maintaining a tough defense — especially after eking out a tough win against Notre Dame in double-overtime Tuesday.

"That's how league games have been. That's how they're going to be," Thompson said.

CHRIS MINCHER (EXPRESS)

## Kubiak Becomes Texans' Coach

**NFL** | Gary Kubiak returned home to become coach of the Houston Texans on Thursday, saying he was "overwhelmed" and that his dream is to bring a championship to the city.

Kubiak, who spent the last 11 years as Denver's offensive coordinator, inherits a team that had a league-worst 2-14 record last season that cost Dom Capers his job. He reportedly signed a five-year contract worth about \$10 million.

"I won't let you down. I promise you that," he told team owner



Kubiak, who grew up in Houston, returned home to coach the Texans.

Bob McNair seconds after being introduced as the Texans second coach."

Kubiak, who grew up in Houston and is a former Texas A&M quarterback, played for Texans consultant Dan Reeves and backed up John Elway from 1983-91. (AP)

## Portis' Cousin Transfers to Play at Maryland

**TERPS FOOTBALL** | Former University of Florida quarterback Josh Portis has enrolled in classes at Maryland and will participate in spring drills this April, the school announced Thursday.

Portis, who spent his freshman season at Florida, will be eligible to compete in 2007.

The 6-4, 210 pound sophomore was the backup to three-year starter Chris Leak in 2005. He is the cousin of Redskins' running back Clinton Portis. (AP)

# A Super Feeling in Pittsburgh

Steelers on the cusp of winning their first title since the 1970s

**SUPER BOWL** | The Pittsburgh Steelers sense something special is going on here, the kind of season that is remembered and replayed not only for a few years but for generations.

A season in which a team has to try harder and travel a far more difficult road to win football's biggest game.

After a month virtually unrivaled in NFL playoff history, the Steelers are one victory away from a Super Bowl championship that, by degree of difficulty, might eclipse any of the four they won during the 1974-79 seasons.

The improbable three-game road sweep in the AFC playoffs. A game and a season saved by an improbable tackle — by quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, of all people. Eliminating Super Bowl favorite Indianapolis a few weeks after the Colts seemed poised to go undefeated.

There's more: Jerome Bettis closing out a Hall of Fame career by going home to Detroit for the Super Bowl — and overcoming the fumble of a lifetime. Bill Cowher, the NFL's most tenured coach with one team, finally getting another



**STORYBOOK ENDING?** An unlikely set of circumstances, including quarterback Ben Roethlisberger becoming a hero for making a key tackle late against Indianapolis, have the Pittsburgh Steelers feeling like they might be destiny's children this year.

chance for a championship ring in his 14th season. Roethlisberger resembling John Elway and Joe Montana in the playoffs in only his second season.

"Somebody should write about a book about this," Pro Bowl wide receiver Hines Ward said this

week. "Because it's better than fiction."

But here are the facts: The Steelers haven't won the last game of the NFL season since Jimmy Carter was president and Terry Bradshaw was their quarterback during the 1979 season.

"You work hard to travel this path, but if you're not able to finish the deal you'll be forgotten," Cowher said. "You have a chance to put your name up there with some of the great teams. That's the opportunity that you're selling to your players." ALAN ROBINSON (AP)

# No Love for the Seahawks

Despite 15-3 record, Seattle still treated like the 'other' team

**SUPER BOWL** | Shaun Alexander was relaxing in front of his television when a face from the Seahawks' middling past appeared on the screen: Tim Brown, now retired after 16 seasons with the Raiders.

From 1988 to 2002, Brown and the Raiders owned Seattle, winning 17 of 29 games when the Seahawks were still in the AFC West. Brown is now a commentator for an NFL preview show on

Fox Sports Net.

"He said, 'I love the Seahawks. I love what they do. But I have beaten them so many times, I just can't pick them,'" Alexander recalled.

That perception helps explain why Seattle (15-3), the NFC's top seed, is a 3 1/2-point underdog against the Pittsburgh Steelers (14-5), the AFC's sixth seed.

The apparent snub isn't unprecedented. Last season, NFC top seed Philadelphia was a 7-point underdog to AFC second seed New England.

At the end of the 2000 season, the top-seeded New York Giants of the NFC were a 3-point



Shaun Alexander's MVP award hasn't meant much in Super Bowl predictions.

underdog against fourth-seeded Baltimore.

After 1988, Cincinnati was the AFC top seed but was a 7-point underdog to NFC second seed San Francisco. And after 1982, top-seeded Washington was a 3-point 'dog to second-seeded Miami.

Those '82 Redskins were the only top-seeded underdog to win.

Yet every postseason, players rush to claim the underdog, underappreciated status as if it was the Lombardi Trophy. This season, the Seahawks haven't had to seize the low ground. The nation has brought it to them.

"Mike said from the very beginning, that we are always going to be the 'other' team," Alexander said, referring to coach Mike Holmgren. GREGG BELL (AP)

## Swengali

REDSKINS | BY MATT SWENSON

### Vote for Monk Is Work of Art

**THE CASE FOR ART MONK** making the Hall of Fame is so easy to make that it's shocking there's still any debate about it.

The Redskins great, a finalist for the honor in his sixth year of eligibility, retired with the single-season receptions record (106), most consecutive games with a catch (183) and all-time receptions (940). Hall-of-Famers Steve Largent and James Lofton had nothing on him.

Monk made the number 81 cool years before Kobe Bryant did.

Yet there are some out there — most notably Sports Illustrated's Peter King — trying to diminish Monk's accomplishments.

Those people say stats don't mean much in Monk's case. And

### Monk made the number 81 cool years before Kobe Bryant did.

you know what? They don't even begin to tell the story.

Monk was a selfless player who never grabbed the spotlight. He let fellow "Posse" members Gary Clark and Ricky Sanders grab as many headlines, if not more, than he did. All Monk cared about was winning, something he excelled in. It's hard to argue with three Super Bowl rings in four appearances.

Perhaps his only flaw was he was too quiet — so quiet that Monk made just three Pro Bowls. Even now, Monk remains humble. He turns down interview requests that would let him make his Hall of Fame case. He would rather let his play do the talking.

Voters will do their talking on the Feb. 4 ballot and, sadly, it's likely that I'll be making Monk's case again next year. That's the price of humility in the NFL.

Matt Swenson is the sports editor of Express. E-mail matt.swenson@readexpress.com

# Surprise from Cyprus

Baghdatis becomes an unlikely finalist in the Australian Open

**TENNIS** | Look at what happens when Andre Agassi, Rafael Nadal and Marat Safin don't show up because of injuries, and Andy Roddick and Lleyton Hewitt lose in the early rounds.

Top-ranked Roger Federer went from strong favorite to an overwhelming choice to win the Australian Open title when his closest contender lost Thursday to an excitable 20-year-old from Cyprus.

If Federer defeats 21st-seeded Nicolas Kiefer in Friday's other semifinal, he'll face former junior world champion Marcos Baghdatis in Sunday's championship match.

Baghdatis rallied to oust fourth-seeded David Nalbandian 3-6, 5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, winning 17 of the last 21 points and enduring a break for a late storm when he was three points from winning.

"Everything is first time here:



Marcos Baghdatis falls to his knees as he celebrates his semifinal match victory over Argentina's David Nalbandian at the Australian Open on Thursday.

getting to the quarters was the first time, getting to the semis was the first time, getting to the final — I hope it continues," said Baghdatis, who had many Australians of Greek heritage, all dressed in blue, chanting for him inside Rod Laver Arena.

Nalbandian, the Masters Cup champion and 2002 Wimbledon

finalist, is the last man — and one of only four in 2005 — to beat Federer.

Baghdatis aims to be the next. "I believe it, my coach believe it, the guys I work with believe, my parents believe it," said Baghdatis, ranked 54th. "I have worked for that ... I'm very proud of myself ... it's been amazing." JOHN PYE (AP)

# Henin-Hardenne Out For Revenge in Final

After overcoming her injuries, Belgian takes on Mauresmo at Open

**TENNIS** | When athletes talk about revenge, it's usually meant for an opponent to atone for an earlier loss.

In Saturday's Australian Open title match against Amelie Mauresmo of France, Justine Henin-Hardenne will be looking for restitution for the knee and hamstring injuries that forced her off the circuit for about 18 months in the past two years.

With it would come the Belgian's fifth Grand Slam singles victory.

"It's been tough for me to be injured for such a long time," said Henin-Hardenne, who was forced to miss last year's Australian Open, preventing her from defending the title she won here in 2004.

"I think I had a little bit of revenge to come here. I hope I can do it on Saturday because I didn't lose a match in Australia in 2004,



Mauresmo

Henin-Hardenne

and I haven't lost any matches here this year. I love this tournament. I hope to do it again."

Mauresmo, a finalist here in 1999 — the first and only time she's gone that far at a Grand Slam tournament — won her semifinal Thursday when Kim Clijsters retired in the third set because of a right ankle injury. Henin-Hardenne defeated Maria Sharapova in the other semifinal.

Mauresmo will attempt to break Henin-Hardenne's 13-match winning streak at Melbourne Park.

Henin-Hardenne has won four of her seven matches against Mauresmo, but the only time they've met in a Grand Slam was at the 1999 U.S. Open, where Mauresmo won in the first round. DENNIS PASSA (AP)

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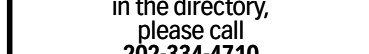
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# The Mean Season

## Eddie Jordan cracks down on Wizards to improve team defense

WIZARDS | Note to Wizards players: Eddie Jordan isn't your friend. He's your coach. A friend might want to have a conversation with you. Not necessarily a coach. A coach, such as Jordan, might be sick of talking.

"Actions speak now. It's going to be my actions or it's going to be their actions," Jordan said. "That's going to dictate who plays and who starts and who plays more."

That's the attitude Jordan has adopted over the past three weeks, since the Wizards fell to 12-18 — their worst record of the season. And after weeks of massive lineup changes, playing time for rookies, the release of a veteran, and unusual rotations, the Wizards have completed a 7-3 winning streak to bring



Coach Eddie Jordan has warned players not to feel his wrath about playing defense.

them within two games of .500.

"I'm coaching the way I coach," Jordan said. "They don't want to feel the wrath."

If the Wizards (19-21) continue to turn this thing around, players say, a large part of that will be because of the realization that their coach wasn't messing around anymore. If any player refuses to do his part — especially on defense — he will suffer the consequences.

"We're going to pay for it. That's my mind-frame, that's the rest of these guys mind-frame on this team," forward Antawn Jamison said.

The Wizards have held their opponent under 100 points in seven of their last 10 games — and improved their defense from 4th worst to 12th worst heading into games against the Chicago Bulls Friday and Charlotte Bobcats Saturday.

"Everybody in this locker room knows that, for us to be as successful as we can be, we have to be a much better defensive basketball team," guard Antonio Daniels said.

CHRIS MINCHER (EXPRESS)

## Pacers' O'Neal Out 2 Months With Groin Injury

NBA | Jermaine O'Neal is expected to miss at least eight weeks with a left groin tear, leaving the Indiana Pacers without their leading scorer and rebounder.

The news came Thursday, a day after the Pacers acquired Peja Stojakovic from the Sacramento Kings for the volatile Ron Artest.

O'Neal was hurt during Indiana's loss at Cleveland on Tuesday. The Pacers described the injury as "significant," but said it was doubtful he would need surgery.

"It's hard ... being in the situation we're in and finally almost getting a new start. ... It would have been a great opportunity to play with a guy like Stojakovic, and I think his ability helps everybody on our team," O'Neal said. "But I'm in a situation where the playoffs may be my best hope for getting back." (AP)

## Kobe Show Ready for An Encore

### Bryant set for action in 1st game since his 81-point performance

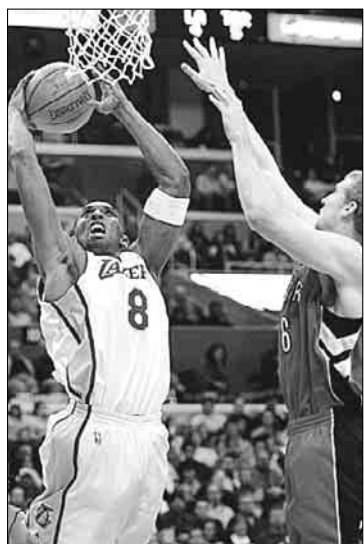
NBA | Kobe Bryant says it's just another game. Yeah, right.

When the Los Angeles Lakers host Golden State on Friday night, the sports world will be watching to see what Bryant comes up with as an encore to his 81-point performance.

"We'll just go out there, do what we do, try to win the game," Bryant said before practice Thursday. "That's about it. Just go out there and do what we do, same old thing. Punch the clock.

"It's just normal, it really is."

Bryant scored 55 of his 81 points in the second half Sunday night as the Lakers rallied from an 18-point deficit for an 18-point victory over the Toronto Raptors. It was the second-highest single-game total in NBA history, behind Wilt Chamberlain's astonishing 100-point performance



Bryant needs 77 points Friday to equal the two-game NBA record for scoring.

nearly 44 years ago.

Chamberlain scored 58 points in his next game, so Bryant needs 77 to equal the two-game NBA record.

"Kobe's going to have to resist or cave in to that temptation," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said.

Bryant said as long as people are excited about Friday night's game, it doesn't matter why. "It's good for us," he said. "I think if anything, it's given a lot of writers a lot to talk about, whether it's good, bad or indifferent." JOHN NADEL (AP)

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# LOOK out K

\* TRENDS, CULTURE, DISCOVERIES, IDEAS, PEOPLE

## Comedy

### Muslims try stand-up in hopes laughter can fight discrimination

Azhar Usman said that when he walks down the street, he gets dirty looks.

"People are looking like I was responsible for 9/11," the comedian told a crowd recently in Tinley Park, Ill. "Me 9/11? 7-Eleven, maybe."

Usman, who calls himself "a very patriotic American Muslim" in his act, is one of several emerging Muslim comedians who are touring in an attempt to break down stereotypes, encourage critical thinking, create an identity and, most importantly, get people to laugh.

"The standup is quintessentially an American art form and is a form of political protest," said Usman. "There's a history of the underdog using standup comedy to speak truth to power. People take notice and are transformed by the experience."

Not many subjects are off limits for Usman — a former lawyer who became a full-time comic about two years ago. He jokes about terrorism, the war in Iraq, President Bush, airport security and the

Patriot Act. His own religion and fellow Muslims are not exempt.

"Just about anything is fair game, just as long as it's done tastefully and artfully," he said. "I have some boundaries, based on religion. I won't do any sacrilegious material, make fun of God or the prophet."

Usman seeks the advice of Muslim scholars when he has doubts over material.

Though most of the response is positive, Usman knows some Muslims disapprove of his mixture of comedy and religion. He

# Allah Ha Ha

tackles not just how Americans see Muslims but how Muslims in America see themselves.

"It's equally my obligation as a comedian to point out what is wrong with us and get us talking about our problems as it is pointing out what's wrong [with] the way, for example, the government is treating us," Usman said.

Though he performs solo, Usman

INSIDE

James Frey isn't Oprah's friend | 38



Live Online: Designer decorating advice | 36

Blog Log: Dowdy condos are sad | 37



MOHAM-IT-UP: Azhar Usman said he uses humor to get his audience to think more about common stereotypes of Muslims.

also travels as part of the "Allah Made Me Funny" tour with two fellow Muslim comedians.

They began touring in 2004, thinking they'd be a success if they played 30 cities in three years. Instead, they toured 50 cities in one year, performing not just at Muslim centers but comedy clubs across the United States and internationally.

Tour creator Preacher Moss, a

longtime comic, said the tour has a twofold message.

"On the outside, our goal is trying to build bridges with non-Muslims, but, on the inside, it's to build bridges between ourselves," said Moss. "When you get people to smile about what they're fearful about, it's powerful. And when you finish laughing, you think about what you're laughing about."

Using laughter to tackle discrimination and fear is not new. Minorities in America have often used standup to open people's eyes.

"Humor is a good way, as it always has been, of drawing people in, exploiting the stereotype and finding a common ground," said John Lowe, a Louisiana State University English professor. ANNA JOHNSON (AP)

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# LOOK out

## Voices

### Interior Design

### Home Style

**RICARDO RAMOS** of Studio Nuovo in Bethesda was online Thursday to discuss designer solutions for the stylish home | [washingtonpost.com/liveonline](http://washingtonpost.com/liveonline)

**What are good colors for a small two-bedroom condo? I like tropical/Miami-influenced hues, but I don't want to mix too many. Should I paint the ceilings too?**  
I'd suggest foam green, light yellows and some cream colors in your fabrics. Black accent pieces are very elegant if used sparingly. Blue hues are starting to be more popular, especially the powder blues with a hint of lavender in them. I highly recommend painting the ceiling other than simply white. It is amazing what this small detail can do to a room.

**We have a very large finished basement with good light, high ceilings, beige Berber carpet and dark-brown leather sofas. What paint color would you recommend to add warmth and style to the room?**  
Use khaki and soft greens with a hint of gray within the greens. It will update and warm the room, as well as provide a good background for art placement.

**Against the advice of friends, I chose marble countertops for my new kitchen. They are already spotted even though I have been so very careful. The expensive marble cleaner recommended by the installers does not work. Experts say maybe my marble was not sealed properly. What is your take?**  
Marble is not the best surface for the kitchen unless you do not mind the spots! There is not really a good sealer for it; eventually, it

will wear off. Remember, marble has a porous surface and it tends to act as a sponge. Some people use it because they like the "worn out" look. Unfortunately, changing to a well-sealed and high-polished granite top will work best.

**What colors are "in" now? I love the light smoky blue paint I see everywhere. What are some brighter colors that will pair well with that?**  
Yellows with a gold tone or gray background. The blue you describe tends to be very powerful, so be careful about your fabrics in the room and make them light in tone. Use some mocha and cream to add balance!

**In terms to limited space, color and style, which interior designs would best suit a studio apartment?**  
If you keep furniture to scale (avoid sectionals) and concentrate on creating simple, clean lines (more contemporary in design), you will be able to accomplish a nice balanced space with these things in mind. Keep color tones light with some splash of colors with your accent pieces (pillows, art, vases).

**→ Today on Live Online**  
**NOON:** Washington Post staff writer Scott Wilson discusses the significance of Hamas' win in the Palestinian elections and the prospects for peace in the region.  
**1 P.M.:** Stewart Copeland, former drummer for The Police, discusses "Everyone Stares: The Police Inside Out," the documentary he made about the band.

### Letters

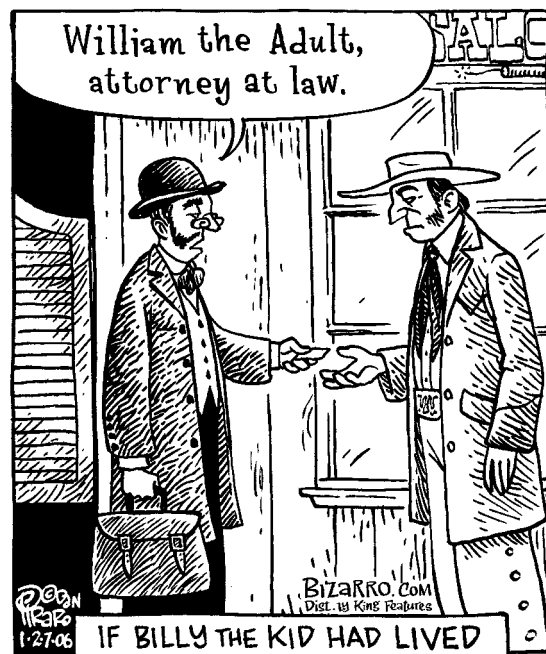
**A Longer Wait for Metro?**  
**IS IT TRUE** that eight-car Metro trains are going to ease congestion in the system or is this plan really just going to add wait time? Metro will be running six trains with eight cars for the morning

rush — but they'll also be running two fewer trains, so there's no real net gain in cars. The reason for congestion at Rosslyn is because Metro's not able to maintain its timetable, and now instead of improving their efficiency, Metro officials are adding wait time for passengers.

—YOGESH BANSAL  
Fairfax, Va.

**WRITE TO EXPRESS:** Include name, hometown and telephone number. Submissions may be edited. E-mail to [inbox@readexpress.com](mailto:inbox@readexpress.com) or mail to Express Letters, PO Box 17370, Arlington, VA 22216.

**Bizarro** | Dan Piraro



**Cornered** | Mike Baldwin

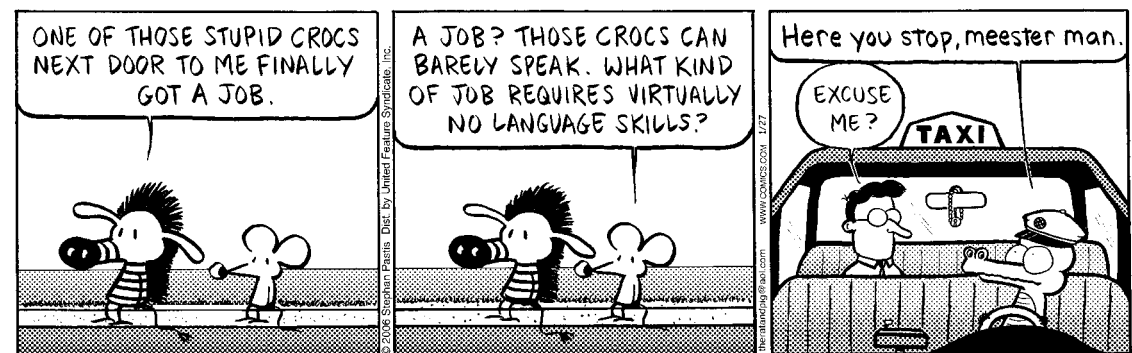


Impulse dating. A really bad idea.

**Pooch Cafe** | Paul Gilligan



**Pearls Before Swine** | Stephan Pastis



**The Duplex** | Glenn McCoy





**DEFINE TERRORIST**

We declare them [terrorists], but it is clear that a significant number of Palestinians consider them something much closer to freedom fighters.”

**ALIEADAY.BLOGSPOT.COM** FINDS IT INTERESTING HOW HAMAS, WHICH SURPRISED MANY WITH ITS POPULAR VICTORY IN THIS WEEK'S PALESTINIAN ELECTIONS, IS PERCEIVED FAR LESS POSITIVELY BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

**THE Blog LOG**

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**GIZMODO.COM** FINDS IT IRONIC THAT THE UNITED NATIONS, WHICH HAS ENDORSED \$100 HAND-CRANKED LAPTOPS FOR KIDS AROUND THE WORLD, WILL SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH THE INVENTOR AT THE LUXURY DAVOS RESORT IN SWITZERLAND.

**CONDO FORECAST, PART 2**

“The housing bubble is just another form of gambling.”

**BUBBLEMETER.BLOGSPOT.COM** ISN'T SURPRISED THAT LAS VEGAS' CONDO MARKET HAS TURNED SOUR ON INVESTORS.



**PETE'S PREDICAMENT**

“Pete Doherty was arrested for the 1,234,567,890th time in London ... Why don't you take a wild guess ... ?”

**DLISTED.BLOGSPOT.COM** RELAYS NEWS THAT SOUNDS LIKE A BROKEN RECORD: THE BABYSHAMBLES FRONTMAN WAS ARRESTED AGAIN FOR DRIVING AROUND WITH DRUGS.

**CONDO FORECAST, PART 1**

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LONG AND FOSTER REAL ESTATE BLOGGER **REALASTUTE.BLOGSPOT.COM** SAYS THAT WITH 47,000 NEW CONDO UNITS PLANNED FOR D.C., THE HOT CONDO MARKET MIGHT MAKE CERTAIN OWNERS DEPRESSED WITH THEIR PURCHASE.

**Horoscope**

*By Stella Wilder*

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)** Keep boredom at bay and you'll increase your enjoyment even when it comes to routine endeavors. Familiarity can be valuable.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)** Now is not the time for a quick fix or any other kind of hasty efforts. Take the time you need to do things right — the first time out.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)** Don't give your heart away prematurely — either to a special person, or to a pet cause. Be ready for a more lasting commitment.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)** Don't be afraid of the same old thing, as you have what it takes to inject a new spice and excitement into everything you do.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)** A conflict between surface emotions and hidden feelings deep beneath the surface will become far more vivid. Address it NOW.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)** Now is the time

to address certain problems that are arising with increasing frequency as a result of a conflict between your own basic desires.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)** Old friends may be trying to contact you, so it may be up to you to make that special effort to renew a special link.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)** This may prove a highly romantic day for you, and your creative impulses can only serve to heighten your enjoyment in social situations.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)** You may be feeling needy and dependent — but a close friend will be right there, willing to lend you all the help you feel you need.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)** You may not be ready to receive a piece of news that is fast coming your way. When necessary, you must make yourself available.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)** You're not to be rushed. Be sure to send the right message and to insist that others give you the respect you deserve.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** Concentrate on romantic potential. Even on a Monday, you can find the time to devote to a new approach and certain imaginative endeavors.

**DON'T** miss “Dawn of the Dead 2.” Hollywood has evolved into a self-sustaining sequel/prequel/remake machine, making new ideas obsolete. One needs no more proof than the 165 planned follow-ups and re-dos completely compiled, and frequently updated, at [Tripkore.fulsic.com](http://Tripkore.fulsic.com).

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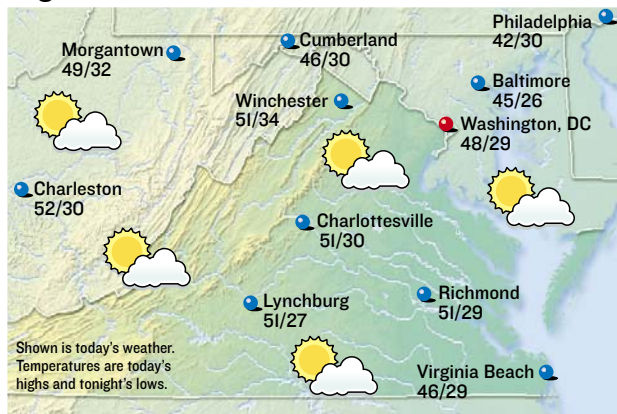
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 Normal month to date ..... 2.71"  
 Year to date ..... 2.82"  
 Last year to date ..... 2.93"  
 Normal year to date ..... 2.71"

**Regional Forecast**

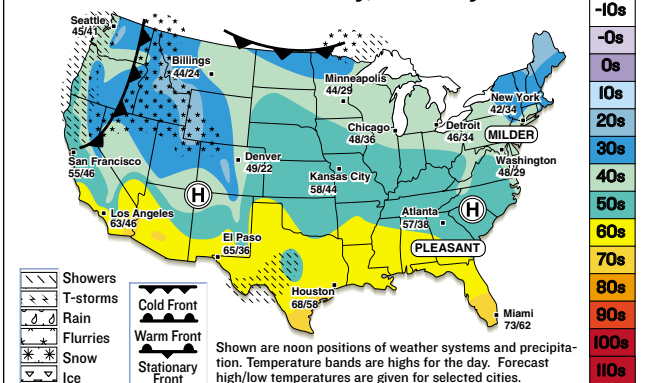
**D.C. Metro:** Today, mostly sunny, becoming milder. High 48. Wind west-southwest 6-12 mph. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 20 suburbs to 29 city.

**Sun and Moon**

Sunrise today ..... 7:19 a.m.  
 Sunset tonight ..... 5:24 p.m.  
 Moonrise today ..... 6:00 a.m.  
 Moonset today ..... 2:58 p.m.

New First Full Last  
 Jan 29 Feb 5 Feb 12 Feb 21

**National Weather for Friday, January 27**



**National Cities**

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Sat. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	57/38/s	60/47/pc
Boston	38/29/s	52/34/pc
Chicago	48/36/pc	44/38/r
Dallas	60/53/r	66/46/sh
Denver	49/22/pc	44/19/pc
Honolulu	83/69/pc	81/67/pc
Los Angeles	63/46/pc	66/48/pc
Miami	73/62/pc	76/65/sh
New York City	42/34/s	54/38/pc
Orlando	70/52/pc	76/58/pc
Seattle	45/41/sh	46/38/sh

**World Cities**

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Sat. Hi/Lo/W
Amsterdam	39/29/pc	41/29/pc
Athens	46/34/pc	47/36/pc
Berlin	27/19/pc	30/19/pc
Buenos Aires	82/70/s	87/73/s
Calgary	35/20/pc	33/15/c
Dublin	43/32/pc	43/30/pc
Geneva	33/24/c	39/34/sh
Moscow	20/20/sn	21/4/sn
Rome	50/41/r	55/48/c
Sydney	86/72/pc	82/68/s
Tokyo	52/34/s	50/34/s



RICHARD DREW/AP

"They gave me a large. They KNOW I'm an extra-small. Do they think I'm fat?!"

## TITLES

**U.N. Scores Another Hottie**

**NICOLE KIDMAN** has a new role — working to advance women's rights around the globe as a goodwill ambassador for the U.N. The Oscar-winning actress will work with the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM, on critical gender concerns such as ending violence against women. "I hope that I can act as a conduit, that I can be the person who tells some of these stories," Kidman said Thursday. "The way in which I was raised and the things I've seen in my life has led me toward this." (AP)

## BABIES

**To Top Angelina, You'll Have to Do Better Than That**

**MEG RYAN** has adopted a baby girl from China. The 44-year-old actress recently traveled to China for the adoption. She and her new child are now home in California together, Ryan's publicist Stephen Huvane confirmed Thursday. No further details were available. Ryan also has a 13-year-old son with her ex-husband, actor Dennis Quaid. (AP)



WALTER BIERER/AP

## SCARY!

**The Wrath Of Oprah**

**OPRAH WINFREY** took on one of her chosen authors, **JAMES FREY**, accusing him on live TV of lying about "A Million Little Pieces." "I feel duped," she said Thursday. "But more importantly, I feel that you betrayed millions of readers." Frey, who was booed by the audience, acknowledged that he had lied. "I don't think it is a novel," Frey said of his book. "I still think it's a memoir." (AP)



WALTER BIERER/AP

## RELUCTANCE

**Later, They Came Around to Saving Sick, Poor Children**

**BONO** said Thursday that his band mates had feared his activism would overshadow their music and have bristled at his meetings with politicians. "Early on they thought it would completely wipe us out, and wipe me out," said the U2 frontman/global activist. "I know spiritually they feel as strongly about these issues as I do. They just don't like the high profile and they don't like me hanging out with really uncool politicians." (AP)

## POSTAGE

**First Black Actress to Win Oscar Now Wins a Stamp**

**HATTIE MCDANIEL**, the first black actress to win an Academy Award, was honored Wednesday with a U.S. Postal Service commemorative stamp. McDaniel is the 29th person honored in the Postal Service's long-running Black Heritage stamp series. The 39-cent stamp depicts the plump-faced McDaniel in a



1941 photograph in the blue dress she wore when she received the Oscar for best supporting actress in "Gone with the Wind" in February 1940. McDaniel played Scarlett O'Hara's maid in the 1939 movie about the Civil War. (AP)

## QUESTIONS

**Al Also Wonders Why He Was Hired**

**AL ROKER** won't be eating heartily to celebrate 10 years on NBC's "Today" show. He's dieting. "Today" will mark the formerly rotund weatherman's anniversary on Friday. "Ten years later to still have [the job] is not only thrilling but also somewhat of a puzzlement," he said. (AP)



RICHARD DREW/AP

**"I ate myself stupid. I thought, 'I'm never going to eat like this again.' The only trick was to make sure I didn't have a heart attack before [surgery]."**

AL ROKER ON THE WEEK BEFORE HIS GASTRIC BYPASS SURGERY

## DEATH

**Doctors Still Don't Know Why Chris Penn Died**

The cause of **CHRIS PENN**'s death remained undetermined despite an autopsy performed Wednesday just



hours before the premiere of his latest film at the Sundance Film Festival. Toxicology tests were ordered on the actor, who was found dead in his Santa Monica condominium Tuesday. "It's just normal procedure for someone who's 40 and has not seen their doctor," said Los Angeles County coroner's spokeswoman Brenda Shafer. (AP)

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 WAS \$4,999

**Toshiba 42" Plasma**  
 860 x 480  
 Model # 42DPC85  
**\$1697**



**Zenith HD Plasma**  
 1366 x 768  
**\$2996**  
 WAS \$3499  
 SAVE \$500

**SAVE ON ALL PLASMAS & LCD'S**

**SONY Bravia 26"**  
**KLVS26A10**  
**\$1097**  
 WAS \$1,499  
 SAVE \$400



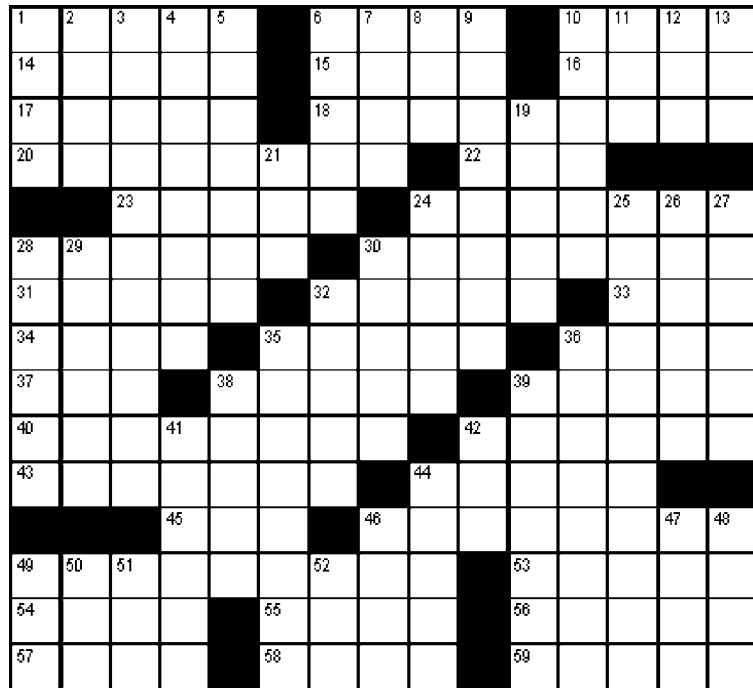
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**Fill Er' Up** | Edited by Timothy E. Parker

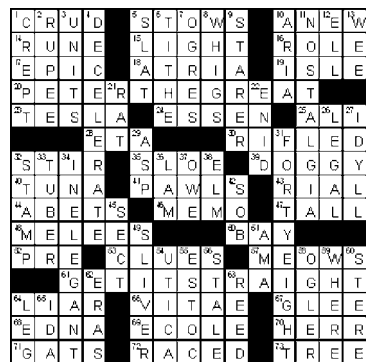
- ACROSS**
- 1 Some artists' studios
  - 6 "The Flim-\_\_\_ Man" (1967 movie)
  - 10 Some exemptions
  - 14 Alaskan native
  - 15 River, city or state
  - 16 Took an elevator, e.g.
  - 17 Historic Alabama city
  - 18 Setting for three kings, perhaps
  - 20 Paint-mixing boards
  - 22 Note header
  - 23 Not fixed
  - 24 Some post office machines
  - 28 Out like a light
  - 30 Watergate conspirator
  - 31 Loamy soil deposit
  - 32 "\_\_\_ to the Church on Time"
  - 33 Important letters for Els
  - 34 Cutlass, for one
  - 35 Ore used as a cleansing agent
  - 36 Organ part
  - 37 The Bard's witch
  - 38 Dweebish
  - 39 Settle an account
  - 40 Some synthetic fabrics
  - 42 Four score
  - 43 Tranquilizes
  - 44 Pool-owner's problem



- 45 Cardinals' cap abbr.
  - 46 It might be x-rayed
  - 49 Result of flying the coop?
  - 53 Adjutants
  - 54 Traditional knowledge
  - 55 Golden rule preposition
  - 56 Bits of news
  - 57 Look with malicious intent
  - 58 Dispose of, informally
  - 59 Kingdom of Croesus
- DOWN**
- 1 Cindy Brady feature
  - 2 Prime draft classification
  - 3 With complete status
  - 4 Eternal
  - 5 Pigeon perches, sometimes
  - 6 Played a flute in a march, e.g.
  - 7 Reed and Grant
  - 8 Hole-punching gadget
  - 9 Spike Lee film
  - 10 Charlotte, Emily or Anne
  - 11 Last word of the golden rule
  - 12 Bradley and Sullivan
  - 13 Part of WYSIWYG
  - 19 Mass of humanity
  - 21 Start to fall

- 24 Thai dish
- 25 Foolish
- 26 Spicy French stew
- 27 Word with "make it"
- 28 Greetings on some islands
- 29 Console
- 30 Range rovers
- 32 Injures with a horn
- 35 Mild stimulant from a palm tree
- 36 Wisdom
- 38 Smartly dressed
- 39 Braid relative
- 41 King's employee
- 42 Inventor Whitney
- 44 They create carbon monoxide
- 46 Former fleet
- 47 Trucking rig
- 48 Pisan pronoun
- 49 Building addition, sometimes
- 50 A Stooze
- 51 Opposite of post-
- 52 Former Roxy Music member

**Yesterday's Solution**



## Sunday in The Washington Post



**Jazz in Georgetown:** A new release captures a legendary concert in which Miles Davis added a dash of rock to his routine. | *Arts*

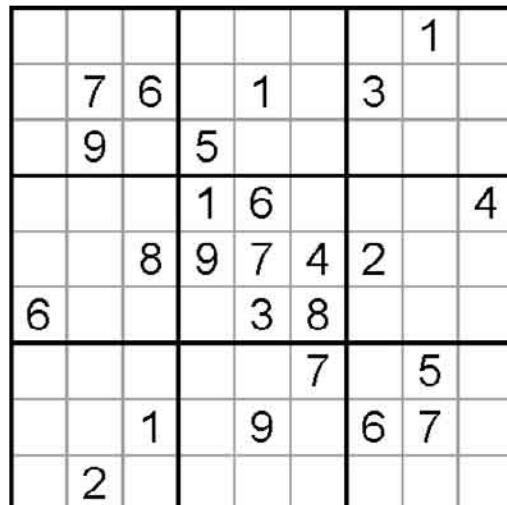
**Salary Secrecy:** Why is talking about how much we make akin to spilling family secrets? Amy Joyce investigates. | *Business*

**Su | do | ku** | © Puzzles by Pappocom

Degree of Difficulty: HARD

Fill in the boxes so that each row, column and 3-by-3 square includes the digits 1 through 9. For solution, tips and computer program, see [www.sudoku.com](http://www.sudoku.com)

**Yesterday's Solution**



**Can't get enough Sudoku?** Find another Sudoku puzzle in the Comics section of the Post every Sunday and in the Style section every Monday through Saturday.

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15642 Emerald Way  
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# LOOK out K

WEEKEND

**Ladies' Woman:**  
Karena Gore Schiff shares her heroines | **E3**



express

PROWLING THE WASHINGTON AREA FOR THE BEST IN SHOPPING AND DIVERSIONS >> JAN. 27-FEB. 2, 2006



# Goldrushin'

Olympians aren't the only ones sporting metals lately

 **PLUS:** Pop the question on the cover of LookOut Weekend for Valentine's Day | **E11**

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# RandomOrder\*

\* THINGS WE FIND HYPOCRITICAL, STRESSFUL, ARTISTIC, SMOKY AND OVER



### 3 Trashcans

When your trashcan is added to the design canon, should you feel guilty about throwing snotty Kleenex in it? Umbra's Garbino wastebasket, designed by ubiquitous superstar Karim Rashid, was just inducted into the Department of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art's permanent collection. Yet, you can get one for \$5 at the Container Store, purveyor of fine art that it is.



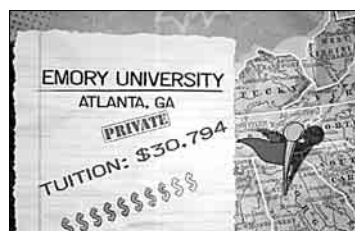
### 2 'Proud to Be a Single' Rings

The Singelringen.com Web site insists that rings signifying pride in being single is a trend "spreading across the world." Of course, the pale aqua rings (\$50), sold out of Stockholm, also broadcast "Available!" Dig deeper — hey, this site is a thinly veiled date finder! Buyers of the ring register online; an interested party can send an anonymous inquiry into a ringholder's status. Sigh.



### 1 Smoking Ban Loopholes

To prevent nicotine from losing its cool, RJ Reynolds has conjured up Marshall McGearty, a "tobacco lounge" in Chicago's hipster Wicker Park. Customers can sip cocktails and buy packs of hand-rolled smokes made with exotic tobaccos. As long as 65 percent of the revenue comes from cancer sticks — making the spot a tobacco retailer — it'll sneak past the 2008 smoking ban.



### 4 College Tours

Each "The U" DVD offers a sampling of college tours hosted by "Everwood" boy Gregory Smith and other WB, er, CW stars. Giant full-screen titles like "EXPENSIVE!" won't stress viewers a bit.



### 5 Blogs=Dead

McDonald's has started a "Corporate Responsibility Blog" (csr.blogs.mcdonalds.com). The comments are mysteriously polite. That's not normal.

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# Lady Pluck

## Gore daughter shines a light on heroines

**LIKE THE LADIES IN HER NEW BOOK,** "Lighting the Way: Nine Women Who Changed Modern America," Karena Gore Schiff, the eldest child of Al and Tipper Gore, isn't afraid of activism — and has hinted at a future career in politics. For now, she's sticking to telling the stories of (mostly) unheralded women who have been key in U.S. history, including child labor organizer Mother Jones, FDR's secretary of labor Frances Perkins, and Southern belle-turned-anti-segregationist Virginia Durr. Express' Vicky Hallett caught up with her by phone in Park City, Utah. She'll be talking about American heroines at the Women's National Democratic Club Feb. 9 at 7 p.m.

### What's hot at Sundance?

"An Inconvenient Truth." I'm biased, but it's my father's film. It's about his presentation of global warming issues.

### Anything surprise you during research for the book?

Septima Clark. I'd never heard of her, even though I'd studied American history in college. But she was responsible for the payload of the civil rights movement. Taylor Branch's new book, the third about Martin Luther King Jr., is dedicated to her. She was self-effacing and the substance, not the flash, of the

movement, but still, you'd think she'd be better known.

### So are you going to march into the National Cathedral School and ask for a curriculum change?

I haven't thought about that. I hope they enjoy the book at all-girls schools like NCS.

**“I would want to do the seating very carefully. Some I'd rather have dinner with, others I'd rather e-mail with.”**

### How many people do you think know about Frances Perkins from seeing "Dirty Dancing"?

What?

### Baby's named Frances, after the first woman in the cabinet.

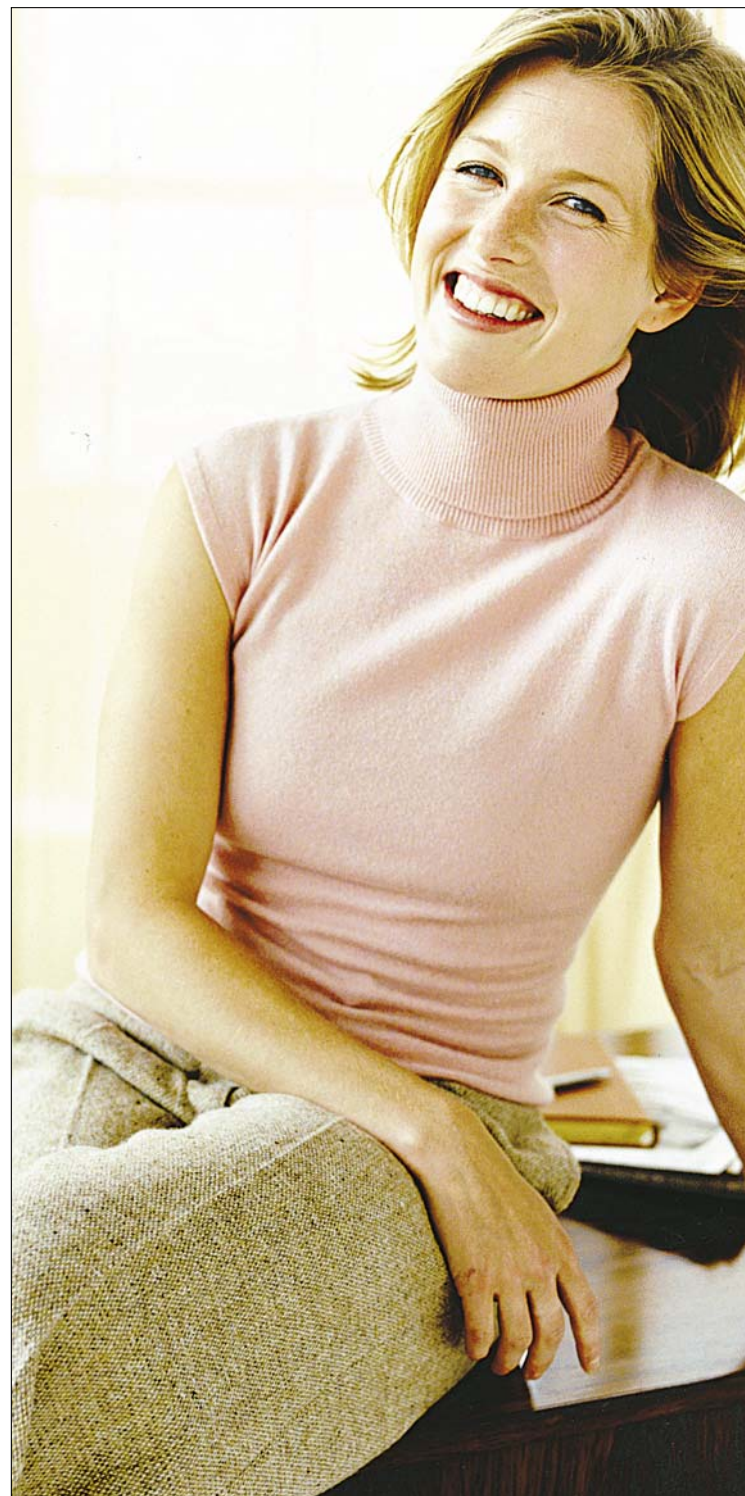
I forgot that.

### How often do you watch Current TV?

I'm not a huge TV watcher, so take that into consideration, but once a week.

### Do you think that's the way to get through to "the young people"?

All of us are inclined to be inspired by something larger than ourselves. The dominant medium is television, although I respond to writing. We —



Karena Gore Schiff checks in on her dad's Current TV about once a week.

well, they — I used to speak for the young generation, but at 32 I can't do that anymore. They're wary of so much spin, so everything that's said they want to know why are they really saying that.

### You compared putting this book together to organizing a dinner party. What would a dinner party with these women be like?

They're such different people. I'd want to do the seating very carefully. Some are loners, some are very sociable. All of the women in the book wanted to be a part of some-

thing bigger than themselves, so it could be fun if we had a purpose. But I can see them getting into squabbles. Some I'd rather have dinner with, others I'd rather e-mail with.

### And what would you serve?

Probably some red meat. It's a hearty bunch.

### So who would you actually like to eat with?

Virginia Durr is the one I feel closest to. We have the same birthday and she went to NCS for a bit, too.

## > The Manolo

ANSWERS FROM THE SHOEBLOGGER

### Can you recommend a pair of hip shoes for a downtown sort of guy?

— ROBERT

It is no secret that the Manolo he loves the shoes, but it is perhaps less well known that the Manolo he disapproves of the "hip" shoes for the men. The "hip" shoe, it is the lamentable trend, with its gaudy colors, its too-square-or-too-pointy toe and the ridiculous exotic leathers like the iguana, or the ostrich or the alley cat.

If it is your desire to look like the Argentine tango pimp then by all means wear the hip shoe. However, if you wish to be taken seriously, as the adult man should naturally wish to be,



you should remain on the side of tradition. Where the fashion for the men is concerned, the Manolo he is the traditionalist. Men should wear well-polished, good quality footwear, which should distinguish itself not with the outré color, or the hand-tooled cat leather, but with the high quality of the material and the workmanship, and with the classical, elegant line of the shoe itself. Thus the Manolo he would recommend to his "downtown" friend the black monkstrap shoe from the Bally called the Breda (\$529, zappos.com). The monkstrap shoe it is ever so slightly eccentric. Indeed there is the faintest whiff of the mystery about the man who wears it. This man he is not the uptight man of business, instead he is free from such mundane concerns, and yet there is still the admirable personal restraint. He is slightly old-fashioned, but in only the best sense, as being one who does not abandon tradition at the first blush of the new. VISIT THE MANOLO AT SHOEBLOGS.COM

## On the Cover

Mandarin collar jacket from H&M (\$50). American Apparel bikini bottom (\$26). Page 4 styling by Lauretta McCoy. Photos by Michelle Repiso.

# LOOK out **K** | Styles



← Looking posh isn't pricey with this beaded, gold-plated necklace. (\$40, TODAY'S CARGO, 315 CAMERON ST., ALEXANDRIA; 703-836-6866)



↑ Make your suit shine with the silk **ISABELLA** flowered tie, the **JULIET** striped tie or the **ROMEO** spotted tie. (\$95 EACH, THOMAS PINK, 1127 CONNECTICUT AVE. NW; 202-223-5390)



Add sparkle to your style with gold elements for home and wardrobe

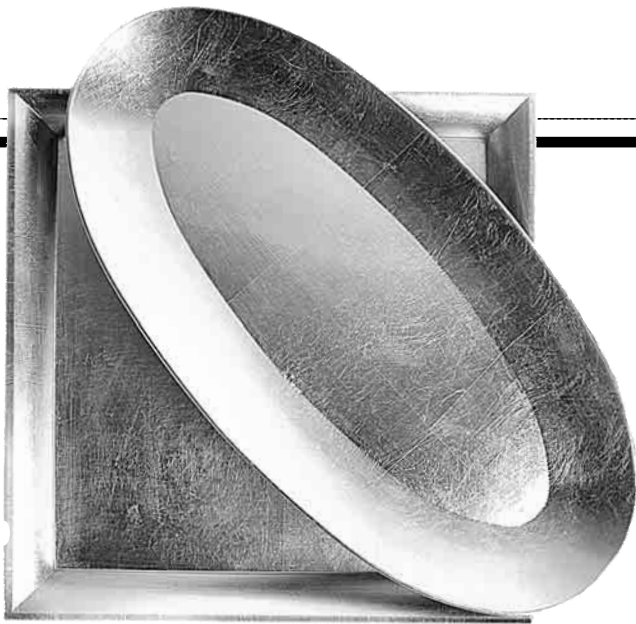
# All That Glitters



↓ Your little piggies will go to market in heavy-metal style with these limited-edition **CHUCK TAYLOR ALL STARS**, available in both men's and women's sizes. (\$95, CONVERSE.COM)

→ Make a shimmering splash with this **MELINDA ENG** silk gown. (\$2,850, NEIMAN MARCUS TYSONS GALLERIA; 703-761-1600) Top it off with a **TINA CUSTOM TIARA**. (\$185, TROUSSEAU, 306 MAPLE AVE. WEST, VIENNA; 703-255-3300)

→ Feel comfortable, look captivating with these metallic **KATE SIGNATURE SNEAKERS** from Coach. They may not be great for working out, but feet never looked so fabulous. (\$130, MACYS)



↑ Even Ramen noodles and Chex Mix will look luxe when served on these inexpensive **LACQUERED TRAYS**. (OVAL, \$8, SQUARE, \$10, Z GALLERIE, TYSONS CORNER CENTER; 703-506-8602)



← Await summer in this itsy-bitsy teeny-weeny shiny shiny **GOLD LAMÉ BIKINI**. Boy shorts meet triangle top for that athletic/sexy vibe. (EACH PIECE \$26, AMERICAN APPAREL, 555 11TH ST. NW; 202-628-0438)



← The **LOVE BUG MASSAGE BAR** is made with cocoa and shea butters, and has a sweet and sexy scent that comes from rose, neroli (made from orange petals) and vanilla. It leaves the skin super-moisturized and with a golden glimmer. (\$6, AVAILABLE IN FEBRUARY. LUSH, 3066 M ST. NW; 202-333-6950)



↑ Need a little something that works for almost anyone's wardrobe? Enjoy the look of a full metal jacket with this **MANDARIN-COLLAR COAT**. Elegant enough for a fancy night on the town but casual enough to pair with jeans, the floral print will help spring come a little early this year. (\$50, H&M)



← Not in the mood for all-over shine? The studs on this lambskin **LUCY BAG** by Kooba add a little glamour to the hobo-style shape. Lavender lining adds a little secret color. (\$595, URBAN CHIC, 1626 WISCONSIN AVE. NW; 202-338-5398)

## TO-DO LIST



MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

## Metal Mania

Does gold not suit your skin tone? Are you fearful of looking like a Vegas showgirl decked out in her glittery best? Here are ways to stay gold in spirit, if not in style.

KRISTEN PAGE-KIRBY (EXPRESS)

### SPIRIT OF ANCIENT COLOMBIAN

**GOLD:** This special exhibit features over 280 gold items from the Museo de Oro in Colombia (like the funerary mask above). Through April 9. (National Museum of Natural History, 10th Street and Constitution Avenue NW; www.mnh.si.edu)

**GOLDFINGER:** The third James Bond movie is one of the best of the series. It's got Connery, it's got a creepy villain who throws his hat and it's got Pussy Galore. See why Austin Powers is smarter than you thought.

**FAIRMONT GOLD LEVEL:** In this exclusive-within-exclusive level at the Fairmont hotel, guests get all sorts of extra accommodations, including private check-in and -out, a "pillow menu" and access to the Fairmont Gold Lounge, which includes a continental breakfast, evening hors d'oeuvres and chocolate fondue at night. (\$399 to \$625 per night, 2401 M St. NW; 202-429-2400)

**CHOCOLATE "BROWNIE" WITH EDIBLE GOLD LEAF:** Finish your day at Restaurant Eve with this dessert, which is only available with the nine-course tasting menu. \$110 per person; 110 S. Pitt St., Alexandria; 703-706-0450.

**ABBA: GOLD:** You know you know all the lyrics to "Dancing Queen." Rock out with the Swedish supergroup's greatest hits. (\$10, amazon)

# Chinese Mood

## Clean and cook to prep for the Year of the Dog

It's not too late for New Year's resolutions — if you're Chinese, or just pretending to be. This Saturday is Chinese New Year's Eve, announcing the start of the Year of the Dog. The event requires no champagne, although a case of Tsingtao couldn't hurt, but hosts have lots of other duties to keep the festivities traditional. Don't worry about pulling everything together this weekend. One way the Chinese New Year bests the Western version: It lasts for 15 days.

Kick off preparations by whipping out the vacuum, said Rosemary Gong, author of "Good Luck Life," a guide to observing Chinese celebrations: "It's time to toss out the old and bring in the new, and you don't want to have to clean at the beginning of the new year and risk sweeping out your good luck." Then work the winter final sales for an entirely new outfit, from shirt to shoes to undies.

The main New Year's Eve event is a ginormous feast of foods that have meanings. "A big fish is the most important dish because it symbolizes doing things smoothly without obstacles. And you have to serve it with the head on, the beginning to the end," explained Larry La, owner of Meiwah, which hosts a blow-out for the staff after business hours. Chicken, which signifies prosperity, dumplings that resemble money and a platter of

sweets, including sugared carrots, lotus seeds and coconut are key to the menu. Skip the bottle of wine as a hostess gift and instead pack tangerines with a few leaves on them. These are sold specially around the New Year to symbolize wealth.

Most items on the grocery list are available at Great Wall Market (2938 Gallows Rd., Falls Church; 703-208-3320), an emporium of all



Clockwise from 1-o'clock: Candied lotus seeds, ginger, carrots, unknown substance, winter melon. Center: coconut. The winter melon and coconut were the favorites of Express testers. Tray is \$10 at Great Wall. Envelopes are free.



things Chinese. With your purchase, they'll throw in a free package of red envelopes, which are traditionally stuffed with money and given to children. Sounds lovely, yes?

Keep it that way by only talking positively. "People are mum when it comes to negativity. You might think it, but you don't say it," Gong said.

Besides, it's tough to be glum for parades. Traditionally, the 15th day of the New Year is the lantern festival, which D.C.'s Chinatown will celebrate Feb. 5. The area will fill with booths, firecrackers and costumed dancers. Jeanny Ho, vice chair of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, noted, "This year, dogs will be there too. In the year of the dragon, we can't do that."

VICKY HALLETT (EXPRESS)

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All study related care is provided at no charge including physical examinations, laboratory services and study medication. Financial compensation for time and travel may be available.

For more information please call:

**(301) 652-5520**

Metropolitan Gastroenterology Group, PC



This Kakuro puzzle is filled out entirely incorrectly. You can do much better.

# Number One Puzzle

Kakuro is catching up to its cousin, Sudoku

**IF A CROSSWORD WERE TO GET IT ON** with a Sudoku square, their offspring would be Kakuro, the latest Japanese puzzle craze. It still involves writing the digits between one and nine into blank boxes without repeating any, but the numbers must add up to the sums listed at the end of each row. "It's the odds-on favorite to be the next craze," said Timothy Parker, USA Today crossword editor and author of "The Official Book of Kakuro: Book 1," one of the first in a deluge of volumes filled with the puzzle. According to Alastair Chisholm, author of "The Kakuro Challenge" volumes 1 and 2 (both published in the past two months), "It's a much deeper puzzle with more to think about, and it's like working your way through a maze. You get one number and the whole thing tumbles in. It's very satisfying."

Newspapers in the U.K. have already started running Kakuro, and Parker promised it won't be long until major U.S. papers do too: "By the spring, everyone will know about Kakuro." But don't get stuck in a rut. Other new puzzle trends are nigh, including Wordsquares for folks fed up with numbers, Hanjie (numerical clues indicate squares to color in to create art) and Slither Links (an tricky version of connect-the-dots). **VICKY HALLETT (EXPRESS)**



Never before had a boy wanted more.

## DVDS

### Oliver Twist (\$29)

It's still a hardknock life for good-hearted orphan Oliver Twist, but in this version of the classic Dickens tale directed by Roman Polanski, there's no singing. Most of the time, you never miss it, thanks to spot-on performances and an authenticity that comes from Polanski's childhood in Polish ghettos during the Holocaust. But after the "Please sir, I want some more" line, you crave "Food, Glorious Food." Just a little.

**NOTABLE FEATURE:** Adorable Barney Clark (who plays Oliver) kept a diary, and he reads from it. On the first day: "We played on my dad's laptop for a bit." Later: "Luckily, I had to sleep in one shot. It was lucky because I had to wake up at 4:30 in the morning."

**IF YOU LIKE:** Ragamuffins. v.h.

## MUSIC

### Sun Sun Sun BY THE ELECTED



(SUB POP, \$14)  
The soft indie crooning of The Elected straddles the thin line

between an emo kid's wet dream and pedestrian coffee-house music. The music ranges from rockish on "Not Going Home" and "Biggest Star," to country-ish on "The Bank," and to luau-ish on "Would You Come With Me." Despite the slight style changes, all the songs seem to fit the band's framework of slow, soft heart-breaking music. The lyrics, though hauntingly sung, can be stilted at times, like "My love she is a rainbow/She moves from east to west," on "Beautiful Rainbow," and many songs seem to lack a climax, instead going for the long drone that's all too common in indie music today. Don't expect The Elected to rock your socks off, but they can definitely serve as good background noise for a coffee break.

**IF YOU LIKE:** The Magic Numbers.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE:** Stuff harder than Bryan Adams. **JOSHUA DAVIDOVICH**

## PAGES

### American Vertigo BY BERNARD-HENRI LEVY (RANDOM HOUSE, \$25)



Americans can feel like foreigners in parts of the U.S., so French philosopher Levy must have felt like an alien retracing the path of "Democracy in America." Quickie essays follow him from the manses of Newport to death row in a Nevada jail to the mall of America, where he ponders the existence of Camp Snoopy. Alternating between thoughtful, amusing ("I kept my eye out for those notorious clusters of fat people photographed in European tabloids") and incomprehensible ("If the end of time has no meaning, then alterity begets its own meaning again"), Levy fails to provide a comprehensive portrait of America, but he cobbles together a captivating travel guide with some notable sketches.

**FIRST LINE:** "For a long time. Alexis de Tocqueville was perceived, in my country, as a second-rate author."

**IF YOU LIKE:** Hegel, visiting Amish villages, pondering foreign policy. v.h.

## MUSIC

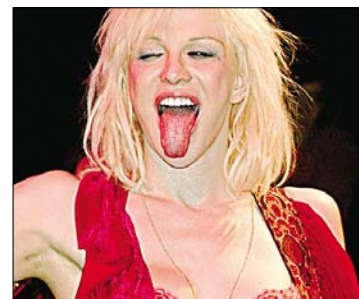
### Black Cadillac BY ROSANNE CASH (CAPITOL, \$19)



The loss of her mother, father and stepmother during a two-year span inspired Cash to forge one of her finest, most cohesive CDs. Far from a manipulative tribute to icons Johnny and June Carter Cash, the metaphor-rich disc burrows into memories and meditations about people who pass through this world, and stay in touch. Loneliness infuses the title track and "World Without Sound," where she sings, "Who do I believe, once they put you in the ground?" Yet in the role reversal of "I Was Watching You," she observes, "Long after life, there is love." Bridging piano ballads, roots country and Appalachian blues, this is a darker album than Cash's recent work, but reaffirming in substance and spirit.

**IF YOU LIKE:** Contemplative country-folk, Cash's "Interiors."

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE:** Cheap sentimentality, Nashville gloss. **PAUL ROBICHEAU**



Even Courtney Love has a mother.

## PAGES

### Her Mother's Daughter

BY LINDA CARROLL (DOUBLEDAY, \$25)

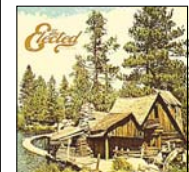
We make fun of Courtney Love a lot, and now we feel really, really guilty. The author (who is Courtney's mom), was adopted, and baffles her frosty, straight-laced mom. Later, first-born Courtney in turn baffles Carroll, with violent mood swings even as a baby. Then Carroll finds her real mom, author Paula Fox. The book isn't a Courtney apologia — she really doesn't even show up that much — but about bridging the gulf between moms and daughters.

**FIRST LINE:** "It was my oldest daughter."

**IF YOU LIKE:** Abnormal psychology case studies, well-meaning hippies. **HOLLY J. MORRIS (EXPRESS)**

## VIDEO GAMES

### White Limousine BY DUNCAN SHEIK (ZOE/ROUNDER, \$18)

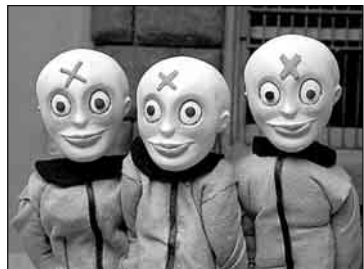


An introspective singer-songwriter with a lush, subdued style, Sheik ruminates on love, war and mortality on this self-produced CD. The title track sparkles, putting melodic octane behind a subtle skewering of our excess-minded culture. And the delicate, fingerpicked "Star-Field on Red Lines" mulls war, and those who "turn those blind eyes to fantasies and white lies." Elsewhere, his pacing grows lethargic, though buoyed by tasteful, atmospheric orchestration. And a second disc lets listeners install DVD-ROM software to remix the songs.

**IF YOU LIKE:** Poetry set to mellow music, The Blue Nile. **P.R.**

# > WhereTo...

IN SEARCH OF THINGS YOU MIGHT WANT TO DO, IF ONLY YOU KNEW ABOUT THEM



Creatures from "Live Freaky Die Freaky."

WELLSPRING FILMS



LaToya was robbed. The phone lines of our hearts are always open for her.

PEAKRECORDS

## ... Watch

**Definition of Insanity.** Do you have that friend, the one who's so positive that fame and fortune is just around the corner? Well, they made a movie about him. This mockumentary follows a struggling and possibly delusional actor from audition to audition. DCJCC, 1529 16th St. NW; Tue., 7:30 p.m., \$8.50; 202-518-9400; dcjcc.org. (Dupont Circle)

**Don Juan.** A reconstruction of Moliere's play envisions its 1665 French premiere. The Shakespeare Theatre, 450 7th St. NW; through March 19, \$14.25-\$71.25; 202-547-1122; shakespearetheatre.org. (Gallery Place-Chinatown)

**Live Freaky Die Freaky.** Flashing back to LSD trips of 1969, this stop-motion animation musical comedy features the voices of alt-rock icons. In brief: A nomad in the year 3069 discovers a copy of "Helter Skelter" and interprets it as the Bible. Avalon Theatre, 5612 Connecticut Ave. NW; Fri. and Sat., 12 a.m., \$9.50; 202-966-6000; theavalon.org.

**Midwives.** An innocent mistake leads a woman to years of legal problems, hostility from the medical community and battles with her own conscience. Round House Theatre Bethesda, 4545 East-West Highway; Wed. through Feb. 26, \$40-\$50; 240-644-1100; round-house.org. (Bethesda)

**Two Queens One Castle.** Marriage,



infidelity and secrecy are the backdrop for this soulful love story.

MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St., Alexandria; through March 5, \$35-\$40; 800-494-8497; metrostage.org.

**The Velvet Sky.** Here's a great main character: A woman who hasn't slept in 13 years. Woolly Mammoth Theatre, 641 D St. NW; Mon. through March 5, \$30-\$48; 202-393-3939; woollymammoth.net. (Archives-Navy Memorial)

... OGLE

## Reality Sights

Reality stars become real people this week, when a bevy of 15-minute famewhores descend on the city. **ETHAN ZOHN** of "Survivor: Africa" speaks at the DCJCC about his work fighting HIV/AIDS in Africa. (1529 16th St. NW; Wed., 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., \$5 in advance or \$10 at the door; 202-518-9400; dcjcc.org.) "American Idol" finalist **LATOYA LONDON** ups her indie cred with a show at the Birchmere. (3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria; Thu., 7:30 p.m., \$25; 703-549-7500; birchmere.com.) And while he might be famous for getting dumped, and then engaged, and then breaking off his engagement, and then marrying someone else, **BOB GUINEY** of "The Bachelor" is trying to make a go of a music career, and he's appearing at Iota. (2832 Wilson Blvd., Arlington; Sun., 8:30 p.m., \$12; 703-522-8340; iotacubandcafe.com.)



MICHELLE REPSO/EXPRESS

... WORK IT OUT

## Football Fitness

Stocking up on chips is one way to prepare for the Superbowl. Or sign up for **KARIM'S BODYFAT-BURNING TRAINING CAMP SERIES**. Starting Sunday at The Sports Club/LA, it's led by Karim Jabbar, an ex-NFL running back, based on his experiences getting in shape for the playing field. "They don't retire from the NFL. They retire from training camp." He's going easier on students, but the circuit of 20 activities, including bench presses, sit ups and suicides, won't be a cakewalk. Scurrying between stations twice a week will give them a taste of the pros. (1170 22nd St. NW; \$149 members, \$199 non-members; reserve with Keith McLaughlin at 202-974-6632.)

## ... Learn

**D.C. Noir.** Mystery scribes George Pelecanos, Laura Lippman and Lester Irby contributed to this anthology of dark tales set in Georgetown, Petworth and other D.C. locales. Politics and Prose, 5015 Connecticut Ave. NW; Wed., 7 p.m., free; 202-364-1919; politics-prose.com.

**Historic Hotels and Hideaways.** Author and photographer Trish Foxwell leads a tour of the city's famous hotels, with a stop for lunch at the Mayflower. Leaves from the Air and Space Museum, 4th Street and Independence Avenue SW; Sun., 9 a.m.-6 p.m., \$168; 202-786-3275; residentassociates.org. (Smithsonian)

**Take It Back: Our Party, Our Country, Our Future.** Democratic political consultants James Carville and Paul Begala examine the past two Republican presidential victories and analyze the impact of the Bush-Cheney years. Olsson's, 2111 Wilson Blvd., Arlington; Thu., 7 p.m., free; 703-525-4227; olssons.com. (Court House)

**State of the Union.** Do it Dem style at Busboys and Poets with Cindy Sheehan. 2021 14th St. NW; Tues., 8 p.m., free; 202-387-7638; busboysandpoets.com. (U St.-Cardozo)



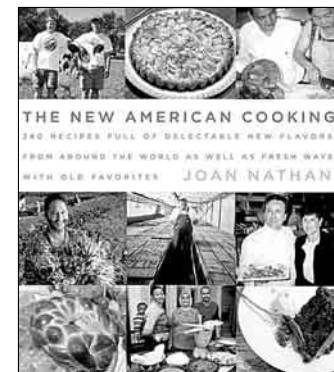
The Mayflower Hotel in the 1960s.

## ... Dance

**Chinese Fox Trot.** Learn the traditional Chinese lion dance and then fox trot the night away. Chinese refreshments will be served. (Hollywood Ballroom, 2126 Industrial Parkway, Silver Spring; Sat., 9 p.m., \$12; 301-622-5494; hollywoodballroom.com)

**Civil War Ball.** Lead your partner through 19th-century waltzes, polkas, reels and more. 1860s attire is encouraged. Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 M. Royal St., Alexandria; Sat., 8 p.m. \$30, \$40 at the door; 703-838-4242; gadsbystavern.org.

**Tango Zen.** This two-part class teaches you to focus on breathing, posture and walking in close embrace through dance. DCJCC, 1529 16th St. NW; Sun., 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., \$20, \$35 for couples; 202-518-9400; dcjcc.org or tangozen.com. (Dupont Circle)



## ... Eat

**Adams Morgan Restaurant Tour.**

Chefs at four restaurants serve up generous samples (but you have to buy your own drinks). Starts at the corner of Columbia Road and 18th Street NW (but buy tickets in advance); Sat., 2 p.m., \$66; 202-786-3275; residentassociates.org.

**Mexican Home-Cooking.** Rosa Mex-

icano's 2006 chef-taught series kicks off with one-pot meals: hominy soup, chicken stew and braised lamb. 575 7th St. NW; Sat., 1 p.m., \$60; 202-654-7010; rosamexicano.com. (Gallery Place)

**The New American Cooking.** Author Joan Nathan uncovers the culinary influences of Asia, India, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America on American cuisine. Restaurant Nora, 2132 Florida Ave. NW; Mon., 6:00 p.m., \$145; 202-462-5143. (Dupont Circle)

**Top Embassy Chefs: Afghanistan.**

Chef Manhan Arefi creates a buffet of traditional Afghan food featuring prized pomegranates, pistachios and almonds. 2341 Wyoming Ave. NW; Mon., 6:30 p.m., \$80; 202-252-0012.



## ... Listen

**Deerhoof.** Enjoy cloven-footed music with an indie band that's shared stages with Sonic Youth and Wilco. You'll be amazed at how much noise tiny lead singer Satomi Matsuzaki can make. Plus, they have a song called "Panda Panda Panda"! Black Cat, 1811 14th St. NW; Sat., 9:30 p.m., \$10; 202-667-7960; blackcatdc.com. (U St.-Cardozo)

**Frédéric Yonnet.** When it comes to the harmonica, French-born jazz harmonicaist Frédéric Yonnet knows how to turn skeptics into believers. Yonnet is one of a handful of musicians to successfully demonstrate the harmonica's versatility as a lead instrument in contemporary jazz, as well as other genres of music. The Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda; Wed., 7:30 p.m., \$10; 301-581-5100; strathmore.org



NTDTV

... BRING IN THE NEW YEAR

## Howdy, Dog Days

Was last year kind of tough? Well, things are about to get "ruff"er, as the Year of the Dog is about to begin. Beginning Sunday and lasting 15 days, the Chinese New Year is in full swing around the D.C. region. **CHINATOWN'S PARADE AND FESTIVAL**, complete with firecrackers, takes place on H Street NW between 6th and 8th streets. (Sun., Feb. 5., 2 p.m.-5 p.m., free; 202-393-7838.) Experience ancient myths and legends in their native tongue, interpreted through song, dance and costume at **NTDTV'S CHINESE NEW YEAR GLOBAL GALA**, above. (National Theatre, 1321 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; Feb. 16 and 17, 8 p.m., \$28-\$188; newyeargala.ntdtv.com.) **LAKEFOREST MALL** gets decked out with 70-foot dragons and a 210-foot representation of the Great Wall of China for its seventh annual Lunar New Year celebration. Don't miss the exhibit "Rice: More Than Just Food — It's Our Culture." (Lakeforest Mall, 701 Russell Ave., Gaithersburg, various activities through Feb. 5, free; 301-251-6263; shoplakeforest.com) Learn how to **COOK TRADITIONAL CHINESE DISHES** like Sichuan duck and sweet New Year's cake. (Sur La Table, Pentagon Row, 1101 S. Joyce St., Arlington; Mon., Feb. 6, 6:30 p.m., \$55; 703-414-3580; surlatable.com.)



STRATHMORE

Frédéric Yonnet works the harmonica.

**Leng Tan.** Freak out the piano teacher in your life. As part of the Freer Gallery's "Virtue and Entertainment: Chinese Music in the Visual Arts," Leng Tan redefines what "playing the piano" means — among other things, she plays on the strings and hits the keyboard using her elbows and her fists. Freer Gallery, 12th Street and Jefferson Drive SW; Fri., 7:30 p.m., free; 202-397-7328; asia.si.edu. (Smithsonian)

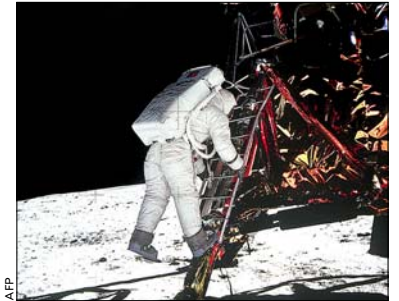
## ... Take the Kids

**Lion King Reloaded.** Based on the original "Lion King" musical, performers ages 3 to 25 retell the story of the circle of life as seen through the eyes of D.C. youth. Lincoln Theatre, 1215 U St. NW; Thu.-Sun., \$20; 202-328-6000; thelincolnthatre.org. (U St.-Cardozo)

**Milestones of Flight: Apollo II.** Play with moon rocks and explore the command module Columbia from the Apollo II mission, the first to land a guy on the moon. Free showing of IMAX film "Magnificent Desolation: Walking on the Moon 3D" at 10:15 a.m. National Air and Space Museum, 4th Street and Independence Avenue SW; Sat., 10 a.m.-3 p.m., free; 202-633-1000; www.nasm.si.edu. (Smithsonian)

**Tales of Beatrix Potter.** Three classics come alive through puppetry. Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd.; through Feb. 19, \$7; 301-320-6668; thepuppetco.org.

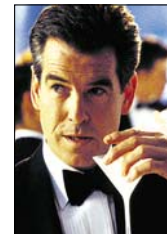
**Winter Wonderland.** Learn about Antarctica and visit with a volcanologist. Bonus: Free hot chocolate. Marian Koshland Science Museum, Sixth and E streets NW; Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., free; 202-334-1201; koshland-science-museum.org. (Gallery Place-Chinatown)



Explore Apollo 11's command module.

## ... Date

**Diamonds Are Forever.** Pull out all the tricks and dress to the hilt at this 007-worthy shindig with an open bar. Home, 911 F St. NW; Fri., 9 p.m., free with RSVP; 202.638.4663; goldfingerDC.com. (Gallery Place-Chinatown)



**Night Sky Festival.** Snuggle around a campfire while learning about constellations. Riverbend Park Visitor Center, Fairfax; Sat., 6 p.m., \$4; 703-759-9018.

**Washington Bridal Showcase.** A bad first date. Patriot Center, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax; Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., \$10; bridalshowcase.com.

## ... Gaze

**Archipelago: Portraits of Life in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.**

The photographs of David Liittschwager and Susan Middleton showcase the monk seals, sea turtles, nesting seabirds, plants and insects that inhabit these wee but fascinating bits of Hawaii. Explorer's Hall, 1145 17th St. NW; through May 29, free; 202-857-7588; nationalgeographic.com/museum. (Farragut North)

**Cézanne in Provence.** This eagerly awaited exhibition features more than 100 of Paul Cézanne's portraits and landscapes created in or around his birthplace, Aix-en-Provence. This year is the 100th anniversary of the post-impressionist's death. National Gallery of Art, Seventh Street and Constitution Avenue NW; Sun. through May 7, free; 202-737-4215; nga.gov. (Archives-Navy Memorial)



express

nonstop expectation

# B.I.O.

✦ BY INVITATION ONLY: UPCOMING WEDDINGS



## Cherise Malm, Christopher Pilger

Cherise, 26, is a defense contractor for SRA International. Chris, 27, is an engineer with SYColeman. They will live in Fairfax.

**WEDDING:** A semi-formal church ceremony in Washington on May 13th at the church where they met, with Cherise's father, a minister, officiating.

**HONEYMOON:** Maui.

**HOW THEY MET:** At a Christmas party affiliated with their church. Months later, they hit it off at a

church retreat.

**FIRST DATE:** Dinner at Woo Lae Oak, followed by The Reduced Shakespeare Company at the Kennedy Center.

**HOW HE PROPOSED:** Chris surprised Cherise when she got home from work, then took her to dinner at the Ritz-Carlton.

**STUPIDEST FIGHT:** They argued over the number of servings of wedding cake to order — even though neither of them really like cake. They'll have a small one for cutting at the ceremony, but they'll mostly serve pie.

**WEDDING TRADITIONS:** Cherise is from Alabama, so they'll use peaches as placecards at the reception. And "Sweet Home Alabama" will almost certainly be played.

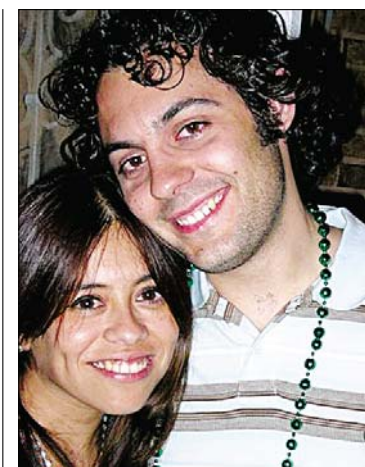
“It hit me when I was trying on wedding gowns ... it still hasn't hit Chris.”



## Hey Look, It's a Ring

Even the best-laid proposals can go sweetly awry. **EVAN MOSELEY** had planned to surprise **SARA BEHANNA** with a clever-yet-subtle ploy: He would let the ring fall out of his pocket in her presence, Sara would see it, exclaim over it, and then he'd ask. While they were visiting her father in New York, Evan called her into the bedroom and asked where his phone charger was. But when Sara saw the ring drop to the floor, she ignored it, "so I wouldn't ruin the surprise," and left the room. He called her back, and she started getting a little annoyed. "Do me a favor, tell me where I should put our dirty laundry?" he asked. "Just leave it on the floor," she said. Evan tried again, "Sara, do me another favor ..." and then she was thoroughly exasperated. "WHAT?!" said Sara — at which point Evan popped the question.

Sara, 27, is an executive assistant with Allbritton Communications Company. Evan, 26, works in IT for RS Information Systems. They live in Germantown, and they'll marry April 8 in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. They met through a pal when Sara lived in Atlanta and Evan lived here, and dated long-distance until Sara moved north two months later.



## Xavier Gibert-Serra, Elena Patiño

Xavier, 27, is a scientist/engineer with ENSCO. Elena, 27, is a fine arts graduate student at the Maryland Institute College of Art. They live in Kensington.

**WEDDING:** At a "cute little old" Catholic church in Barcelona on May 28. The ceremony will be conducted in Catalan, which Xavier and his family speak.

**HOW THEY MET:** At the now-defunct Cities in Adams Morgan.

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS:** "I thought Xavier was very outgoing and loved to party."

**HOW HE PROPOSED:** "We just decided to get married," said Elena. "I told him that instead of a ring I'd

“She had a nice smile and looked as if she came out of a fairy-tale book.”

rather have a house, so that is what we did!"

**THEIR SONG:** No one tune, but Franco Battiato's music reminds them of the summer they met.

**STUPIDEST FIGHT:** Elena was waiting at the Woodley Park Metro. Xavier was waiting at Cleveland Park ...

**WEDDING STYLE:** "Our ceremony reflects what we are: citizens of the world," they said. The dress was made in Peru, the fabric is from Italy and the invitations from Argentina. Instead of a car, they'll make their getaway in a white Vespa decorated with flowers.

## Jason Busby, Tara Woodward

Jason, 29, teaches math at Williamsburg Middle School. Tara, 26, is a marketing coordinator for Heller Ehrman LLP. They live in Arlington.

**WEDDING:** The ceremony and reception will be outdoors at a resort in Lansdowne, Va., on May 27, overlooking the golf course and mountains. They'll be joined by about 160 guests.

**HOW THEY MET:** In high school, when Jason was a senior and Tara a freshman. They met again 10 years later when they were both coaching at Yorktown High School (Jason in basketball, Tara dance).

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS:** In high school, Jason thought Tara was cute and sweet, "but that it would be a lot of effort to get her to go out with him."



Tara thought he was cute, too.

**FIRST DATE:** Rhodeside Grill. They went for drinks and stayed till closing.

**HOW HE PROPOSED:** At Potowmack Landing restaurant, where they had spent their first Valentine's Day. Tara was surprised, because she thought Jason would ask a few weeks later, when they'd be in the Bahamas.

**THEIR SONG:** "Let's Stay Together" by Al Green. "We're planning to take some dance lessons to help us with this one, since it is a faster tempo!" they said.

**MOST HATED CLOTHING ITEM:** It's not clothing, but Jason doesn't care for Tara's baby blanket, with which she still sleeps.



**Getting Married?** If you'd like to see your wedding or commitment ceremony in B.I.O., send your favorite informal photo (wacky is fine, but please don't send a formal engagement shot), plus your names, contact info and the ceremony date to [weddings@readexpress.com](mailto:weddings@readexpress.com). We'll contact you with some questions as your big day approaches. Our space is limited, but we'll do our best to include as many as we can.

# Samurai SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: WELTERWEIGHT

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8		3				4							
		9			6						2		
7		2								1			
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**Last Week's Solution**

9	2	4	3	7	8	5	6	1
7	3	8	6	1	5	9	4	2
1	5	6	4	2	9	8	7	3
2	6	9	5	3	7	1	8	4
3	8	7	9	4	1	2	5	6
5	4	1	2	8	6	3	9	7
6	9	3	1	5	4	7	2	8
8	1	5	7	6	2	4	3	9
4	7	2	8	9	3	6	1	5

2	9	1	6	5	4	7	8	3
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4	7	5	3	1	8	2	9	6
7	1	2	9	8	6	4	3	5
8	3	4	1	2	5	6	7	9
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5	4	3	6	9	8	7	1	2
9	6	2	3	7	1	4	8	5
8	7	1	4	5	2	6	9	3

3	5	6	1	7	9	2	8	4
8	7	9	2	3	4	1	5	6
1	4	2	8	6	5	3	9	7
2	3	8	9	4	6	5	7	1
9	6	5	3	1	7	4	2	8
7	1	4	5	2	8	9	6	3
5	2	1	7	8	3	6	4	9
4	8	3	6	9	2	7	1	5
6	9	7	4	5	1	8	3	2

**How to Play**

The rules of Samurai Sudoku are the same as in the popular Sudoku puzzles that appear in Express and The Washington Post.

As with standard Sudoku, the Samurai version requires no math, just logic, reasoning ... and an iron will. The goal is to fill in each column, row and 3x3 box with the digits 1 through 9 without repeating any. The twist in Samurai Sudoku is that the digits that appear in the overlapping boxes must work for both puzzles.

A piece of advice to get you started: Don't focus on completing one grid at a time. Keep the whole puzzle in mind as you go, because filling in a number in one grid could give you clues to another. As always, there's only one solution, which will appear in next week's edition of LookOut Weekend.

**Can't get enough Sudoku?** Find a standard Sudoku puzzle in the Comics section of the Post every Sunday and in the Style section every Monday through Saturday.

## Ready to Propose?



Want a great D.C. story to tell your grand-kids? Express is offering one lucky local the chance to propose in the Feb. 10 issue.

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**Safe at Home Base:** Gated condos are adding high-tech security devices — and luring crime-conscious buyers | **E2**

**Born Again:** A look at one of the area's biggest condo converters, Miami-based Crescent Heights | **E7**

**Fitting In:** Studios the size of dorm rooms are being snapped up by budget buyers who want to own their own place | **E27**

# Your Home, Your Castle

## Gated condos are increasingly using high-tech security

When Chad Eilermann went home shopping three years ago, security was paramount. "The last apartment I lived in, I had my car broken into and my stereo stolen. I didn't want to go through that again," said Eilermann, a 26-year-old senior programmer for the Internet services company Radio Data Group.

So Eilermann bought a \$192,000, one-bedroom condominium at the Gates of McLean. A six-foot-high, metal fence topped with surveillance cameras surrounds the property, and all of the buildings have an electronic security system, complete with key cards and inter-



**NO ENTRY:** Chad Eilermann purchased a condo at the Gates of McLean because of the property's extensive security system.

coms. "I haven't had any car stereos stolen," he said. "So it seems to do the trick."

Over the past few years, the gated condo has been going electric. Instead of security guards manning the front entrance, walled-in condos have been using automatic gates and electronic surveillance devices like cameras, intercoms and key cards to protect their residents. "A luxury condo implies controlled access," said Tom Farasy, chairman of the Multifamily Housing Council of the Maryland-National Capital Building Industry Association. High-tech security is "part of a building's amenity package and the reason why you're paying so much."

In fact, many area developers now avoid the term "gated condo," which has historically described a building that had a security guard sitting day and night in a phone-booth-sized hut in front of the entrance. Builders now prefer "controlled access" or "restricted

Continued on page E4

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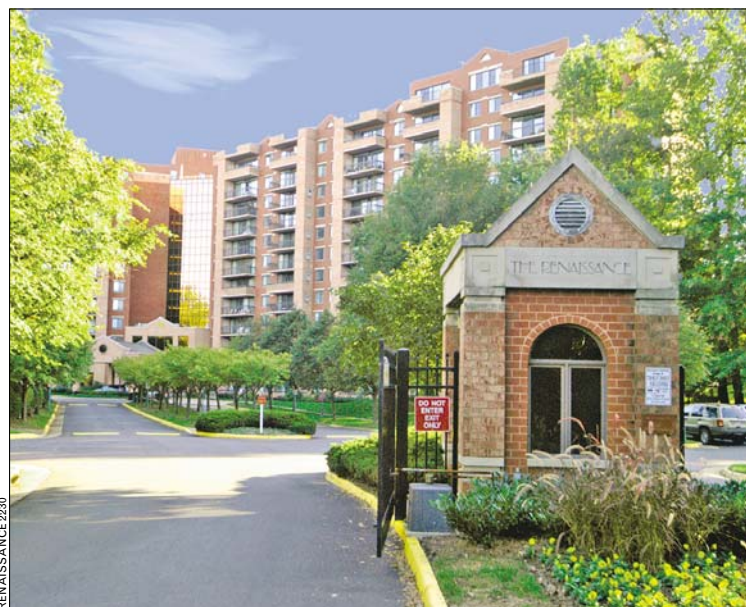
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## CONDO Living



**OPEN SESAME:** The developers of the Renaissance 2230, a Falls Church complex, plan to upgrade the gate, above. In the future, visitors will have to use an intercom.

### Your Castle

Continued from page E2

access” to describe condos that don’t use guards but have other security measures like automatic gates and electronic key pads that limit admission.

In October, Alice Huang purchased a \$437,000, two-bedroom unit at Renaissance 2230, a Falls Church complex, because of the property’s extensive security measures. Residents need an electronic key card to enter any of the building’s four entrances, and a security guard watches each door via a surveillance camera.

Huang, a 23-year-old information technology consultant, feels so protected by the system that she isn’t bothered by the fact that the property’s front gate is often left wide open. “During the day, you can drive in,” Huang said. “They’ve only just recently said they are going to start locking it at night.”

In fact, Draper and Kramer Inc., the developers of the Renaissance, said they plan to upgrade the front entrance this year, so the gate will stay, well, gated. In the future, the developers say, visitors will have to use an intercom and be screened by an attendant in order to enter the property.

Real estate experts say local laws often dictate where and how such high-security condos are built. Debbie Rosenstein, president of market research firm Rosenstein Research Associates in Fairfax, said some local zoning policies prohibit

unmanned, electronic gates because they could prevent an ambulance or a fire truck from entering the property during an emergency. The developer of Legato Corner, a condominium in Fairfax, for instance, was required to install a special lock on its front gate so emergency services could easily access the complex.

In other local communities, concerns about gates have more to do with social values, said Rosenstein. “Oftentimes, D.C. doesn’t want to

**Gated condos have been installing high-tech security devices from automatic gates to videophones.**

segregate a luxury community from the greater surrounding community,” she said.

If you want the protection — and prestige — of a front gate manned by security guards, you can find them locally, although they are rare. Typically, only the toniest properties employ a security force to check out visitors.



## Your Castle

Continued from page E4

The 35-acre Rotonda in McLean is one such property, and a number of diplomats and ambassadors call the enclave home. In fact, the property comes with more than just a large team of security professionals. A putting green, bowling alley and barbershop are also located on the grounds.

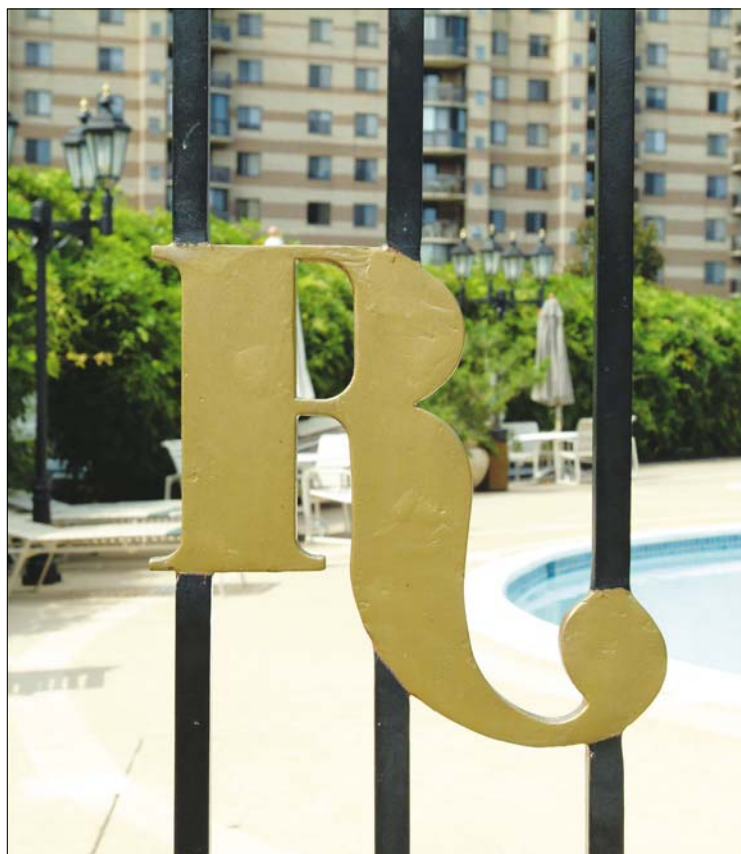
"It was designed as luxury condos from the start and, in 1978, it was not only well ahead of its time but also the premiere place to live," said 41-year-old Blake Newman, a real estate agent who bought a two-bedroom in the Rotonda in 1999. He likes to call the property his "Ritz-Carlton" condo.

If a visitor drops in on a resident, Newman explained, "The security guards call and say, 'are you expecting so and so?'" Should the owner answer, 'He's my stalker. Call the police fast,' the guards do just that."

Outside each building, a camera captures what's happening in the entranceway and sends the image to a television in the gatehouse — and to all of the owners' TVs. "When somebody buzzes, you can turn your TV on Channel 3 and, on your TV, you can actually see who's at the front door," Newman said. "If I get really bored, I'll just turn it on and watch who comes and goes."

Ray Venable, the daytime supervisor of security, has tried several techniques to keep out vandals and car thieves over the 19 years that he has worked at the Rotonda. "During the spring, we would grease the small, chain-link fence, so that if someone tried to get over the fence they would get grease on them," he said.

The security force then tried a high-tech tactic: motion detectors. "Between the squirrels and the branches and everything hitting the motion sensors, you had security guards running back and forth," said Venable, adding that they ultimately did away with the



BLAKE NEWMAN

**HIGH SECURITY:** The Rotonda in McLean is protected by a 7-foot-high fence.

devices.

Now, the property is protected by several cameras, a 7-foot iron gate and, of course, the guards. "Even the repo guys, who try to get cars, we don't even let them in," said Venable, adding that they must be escorted by security.

Realtors say that extensive security measures can turn off some of their clients. DROdio realtor Adam Gallegos, who lived at the Rotonda as a teenager, says condo communities with a full-time guard at the front gate do exude a high-class atmosphere, but buyers are not necessarily impressed. "It's almost an annoyance. They are definitely not interested in the one that's gated, because it's gated," he said.

The Gates of McLean's Eilermann said the high-tech safety measures at his property can also be an inconvenience. He assumes that his complex's security system is enough to frustrate the United Parcel Service, and he has all his packages shipped to his office.

Continued on page E6



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## CONDOLiving

### Your Castle

Continued from page E5

High-security condos, like most condos in the area, have been good personal investments. When Newman bought his two-bedroom condo at the Rotonda, it cost \$138,000. The current value is about \$438,000, he said. The property's 1,153 units range in price from \$350,000 to \$980,000.

The properties have also provided solid returns for builders. Over the past three years, the development company Crescent Heights has converted three previously fenced-in apartment buildings into condos, including the Gates of McLean and the Pointe at Park Center in Alexandria. The two properties, now accessible by either key card or garage clicker, sold out in less than a year.

Several other well-secured buildings have come on the market recently. Crescent Heights is offering condos at the Fairfax Ridge near Fairfax Town Center, with prices in the \$260s to low \$400s. In North Bethesda, Morgan Condos is selling 132 two-bedroom units from the upper \$300s to the \$600s. An electronic front gate protects both condos.

To be sure, gates don't have to be brand new in order to keep out intruders — and attract buyers. When developers decided to convert the then-vacant Italian Embassy in Adams Morgan into condos, they knew they would keep the building's front gate.

"The gate was most likely added as a security measure after World

War II for the Italian Ambassador who resided there until 1977," said Robert Maurer, marketing vice president for the developer Jones Lang LaSalle. "Preserving the historical significance of the gates was very important to [us] in restoring this grand building."

Once the renovation is completed this year, homeowners will enter through the gate by punching a keypad, while visitors will use an

**"Even the repo guys, who come to get cars, we don't even let them in."**

**RAY VENABLE**  
DAYTIME SUPERVISOR OF SECURITY  
THE ROTONDA

intercom system. The building's 79 units will range from the \$500,000s to more than \$2 million.

Sometimes a large, imposing gate is enough protection. When developers constructed the Beekman Place Condominium in D.C. in the 1970s, they used part of a stone castle that had been built in the 1800s; parts of the wall are over 20 feet high.

Lance Horsley, a Long and Foster Realtor who bought a two-bedroom at the Beekman four years ago, says the presence of the large wall transcends any sort of high-tech security, and he ended up disarming the motion detectors and cameras inside his home.

"We thought it was a waste of money," he said. ALIYA STERNSTEIN

## Lock and Load Your Condo

SOME ADVICE from security experts on how to have a safer home base:

- Splurge on heavy-duty deadbolt locks. Experts recommend always keeping your doors locked — even when you're at home watching TV.
- Install bright lighting above your front door and in all common areas in order to discourage criminals.
- Be a good neighbor and keep an eye

out for suspicious activity.

- A large tree next to your front door might look pretty, but it could also be a good hiding spot. Consider how your condo's landscaping might allow intruders to move around unseen.
- Be careful about lending out your key. Someone might make a copy and use it to burglarize your home.
- Consider upper-level condos. Experts that units above ground-level report fewer break-ins.
- If you head out for a week, or a even a weekend, make your home look like it's occupied. Consider leaving a radio on, and don't let the mail pile up.
- Buy renter's insurance so you'll receive compensation if your apartment does get robbed. ULRICH BOSER

# Crescent's City

## D.C. condo explosion owes much to Miami development firm

One of the biggest Washington real estate stories in the past three years has been the condo boom and the conversion of thousands of apartments to for-sale units.

But the biggest player has always kept a low profile here — Crescent Heights of Miami hasn't sought the limelight, according to Efy Bashary, regional manager for its East Coast and mid-Atlantic operations.

The company is better known in its South Florida base, home to miles of condo canyons. The company was founded in 1986; its principals are President Sonny Kahn and vice presidents Bruce Menin and Russell Galbut, all from the Miami area.

Galbut's roots, according to an article last year in the Miami New Times, go back to a drug-store-diner that his grandfather opened in 1935. The paper said his "extended family of brothers and cousins grew into one of the largest landowners on the [Miami] Beach, selling hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of condos here over the past few decades — not to mention similar projects across the country."

Little attention was paid in the Washington area in 2002 after Crescent Heights bought its first apartment complex in Northern Virginia, 500 units known as the Fountains of McLean in Tysons Corner, Bashary said.

"Nobody back then was doing conversions" of any scale in the Washington region, Bashary said. "People were doing tiny little ones in D.C., some historic buildings, and little conversions of 10 units here and there. But nothing of this magnitude."

When the renovated garden-style units sold out immediately, and a nearby project, the Gates of McLean, did the same, "the mar-



**SWITCHEROO:** Crescent Heights, a Miami-based developer, converted this apartment complex near Fairfax Town Center into a condominium called Fairfax Ridge.

ket started noticing," Bashary said. "The competition started popping up very slowly. But we had had no other competition until then. I wish there had been any — it would have made it much easier for me. My lender was asking me why nothing was happening there. It was very hard to convince them that this was a great market."

Crescent Heights took the lead quickly, say industry trackers, because its rental-conversion products were so much cheaper than newly built units. That made them much more attractive to first-time home buyers who were being priced out as prices here exploded.

Crescent Heights' success led others, both big national builders and small investors, to enter the condo conversion and construction market here. Real Capital Analytics analyst Robert M. White Jr. said Monument Realty, a Washington-based office developer, went into condo conversions because "they saw they could make money."

The Carlyle Group, a global investment firm based in the District, national powerhouse Trammell Crow Co. and Reston-based Comstock Homebuilding Cos. have also been active, White said.

But Crescent Heights has been the busiest, according to research firm Delta Associates. Of 13,698 area condo sales in the region in

2005, Crescent Heights had about 1,100, or about 8 percent, of the total, according to Delta's count. Its closest competitor was KSI Services Inc., with 821 sales.

In 2004, Crescent Heights had

"The competition started popping up very slowly. But we had no other competition until then. I wish there had been any — it would have made it easier for me. My lender was asking me why nothing was happening."

an even bigger share of the market, about 11 percent of the year's 9,108 sales.

Real Capital Analytics lists Crescent Heights as the buyer of about 1,100 apartment units in Northern Virginia in 2004 at a cost of about \$265 million. During that year, the company paid at least \$1.4 billion to buy 6,538 units nation-

wide, according to Real Capital. The company tracks deals of \$5 million or more.

Through September 2005, Crescent Heights had spent another \$219.4 million to buy 730 more Northern Virginia apartments for conversion, according to Real Capital.

The conversion explosion here has drawn criticism from affordable housing advocates, who have sounded alarms about the impact on renters who have seen their homes turned into condos.

Bashary said Crescent Heights "does not evict people, we don't push them out," but instead follows the legal requirements to give tenants notice when a property is sold. "We do what the law requires."

He added that those who want to buy a unit "get an inside price" and "the ones that don't stay as long as they want."

Virginia does not require that tenants get the first opportunity to buy an entire building or to match an offer, unlike the District. Tenants in all of the local jurisdictions do have the right to buy their own apartment in a conversion, according to development lawyer Robert M. Diamond of Falls Church.

Diamond, who has represented many condo converters in transactions, said most of the properties are not housing long-time renters. "Very few people in those projects have been there five or 10 years. They tend to be young, single professionals who are highly transient."

How much longer will the condo craze last? White, of Real Capital, said that in September, Crescent sold three big properties in California, New York and Florida. That signaled to him that the conversion party may be winding down.

"When something like that happens... when one converter is flipping to another, and it's more profitable to flip to someone else than go ahead, it seems like we're at the end of a cycle," he said.

SANDRA FLEISHMAN (WASHINGTON POST)

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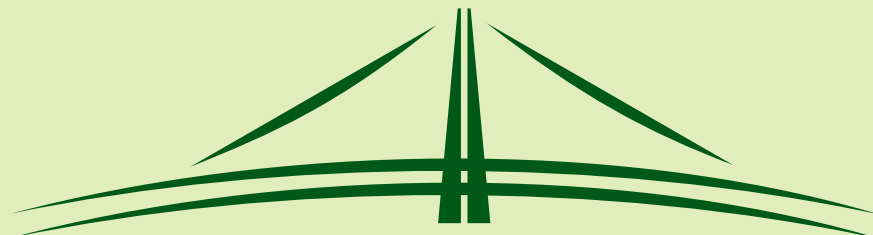
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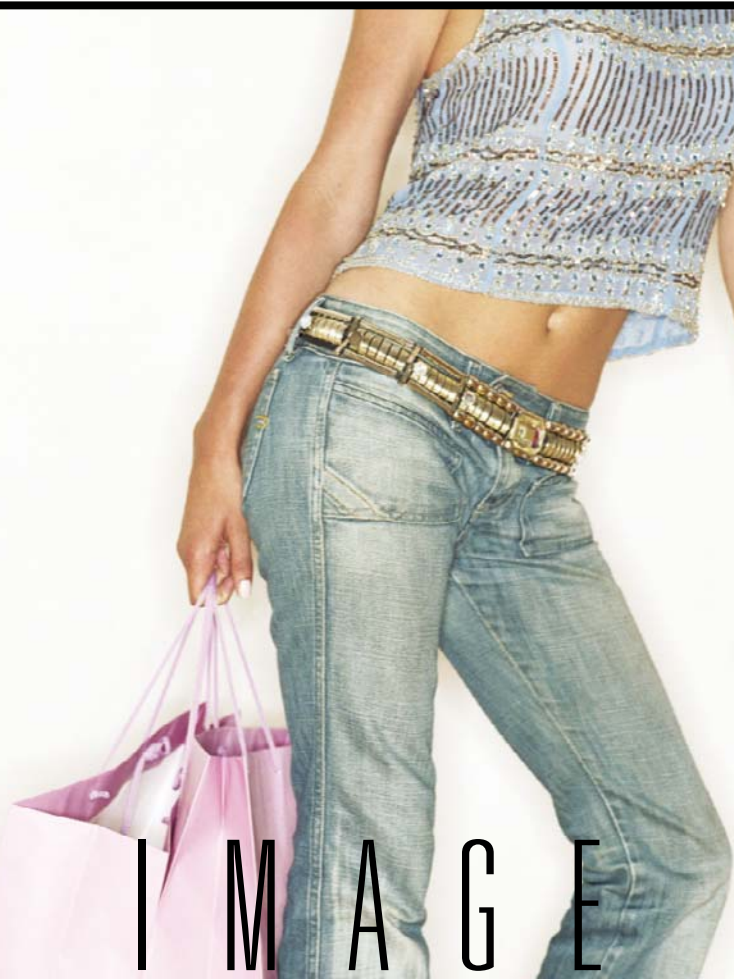
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## CONDOLiving

LIVE ONLINE

### Home Style

Washington Post Home staffers **ANNIE GROER** and **JURA KONCIUS** chat every week on [washingtonpost.com/live](http://washingtonpost.com/live) online about ways to improve your home.

**Last week you asked for comments from anyone using Lumber Liquidators. We removed carpet from our entire second floor and put down their house-brand laminate faux wood at \$1.39 a square foot. It is dark cherry and has been down for two years and is beautiful. I have allergies and laminate has fewer seams, thus less dust. The only issue with laminate fake wood flooring is it can be slick. Our older dog has great difficulty standing/walking on it so we put down carpet runners for her safety.**

Thanks. But before we go any further, Jura has to get something off her chest, which is: Why do so many houses in Washington still have pumpkins on the front porch or steps? We can understand not taking down the wreath yet, but why, why, why leave a harbinger of fall up when the rest of us can't wait for spring! She is much relieved to have vented and wants your input.

**I have tea green walls, white curtains and a need for some new bedding. What would you suggest?**

How about an aqueous blue for a kind of beach-glass cottage look (Duron Heaven Scent) or a yummy cream (Corinthian)? Sweet dreams.

**What's your take on the metallic paints? What kind of effect do they have on a room, other than the obvious shimmer? Could too much be too much?**

Metallic paint, like jewelry, goes a long way, which is why we suggest using it sparingly — either in a powder room, little nooks, accent walls or hallways.

**I've been looking for a sideboard/hutch for my dining room but all the ones I like are black. The rest of the furniture is various dark brown wood (though not too matchy matchy). Will the black look OK with the brown?**

It sure will. If you look at all the catalogues and magazines, you'll see the melange concept

in action.

**So I'm on a search for a fun, MODERN duvet cover and I've been to all the usual suspects, Crate & Barrel, Storehouse, Macy's, Bloomingdales, and everything is ugly, depressing, frilly or ultra-traditional, when I'm looking for whimsical, colorful, asymmetrical! Can you help me with my unending duvet search?**

Try going to a couple of the large fabric stores in town looking for some really jazzy fabric. If you don't sew, perhaps a friend does. This is really a fairly simple project. You may even want to find a seamstress to make this for you. And don't forget to get some extra fabric for pillows or even a dust ruffle.

**I'm looking for direction on a bedroom color (clueless male here). I have a chocolate-brown bedspread, rice-colored draperies, beige carpeting and some oak furniture. Should I look toward an earthy tan like Benjamin Moore's Sepia Tan or an earthy green like Benjamin Moore's Early Morning Mist or go in another direction altogether?**

You're not so clueless. You've done pretty well so far. But I'd back off the Sepia Tan as you may end up feeling you're trapped in a chocolate/caramel factory. Early Morning Mist, which is grayer, would be better. Or you could go for a bit more dram with Brushed Aluminum, which is even more gray.

**Sounds like you have some biases and issues to work through. I leave my Xmas lights up all year and leave my pumpkins out until they disintegrate just to piss off my neighbors here in tony Clifton. I also like to go pick up my mail at the Clifton Post Office with my herding dogs and myself covered in my mud and sheep poop. It really upsets the posuers and nouveau rich here in Clifton.**

The lights, the dogs, the sheep poop are all fine. But the disintegrating pumpkins may attract rats. And Adrian Higgins, our esteemed garden editor, notes that the seeds may sprout all over your front yard, giving you an entire pumpkin patch with which to annoy your neighbors.

**The duvet cover person can try Overstock. They have a variety of styles and price ranges. I just got**

Continued on page E14



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## CONDOLiving

### Live Online

Continued from page E12

my new one, and it suited my needs perfectly.

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**RE: metallic paint: I have one wall of my master bath done in gold and I love it. However, I found that the paint didn't go on as easily as regular paint. After three coats, there was still a textured look from the roller. I used Modern Master; I don't know if other brands go on more smoothly.**

Annie used Ralph Lauren's gun-metal paint in a kitchen and had the same problem. It's incredibly unforgiving, and shows every nick, bump and plaster mark. That said, it's pretty spectacular.

**I am a counselor looking to paint my office a warm, calming color. Would you recommend using a beige, brown color or could I use the featured Behr Sage Tint? Thanks!**

We vote for Behr Sage. Beige actually induces hives in Annie. And Jura says not to forget the aromatherapy candle.

**I was hoping you could help me with a carpet-related question. I was looking at area rugs and of course the ones I like are just too far out of my price range right now. Someone suggested buying a regular rug (like wall-to-wall) and getting it bound. Do you know anyplace that does this? Do you think this would end up costing about the same as just buying an area rug? Any advice you could give would be most appreciated!**

Hey, this is a great question that has made us curious, too. So we called Georgetown Carpet, 7828 Wisconsin Ave. in Bethesda, 301-654-0202. The news is that if you buy your carpet there, it will cost you about \$1.25 per linear foot to bind it. That would be an extra \$100 for an 8x10 rug. But if you bring in carpet that you bought elsewhere, they will do it for a charge of \$2 to \$3 per linear foot. So you decide.

**I recently purchased a used desk at a yard sale that has a wood veneer. I want to paint it an antique white (maybe with a crackle finish) but am not sure how to. Should I sand the veneer first, or should I just prime and paint right over the veneer?**

Good score, good for you, recy-

cling is good, blah blah. And yes, you should sand first. The piece will look so very much better.

**We are in the process of finishing our basement. We want to keep it warm, but not too dark (limited windows in the basement). We were planning on having a denim couch/loveseat with some bright yellow accent pillows. Any suggestions on wall color?**

Basements pretty much need to be painted light colors. And if you're doing denim for wearability, remember they come in tons of colors, not just blue. So you could do a bright red, or even a deep yellow and then do the walls in a nice sunny yellow like Behr's Wickerware.

**Is this the week you will reveal the site of the furniture warehouse sale in North Carolina?**

It's the Mitchell Gold factory outlet sale. Worth the drive, we think. It's also on the Web site, [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com). Let us know if any of you out there get down to Hickory, N.C. and score big.

**We have a four-year-old home, with white siding and shutters on the front. None of the houses in the neighborhood have detailing anywhere but the front (i.e. brick front, stone front, shutters only on the front windows, etc). I hate this incomplete look but it seems to be the norm for this area! Would it be nuts to break the mold and do shutters all the way around my house? I don't want my house to stand out like a sore thumb, but I hate the plainness of it!!**

It's your house, do whatever you want. It sounds tasteful and will make you happy.

**I am finally ready to take down the hideous wallpaper in my kitchen, but I can't decide on a paint color. The cabinets are a fairly bright white. The red dining room (Cyclamen, an old Duron color) and tan living room (Benjamin Moore historical color Powell Buff) are both visible from the kitchen. I'm thinking either a cream that's dark enough to contrast with the cabinets or a light green that would go well with the red. What do you think?**

Both are good choices. It's your call. If your kitchen doesn't get too much natural light, go with a cream. If you get lots of sun, go green.

**I am painting my kitchen a nice sagey green, and was hoping to throw in a**

Continued on page E19

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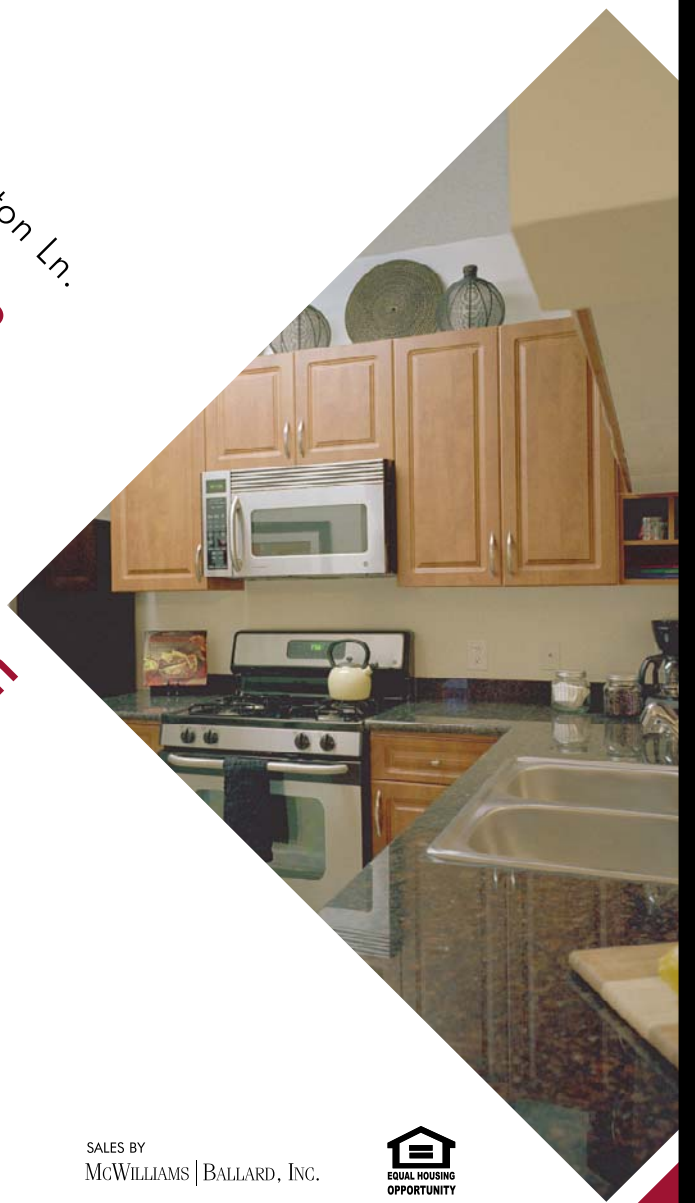
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**L O C K I N R A T E S**

# CONDOLiving

## Live Online

Continued from page E14

few purple accents here and there. But then it struck me this morning that this color duo feels a little outdated, like all my mom's friends bathrooms in the '90s. If this color duo is dated, it cuts against my valient attempts to maintain a contemporary style. So is it dated? If yes, can you suggest other accent colors to pair with the sage?

You're right. Sage and purple is a bit dated. But you can shift gears slightly and go blue or brown for a more contemporary look. Try Restoration Hardware's Dusk, which is an intense slate blue, or Chocolate. And if you haven't painted yet, get Silver Sage, a consistent fave among kitchenistas.

I don't know where to start with the room I'm about to start work on. I'll be finishing a 9x18 basement room. There is a sliding glass door to the backyard, and there will be doors covering a laundry area. I have a sofa bed I need to keep, but will put a slip cover over it. I just have no idea what color to paint this room. I'm willing to be bold. The room won't be used too often, mostly as an overflow for parties. My house is mostly greens, blues and tans, with mission style furniture. What direction should I go so that it is cool and different but won't be too out of date by next season?

Since you've got Mission going on upstairs and lots of light downstairs, go for red walls and a nice spruce slipcover for the sofabed.

**Area rug seeker:** Check out macys.com for an area rug. They have 384 selections on sale right now. We recently ordered a rug from them, after hours looking at rugs on other sites and not finding anything that seemed right for our space, and ended up with a nice 6x8 rug that really looked like the picture on the Web site, delivered within a week, for \$250!

Great tip, particularly since we'll be seeing so much more of Macy's once they close Hecht's and Lord & Taylor.

I have a chair that is upholstered in a fantastic floral fabric — great colors, not too fussy, a very classic print. Problem: It's 20 years old and I would love to find more of the fabric. I got the chair from my aunt, and all she has about it is a tag that reads "Age of

Grandeur," screenprinted exclusively for Hines and Company, 1986.

My aunt had these chairs done in 1989. I'm sure they aren't making this pattern anymore, but I would love to find some more of this fabric! People have lots of stuff tucked away in attics and basements, right? Lots of time on the computer hasn't yielded anything, so I thought I would turn to the experts.

Jura just got off the phone with Myra Hines, owner of Hines & Co, which is headquartered in Bethel, Ct., but has showrooms all over the country including at the Washington Design Center in SW.

This fabric was actually created in the '70s for the company and was originally a glazed cotton chintz. Today it is still available, but only as a linen/cotton blend. It can be found in the original colorways: white, celadon, parchment, red and yellow (sounds yummy). It retails for about \$100 a yard and you can get it through a designer or a store that sells custom fabrics.

I'm hanging curtains for the first time — I bought some decorator remnant fabric for \$3.97 a yard at G Street and am just doing a very simple curtain to cover the French doors to our porch, hanging either with clips or putting grommets in the fabric.

My question is: Where do I position the curtain rod? So that it is even with the top of the door frame or a little higher so the curtain covers the frame? I can't go much higher because of the amount of fabric I've got.

That's why they call them remnants. Just over the window frame will be fine.

What kind of lighting would you recommend for a dark living room? Would recessed lighting prove too harsh?

Actually, most decorators really like recessed lighting, particularly if it is on a dimmer because then you can put the lights in places that work for you. You also can add a floor lamp or two, particularly near your favorite spot for reading.

My husband and I are buying a new home that's new construction. I want to do things like paint before we move in (to make life easier!), but I don't even know where to start. The house is a big blank slate — all cream — which is exciting, but daunting because I'm really not good at this stuff (decorating, choosing colors, etc).

We're getting a lot of new furniture too,

Continued on page E22

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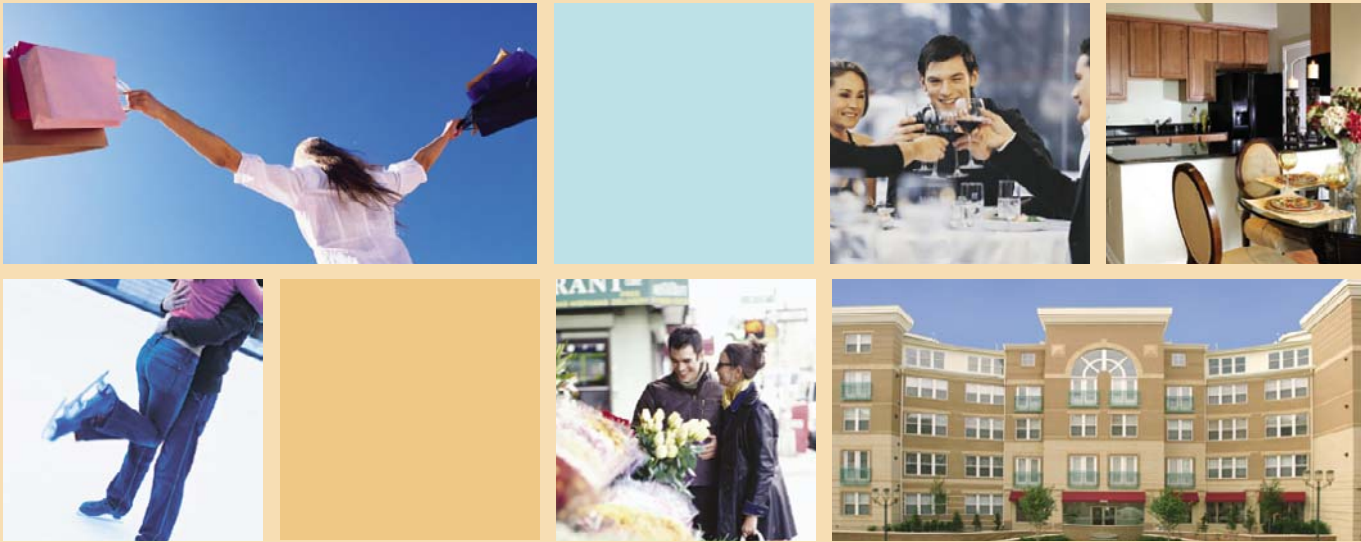
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## CONDOLiving

### Live Online

Continued from page E19

and I have no idea how to make furniture and walls and carpets match. Any suggestions on where/how to start? I figure the master bedroom and the kitchen are the most important, and I've been trying to get ideas from HGTV, but I'd really appreciate any tips or ideas.

Yes, a blank slate is both exciting and scary. You may simply need an hour or two of a designer's time, someone who can help you with furniture placement, floor coverings, etc.

Call the local chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers, which is based at the Washington Design Center, for the names of a couple of designers in your area who do consultations by the hour. Call 202-488-4100 or go to the Web site, [www.saidcmetro.org](http://www.saidcmetro.org).

**I'm looking to spruce up my kitchen with some new cabinet pulls. I'm thinking about amber glass pulls on my white cabinets with walls painted tundra green. Any online cabinet hardware retailers you love?**

There is a terrific Web site for hardware, [www.bauerware.com](http://www.bauerware.com), with things ranging from \$3 to \$1,500. Some pieces are made by artisans, others are manufactured. But the range in style, material and

era is pretty amazing.

**We're brand-new home owners and new to this decorating thing. We are trying to do things on a very limited budget and one of the problem areas is in the kitchen between the countertop and the cabinets. It's called a backsplash, right? Do you have any recommendations for a substitute to tile for a kitchen backsplash? Any painting types or techniques that might look good? What kind of paint would easily wipe off?**

The whole purpose of a backsplash (usually tile or the same material as the countertop) is to provide a surface that is easily wiped off due to the many splatters of cooking and cleaning up.

Jura recently visited an elegant newly done kitchen in D.C. that had honed marble counters and matching backsplashes in white and gray stone. It looked fabulous.

**Just purchased dwell nursery bedding in robin — what would be a similar paint color for the walls? Prefer Duron or Benjamin Moore.**

We just visited [www.dwellshop.com](http://www.dwellshop.com), a very cool, contemporary Web site. Know that everyone's computer monitor is different and so there could be color distortion but the closest Duron color we could find was Heron Blue. However, to be safe, take a piece of the bedding to the paint store and try to match it that way.

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## Condo Resources

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### CONDO SHOPPING

< **CRAIGSLIST.COM**: There's more for sale here than used furniture.

< **HOMESDATABASE**: Search for properties and agents in the Mid-Atlantic area using the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), the grand-daddy of real estate listings. [homesdatabase.com](http://homesdatabase.com)

< **DC LOFTS**: "Dedicated to lofts and loft-like, upscale contemporary residences in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area." [dc-lofts.com](http://dc-lofts.com)

< **DCREALESTATE**: Much like [dclofts.com](http://dclofts.com). [dcrealestate.com/newconstruction.cfm](http://dcrealestate.com/newconstruction.cfm)

< **NEWSVOYAGER**: Browse classified ads from around the country. [newspaperlinks.com](http://newspaperlinks.com)

< **SALE BY OWNER REALTY**: Shop for condos being sold without an agent. [www.salebyownerrealty.com](http://www.salebyownerrealty.com)

< **WASHINGTON POST REAL ESTATE**: Search the MLS and more. [washingtonpost.com/realestate](http://washingtonpost.com/realestate)

### LOCAL DEVELOPERS

New condominium complexes are flying up all over the city. Here are some local developers with projects in the works:

< **AB URBAN DEVELOPMENT**: [ab-urban.com](http://ab-urban.com)

< **ABDO DEVELOPMENT**: [abdo.com](http://abdo.com)

< **DONATELLI & KLEIN**: [dkdevelopment.com](http://dkdevelopment.com)

< **DRUMMOND DEVELOPMENT**: [drummonddev.com](http://drummonddev.com)

< **FURIOSO DEVELOPMENT**: [furiosodc.com](http://furiosodc.com)

< **THE GALLATIN COMPANY**: [gallatincompany.com](http://gallatincompany.com)

< **THE JBG COMPANIES**: [jbg.com](http://jbg.com)

< **KINGMAN DEVELOPMENT**: [kingmandevelopment.com](http://kingmandevelopment.com)

< **KL ASSOCIATES**: [klproperties.com](http://klproperties.com)

< **MACY DEVELOPMENT**: [macydc.com](http://macydc.com)

< **METROPOLIS DEVELOPMENT**: [metropolis-dc.com](http://metropolis-dc.com)

< **MONUMENT REALTY**: [monumentrealty.com](http://monumentrealty.com)

< **PN HOFFMAN**: [pnhoffman.com](http://pnhoffman.com)

< **URBAN LAND COMPANY**: [urbanlandcompany.com](http://urbanlandcompany.com)

### RESEARCH TOOLS

< **COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INSTITUTE**: The site your condo board is

reading. [caionline.org](http://caionline.org)

< **CRIMEREPORTS**: Sign up for free daily or weekly District and Virginia crime reports. [crimereports.com](http://crimereports.com)

< **FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**: Find out what disasters are most likely to strike your home. [fema.gov](http://fema.gov)

< **RELOCATION CRIME LAB**: Study crime reports for your new neighborhood. [homefair.com/homefair/calc/crime.html](http://homefair.com/homefair/calc/crime.html)

< **THE SCHOOL REPORT**: Free school reports for all U.S. public schools. [theschoolreport.com](http://theschoolreport.com)

< **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**: Pore over state and local economic data. [bea.doc.gov](http://bea.doc.gov)

### FINDING AN AGENT

< **GREATER WASHINGTON COMMERCIAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS**: [gwcar.org](http://gwcar.org)

< **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS**: Find a qualified Realtor. [realtor.org](http://realtor.org)

< **REALTOR.COM**: Buying info and, of course, lots of Realtors. [realtor.com](http://realtor.com)

### FINANCING

< **AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HOME INSPECTORS**: Learn how to find a good home inspector at [ashi.org](http://ashi.org)

< **BANKRATE**: All things mortgage-rate related. Check out the calculators. [bankrate.com](http://bankrate.com)

< **HSH ASSOCIATES**: Track mortgage data for D.C. and other metro areas. [hsh.com](http://hsh.com)

### GOVERNMENT FINANCING

Several national, state and local programs exist to help homebuyers — especially first-time ones — finance their purchases.

< **FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION**: [fanniemae.com](http://fanniemae.com) and [homepath.com](http://homepath.com)

< **GOVERNMENT NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION**: [ginniemae.gov](http://ginniemae.gov)

< **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND**

**URBAN DEVELOPMENT**: Let HUD help you buy a home. [hud.gov](http://hud.gov)

< **ALEXANDRIA OFFICE OF HOUSING**: [ci.alexandria.va.us/city/housing](http://ci.alexandria.va.us/city/housing)

< **ARLINGTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT**: [www.co.arlington.va.us/cphd](http://www.co.arlington.va.us/cphd)

< **FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**: [www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/rha](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/rha)

< **MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING**

Continued on page E24



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## CONDO Living

### Condo Resources

Continued from page E23

#### ING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

[www.dhcd.state.md.us](http://www.dhcd.state.md.us)

#### < MONTGOMERY COUNTY HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION:

[www.hocmc.org](http://www.hocmc.org)

#### < PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

[www.goprincegeorgescounty.com](http://www.goprincegeorgescounty.com)

#### < VIRGINIA HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

**AUTHORITY:** [www.vhda.com](http://www.vhda.com)

#### < WASHINGTON, D.C. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

[www.dhcd.dc.gov](http://www.dhcd.dc.gov)

### NEIGHBORHOOD SITES

#### WASHINGTON, D.C.

- < [about.dc.gov](http://about.dc.gov)
- < [neighborhoodaction.dc.gov](http://neighborhoodaction.dc.gov)

#### NEIGHBORHOOD

- < **ADAMS MORGAN:** [adamsmorgan.net](http://adamsmorgan.net)
- < **ANACOSTIA WATERFRONT:** [anacostiawaterfront.net](http://anacostiawaterfront.net)
- < **CAPITOL HILL:** [capitolhill.org](http://capitolhill.org)
- < **CHEVY CHASE:** [chevychasecitizens.org](http://chevychasecitizens.org)
- < **CLEVELAND PARK:** [clevelandpark.com](http://clevelandpark.com)
- < **COLUMBIA HEIGHTS:** [columbiaheightsdc.com](http://columbiaheightsdc.com)
- < **CRESTWOOD:** [crestwood-dc.org](http://crestwood-dc.org)
- < **DUPONT CIRCLE:** [dupont-circle.com](http://dupont-circle.com)
- < **FOXHALL:** [foxhall.org](http://foxhall.org)
- < **H STREET NE:** [hstreetcdc.org](http://hstreetcdc.org)
- < **HILLCREST:** [hillcrestdc.com](http://hillcrestdc.com)
- < **LOGAN CIRCLE:** [logancircle.org](http://logancircle.org)
- < **MOUNT PLEASANT:** [mtpleasantdc.org](http://mtpleasantdc.org)
- < **OLD CITY:** [oldcitycapitolhill.org](http://oldcitycapitolhill.org)
- < **PALISADES:** [palisadesdc.org](http://palisadesdc.org)

< **PENN-BRANCH:** [anc7b.org/penn-branch.htm](http://anc7b.org/penn-branch.htm)

< **PETWORTH:** [petworthdc.net](http://petworthdc.net) and [petworthnews.blogs.com](http://petworthnews.blogs.com)

< **SHAW:** [shawdc.com](http://shawdc.com)

< **SOUTHWEST:** [swdc.org](http://swdc.org)

< **TAKOMA PARK:** [takomadc.com](http://takomadc.com)

< **U STREET:** [ustreet.com/csna](http://ustreet.com/csna)

### MARYLAND

- < [dcmetro.maryland.com](http://dcmetro.maryland.com)
- < [mddccommunity.com](http://mddccommunity.com)

### COUNTY

- < **MONTGOMERY COUNTY:** [montgomerycountymd.gov](http://montgomerycountymd.gov)
- < **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY:** [co.pg.md.us](http://co.pg.md.us) and [pgcoc.org](http://pgcoc.org)

### NEIGHBORHOOD/CITY

- < **BELTSVILLE:** [beltsville.com](http://beltsville.com)
- < **BETHESDA:** [BETHESDA.ORG](http://BETHESDA.ORG)
- < **BLADENSBURG:** [porttowns.com/blad/blad.htm](http://porttowns.com/blad/blad.htm)
- < **BOWIE:** [cityofbowie.org](http://cityofbowie.org)
- < **CHEVERLY:** [cheverly.com](http://cheverly.com)
- < **CHEVY CHASE:** [northchevychase.org](http://northchevychase.org)
- < **GREENBELT:** [ci.greenbelt.md.us](http://ci.greenbelt.md.us)
- < **HYATTSVILLE:** [hyattsville.org](http://hyattsville.org)
- < **LAUREL:** [laurel.md.us](http://laurel.md.us)
- < **NEW CARROLLTON:** [new-carrollton.md.us](http://new-carrollton.md.us)
- < **ROCKVILLE:** [rockvillemd.gov](http://rockvillemd.gov)
- < **SEAT PLEASANT:** [seatpleasantmd.gov](http://seatpleasantmd.gov)
- < **SILVER SPRING:** [gsscc.org](http://gsscc.org) and [downtownsilverspring.com](http://downtownsilverspring.com)
- < **TAKOMA PARK:** [cityoftakomapark.org](http://cityoftakomapark.org)

### NORTHERN VIRGINIA

< [novaregion.org](http://novaregion.org)

### NEIGHBORHOOD/CITY

- < **ALEXANDRIA:** [ci.alexandria.va.us](http://ci.alexandria.va.us)
- < **ARLINGTON:** [co.arlington.va.us](http://co.arlington.va.us) and [arlingtonvirginiausa.com](http://arlingtonvirginiausa.com)

## IT'S UNBOUND TO BE A GREAT WEEKEND

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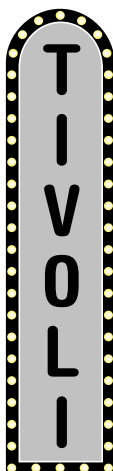
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# CONDOLiving



CLARE DUGGAN

**MAIN SQUEEZE:** Kirsten Catanzano's studio is small. But a wall of closets makes it feel cozy rather than cramped. And furnishing the 310-square-foot unit was easy.

## A Little Place Of One's Own

Tiny studio condos and co-ops are gaining fans among city dwellers who long to own

When Kirsten Catanzano went home shopping in spring of 2002, she wound up buying the smallest place she visited — a co-op unit in Georgetown that measures a mere 310 square feet.

"It's probably the smallest thing they make," she said. "It's like a dorm room."

The steep rise in Washington home prices has put one-bedroom condos and co-ops out of reach for a growing segment of home buyers, forcing many first-timers to choose between one-room living downtown and more space farther out. Buying a studio "gives them the opportunity to live in the midcity neighborhoods," said Matt Zanolli, an agent with Long & Foster in Woodley Park, while enjoying the financial benefits of homeownership.

For Catanzano, the small size was a drawback she could live with. Her building oozes old-Georgetown charm and has a quiet garden with a grill. Her walk to Georgetown

University, where she worked at the time, took just a few minutes. Her studio is filled with light and

**As the D.C. market continues to grow, first-time buyers are increasingly bidding on studios.**

boasts a new kitchen and bathroom, plus a wall of closets. Furnishing the place was easy. "I didn't need to buy anything," she said.

She'd like a separate bedroom and more space for entertaining,

*Continued on page E28*

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# CONDOLiving

Continued from page E27

but at \$91,000, her studio (or efficiency — Realtors use the terms interchangeably) was an affordable way to get off the rental track. “It’s small, but it has a small mortgage,” she said. A neighbor recently sold a similar unit (sans the renovated kitchen and bathroom) for \$60,000 more than Catanzano paid.

Studios are usually occupied by singles, and Washington has one of the highest rates of single-person households in the country: 44 percent, according to the 2000 Census. (Some of the area’s tiny condos are original bachelor pads in historic buildings.) They’re also a good bet for buyers who live in Washington part-time for business. “I have some clients who say, ‘I travel constantly, I really just need some place to throw my hat,’” Zanolli said.

For Carrie Simmons, a teacher, living in town trumped having a separate bedroom. This summer, she bought a studio in an Adams Morgan co-op building for \$118,000. It has just 450 square feet, but Simmons loves the location. “I’m single and I wanted to live in the city,” she said. “I park my car on Friday and I don’t move it until Monday.”

The coziest part, though, is that it’s all hers. “I know I’m not going to be here forever, but it’s a good investment,” Simmons said.

That wasn’t always the case. “Historically, [efficiencies] were about the worst investment you could buy,” said Roby Thompson, an agent with Long & Foster in Woodley Park who’s been working in Washington real estate since 1987. Many efficiencies sold then didn’t start gaining value until the early to mid-1990s, he said. Investors bought them to rent out, and parents bought them for their college-age children instead of paying for dorms.

In the last five to 10 years, though, a number of forces have created a hot market for small condos and co-ops. Tax breaks for first-time buyers, more flexible lending options and the high prices of larger homes have all driven up demand.

In addition, more people are buying efficiencies as their homes, rather than as rentals. In areas of downtown D.C. such as Georgetown, Dupont Circle and



**ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE:** Carrie Simmons painted one wall of her Adams Morgan studio cranberry and eschewed window drapes to make the room feel larger.

Logan Circle, even small studios can now sell for \$200,000 or more—a price unthinkable just five years ago.

In the past, conventional wisdom held that owners needed to hold onto a home for about five years to break even. That rule hasn’t applied in the Washington

“Everybody seems to think they’re going to make a fortune.

... If you’re looking to buy a studio just to buy, that’s a mistake.”

ROBY THOMPSON,  
REAL ESTATE AGENT

market of late, where more rapid growth has been the norm. “We sell a studio as fast as any other size real estate today,” said Lawrence Savage, of Lawrence Savage Real Estate, a brokerage located in Georgetown.

Rey Post, a Realtor with Tutt, Taylor and Rankin, held an open house for a Kalorama studio with less than 500 square feet earlier this month. About 60 people showed up, and several submitted offers right away. It sold for more than \$10,000 above the asking price of \$169,900. But Thompson cautions against get-rich-quick expectations. “Everybody seems to think they’re going to make a fortune,” he said.

If the market slows down — as some say it inevitably will — properties will become more difficult to sell, which could mean trouble for owners who need to move for work or suddenly need space for two. “If you’re looking at buying a studio just to buy, it’s a mistake,” Thompson said.

Some buildings allow owners to rent properties out, often after living in the unit for a certain amount of time. If this is the plan, weigh the carrying costs—the total monthly payments for a property’s mortgage, taxes and condo or co-op fees—against how much the property could fetch in rent.

Carrying costs and rents used

to be much closer but, while condo prices have skyrocketed, rents have remained relatively stable, creating a gap. Thompson warns that very small apartments can be difficult to rent, and that tenants typically don’t stay more than a year or two.

“Buy for your lifestyle,” Zanolli advised. He’s seen owners of small condos and co-ops find clever ways to make the most of their space, like installing Murphy beds. “You’re thinking ‘Laverne and Shirley,’” he said. “But now they’re cabinet units and they’re very attractive.” Furniture stores like Ikea sell tables that operate on the same principle, folding against the wall when not in use.

With help from her interior designer sister, Simmons, the Adams Morgan co-op owner, painted one wall an accent color — cranberry — to make her space appear longer, and she avoided drapes to give the windows cleaner lines. She’d like to renovate the kitchen as well — after all, she expects to stay for about five years.

“It’s definitely home now,” she said. DENISE KERSTEN

## Live Larger Than Your Studio

**Your ideas don’t have to be small just because your space is. Some advice from interior decorators:**

- Don’t be afraid of strong color even in a very small space. It’s inviting.
- In rooms with low ceilings, draperies hung from ceiling to floor give the illusion of height.
- A tiny room needn’t have only small-scale furniture. A few bold pieces are better.
- Instead of expensive frames, paint colored squares on the wall to set off photographs.
- In small spaces, try using only one fabric, with touches of one or two others as accents.
- Splurge for a halogen spotlight, which is the only light that shows true color.
- Use old things in new ways, like an 18th-century fish print in a \$10 Ikea frame backed in a piece of red gingham fabric.
- If you can’t afford expensive fabric, use expensive trim. JURA KONCIUS (WASHINGTON POST)



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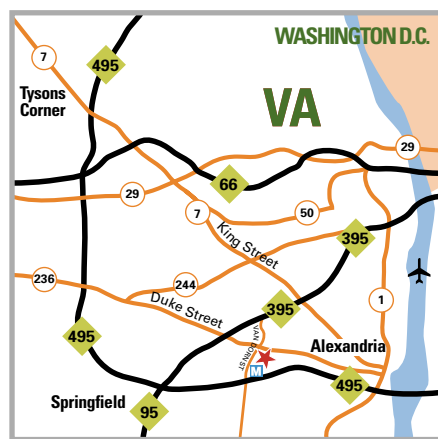
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## CONDO Living

LIVE ONLINE

### Real Estate

Washington Post writer **MARYANN HAGGERTY** discusses the Washington housing market on [washingtonpost.com/liveonline](http://washingtonpost.com/liveonline). Some excerpts follow.

**I've had my downtown house in Shaw on the market since Thanksgiving and there's been some interest but nothing solid. Should I expect an uptick in activity after the Super Bowl when realtors supposedly say the spring buying season really begins? I think the house is priced in accordance with previous sales and current homes on the market.**

Yes, the conventional wisdom among agents is that the spring market begins after the Super Bowl (Feb. 5 this year). I've always thought that's a bit glib — it really does take some weeks after that for buyer interest to ramp up.

**I'm wondering if you can give me advice for a first-time home buyer. I am 26 and my husband and I are saving every penny we can to buy our first home in the next couple of years. We live in Worcester County, but are looking to buy in southern Maryland. Housing prices have increased astronomically in the past few years and buying a home is slowly slipping out of our reach. Many couples my age are buying trailer homes, town homes, co-ops. Most housing experts say that housing costs should not consume more than 25 percent to 30 percent of your monthly income and if that is the case, my husband and I would have to triple or quadruple our income to afford even a small house in a decent neighborhood. What can we do?**

This is the most painful question of all. All you can do is save, and search. With luck, your income will improve over time. With luck, governments around the country will begin to realize that perhaps we need some sort of answers to these questions. I don't have the solution.

**I am looking at a new home community, in its first phase. Am I near-guaranteed that in the other phases the homes will sell for more and I will have instant equity? Are there any occasions that you know where they have sold for less? Would it be unwise to**

**purchase at this time, seeing that it will take over 12 months to complete and I don't know where interest rates will be by then? (Note: I am a single male who pays cheap rent in D.C.)**

No, there are no guarantees. Yes, there are times they have sold for less, even though builders do try hard not to let this happen. And only you can decide where your life will be 12 months from now, and whether you want to buy.

**Can you provide an update on the Metro expansion? Or a Web site that maps out future lines/stops?**

This is the link to Metro's official site on the Dulles project: [www.dullescarridorrail.com](http://www.dullescarridorrail.com).

**My husband and I were looking at the South Riding, Va., community as a possible place to live. The transportation system doesn't seem to be adequate, though — it looks like I would have to drive or slug it from South Riding to Chinatown. A one and a half to two hour commute each way is a deal-killer, in my opinion. Do you think Metro or the Virginia rail would ever have lines out in that direction?**

It's going to be a long, long time before Metro or VRE goes anywhere close.

**I am going through a broker who says the lender of choice will "for free" do the biweekly payments. I can afford to make 26 biweekly payments per year versus the normal 12. With that taken out of the equation, is there any downside to a biweekly mortgage payment? (P.S. the bank will apply the payment ASAP and not wait until end of month payment to apply.)**

Look closely and make sure that payment plan really is "for free." No upfront charges? No \$4 a month nuisance charges? Then, consider your own cash flow issues. Any problem with making those payments? If you like the answers to those questions, you may want to consider it, because it really is great discipline. Yes, I know, if you simply send in a 13th payment every December, have it applied to principal, the result is pretty much exactly the same. But I personally have seldom had the discipline to write that 13th check.

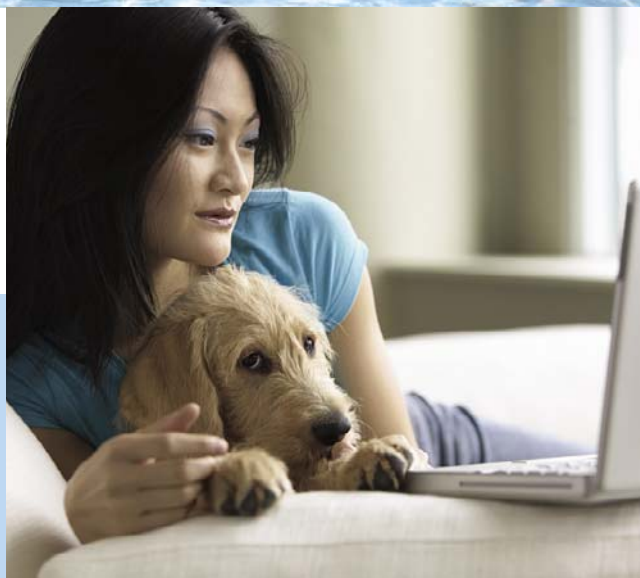
**I bought a home in Ashburn, Va., in 2005 for 580k. We work hard and finally we are just planning to live on the home equity hoping that we can**

Continued on page E33

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## Live Online

Continued from page E30

**make some money out of it, but as the market is getting bad and prices are going down we are scared of what we should be doing. Sell it? Keep it? Is there any hope of market getting better in the next three to five years? Also, how would I be benefited by the tax exemption on interest paid? Thanks in advance for your suggestions.**

A house is NOT a short-term investment. It is a place you live, and if you get lucky, you make money in the long-run. Even in the best of circumstances, you aren't going to make money selling after a year — selling costs and taxes will likely eat that all up. So fercrissake, don't panic and sell! Live. Enjoy. Housing markets are historically

cyclical. No one knows what will happen in three to five years to housing values.

As far as interest paid: Interest paid month to month on the mortgage on your residence is deductible. So is interest paid at closing (i.e., points) in the year it was paid. This is pretty simple, but there is some fine print. (And any decent piece of tax prep software or a half-competent tax preparer can quickly explain it to you, too.)

**How are the costs for building materials now and in the foreseeable future? Builders have been giving us high estimates, citing increased material shortages and high costs. We wanted a house built with an insulated concrete form, but the price of cement was sky high. We then considered a stick-built home. But lumber prices**

**and other materials, such as drywalls, have also been sky high. Of course, labor costs also have been quite high. When might material costs be stabilized or reduced? When will builders be affected by a slowdown in the housing market, which seems to be well on its way in the D.C. metro area?**

Building material costs have soared over the last year — up 20 or 25 percent. There are lots of factors to blame — materials shortages and soaring energy costs among them. (You would be surprised at how much energy it requires to make the cement that goes into concrete.) And these things are affected by factors far, far outside the Beltway — as long as an unprecedented building boom continues in China, don't expect that a leveling in construction in Fairfax will result in lower material costs.

As far as labor costs, the other day, the Wall Street Journal ran a story saying some remodeling contractors in some parts of the country are cutting their estimates because of business slowdowns. But guess what? I'm really still not seeing that here. I mean, first contractors have to be willing to return phone calls asking for estimates, right?

**I have experienced trouble selling my one-bedroom condo in Columbia Heights. I have it priced well below other units in the building that sold for thousands more about six months ago. Still, mine won't sell. Is there a glut of condos on the D.C. market?**

Yes, there does seem to be a bit of a glut right now — a lot of units are on the market. You may have to be patient. Perhaps you want to discuss with your agent (if you have

one) how to make your unit stand out amid the competition.

**I bought a house six months ago in D.C. I am currently sharing it with another person on a rental basis. The deal is that he will pay all utilities, so I changed the bills to his name. If I want to sell the house after two years how can I prove that I was living in it so that I avoid paying the taxes?**

There are many, many other documents that help establish that a home is your primary residence. Make sure that's the address on your driver's license, auto registration and voter's registration. Those three are probably better proof than a utility bill. Also make sure it's the address where your bank and credit card bill you.

Continued on page E34



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# CONDOLiving

## Live Online

Continued from page E33

### We have some savings; should we invest in real estates now or wait until the market goes down?

You have to look at the individual investment that you are considering. But the old stock market wisdom applies to real estate, too: Buy low, sell high.

**Which state is better to live in, Virginia or Maryland? My husband is getting transferred to Andrew's Air Force Base and we are interested in purchasing a home. There are only the two of us. The cost of housing seems extremely high in comparison to Phoenix. We are used to a commute time of 60 minutes. Would D.C. be an option as well? Where do you recommend liv-**

**ing? Please advise. Thank you!**

Ah, the Virginia-Maryland-D.C. question! There is no clear winner - all three have their partisans. You can get into long, long discussions here about the topic. If you're working at Andrews, Maryland may be more convenient. (Especially while construction on the Wilson Bridge continues.) And the more affordable parts of Maryland will be the most convenient, actually. But if you're a city person, you may love D.C., which is a shortish hop down the Suitland Parkway.

**My husband and I are trying to buy a condo in south Arlington but are having trouble really figuring out what we can afford. I know lenders base what you can "afford" on your gross income, but - let's be honest - many people take home nearly 40 percent less than that**

**given retirement and taxes. Aside from making a budget and charting regular expenditures, is there any baseline recommendation for what percentage a reasonable mortgage should be of "take home" salary?**

You have the first steps: Making a budget and charting regular expenses. You may be able to pay all your other expenses on top of 40 percent of your take-home pay, or you may not be able to. But those lender guidelines on ratios - FHA allows up to 29 percent of your gross for housing expenses, and up to 41 percent for all debt - have stood a lot of people in good stead for a long time.

**My impression is that condo prices have started to fall in D.C. Is there any evidence to back this up?**

The numbers from MRIS (the

multiple listing service) actually show that median prices continue to go up, in the D.C. condo market and in most of the region. Those same numbers also show inventory of property for sale way, way up. That should affect prices, but...

**My landlord just bought our apartment for \$625,000. He rents it out to us for \$2,200. Condo fees in the building are \$600 and I estimate that he must have at least another \$200 a month in other taxes and expenses. That means that our net rent is only \$1,400 a month. If he had a 5.5 percent 20 percent down 30-year mortgage, he would be paying an extra \$1,500 a month out of his own pocket.**

I suspect that he is using an interest-only ARM. This would mean that his cash flow is still negative, only to a slightly lesser degree. It also means

**that his payments are about to go up, and he will probably soon be dipping into his pocket to the tune of \$2-3k or worse. If he has negative equity in the condo, how long would you expect he'll keep doing this?**

**Do you think it's possible that he will default? If so, would the mortgage company respond by increasing interest rates and down payment requirements? Would this then cause more ARMs to default and lessen the pool of potential buyers. Honestly, I think we are in a really bad position here; I know a lot of people expect a small fall, but I see a small fall, triggering a cycle where higher interest rates lead to more defaults, which lead to higher interest rates, etc. What do you think people like my landlord will do if prices start dropping and interest rates start rising?**

Continued on page E36

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## CONDOLiving

### Live Online

Continued from page E34

I think they'll try to sell, or try to ride it out. If those don't work, then yes, foreclosure is an option. And if that scenario is repeated often enough, it could get messy.

#### Any thoughts on part-time Realtors?

I'm sure there are some very professional and successful part-timers out there. That said, it is almost an iron-clad rule that a full-timer is going to better be able to represent your interests. After all, the part-timer has another job to attend to.

#### Are homes staying on the market longer than they were last year? A friend said it took her a long time to sell her Georgetown condo. And are there still crazy bidding wars?

Time-on-market stats seem to be showing that, yes, on average, homes are remaining on the market a bit longer. We're certainly hearing less about frenzied bidding wars, but that doesn't mean they have gone away completely — if there's a desirable, well-priced home in a submarket and price class without a lot of excessive inventory, yes, there can still be multiple bids, real estate agents have been telling our reporters.

#### I've read on the Internet that our housing market will drop 20 percent by the end of this year. Do you think this can be true? Thanks for your advice.

20 percent is a very, very steep drop, if what you mean is prices. If what you mean is sales volume, well, I guess that's less preposterous. And, of course, you can read ANYTHING on the Internet.

#### I have lived in an emerging neighborhood for over three years — Petworth in Northwest D.C. I see drastic change occurring around me. How does the real estate professional population view this area of the District?

As you've found, it can take a long time for a neighborhood to "emerge." What happens to yours depends on what happens to the city, whether people continue to see it over the long term as an attractive place to live.

#### Unfortunately, my wife and I bought in the spring of 2005 when the market

was insane! I believe that we overpaid for our townhouse in Centreville. It is only two bedrooms, but by the time we go to sell it it will be very beautiful. We paid \$375K for our townhome built in 1990. Is there any chance that in the next three to four years the market will encourage someone to buy this kind of property for over \$400K? Because sometimes I think that I should just get rid of it now and rent something cheap and save money because ultimately that way I will have more money in my savings account.

Calm down, folks, calm down!!! Live in your house and enjoy it. Do NOT panic sell, especially after holding a property for such a short term. The real estate commissions alone could kill you!

I recently got married, and we have begun to clean up our credit. Because we are aggressively paying down our debt, the dings on our credit will be cleared in about six months. We are looking to purchase a condo (hopefully) at the end of the year.

Fortunately, it is a new development, which will break ground this year, but will not be delivered until 2007. Because we have been fixing our credit, we do not have a lot of money in the bank. What do you think about interest-only mortgages?

I think interest-only mortgages could be perilous in your situation. Face it, you will be stretched. You will already have a big mortgage because you have a small down payment. And you face the possibility of higher payments, soon.

#### Why are you so skeptical about the possibility of prices falling dramatically?

Why am I skeptical? Because I tend to moderation in most things. I never believed that the market would grow to the sky forever.

I also don't believe it will crash as precipitously as some people seem to believe. Of course, I always admit I could be dead wrong.

I bought a condo two years ago on a 5/1 adjustable-rate mortgage and I am thinking about selling. I never planned on staying in it past five years. Should I wait a year or two before I sell or should I sell it now?

If you have your two years as principal residence (to avoid capital gains tax), then determine whether selling now fits your lifestyle choices and financial needs. No crystal ball, remember?



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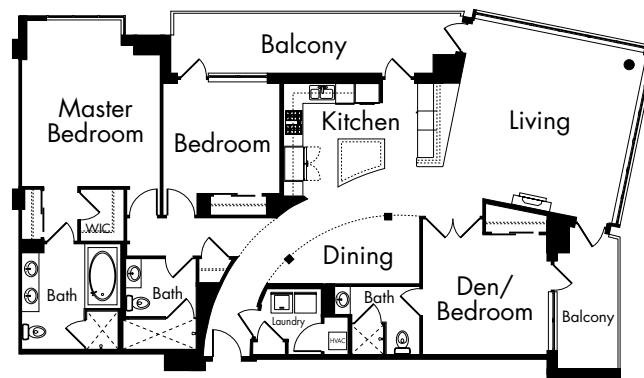
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