

Santa Monica Daily Press

A newspaper with issues

DAILY LOTTERY

7 15 24 43 44
Meganumber: 22
Jackpot: \$66M

SuperLOTTO

6 20 27 37 43
Meganumber: 22
Jackpot: \$25M

4 16 22 29 35

DAILY 3

MIDDAY: 5 7 6
EVENING: 6 8 0

1st: 05 California Classic
2nd: 04 Big Ben
3rd: 03 Hot Shot
RACE TIME: 1:41.39

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery website. Visit the California State Lottery website at: <http://www.calottery.com>

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ In Mont-de-Marsan, France, Christophe Fauviat, 46, was sentenced to eight years in prison in the death of a young tennis player who ingested a sports drink Fauviat admitted to spiking with a tranquilizer. Fauviat said he spiked 27 young players' drinks before their tournament matches against his son Maxime and his rising-star daughter Valentine.

■ Dieterich Doerfler Sr. was arrested in Seminole County, Fla., in March and charged with shredding his adult son's child pornography collection, which police said he did in order to help the son avoid a probation violation.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 130th day of 2006. There are 235 days left in the year.

On May 10, 1869, a golden spike was driven at Promontory, Utah, marking the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the United States. In 1775, Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys captured the British-held fortress at Ticonderoga, N.Y.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Creative minds always have been known to survive any kind of bad training."

ANNA FREUD
AUSTRIAN-BORN PSYCHOANALYST (1895-1982)

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The promenade's final drag?



Alejandro Cesar Cantarero II/Daily Press

WHEN THERE'S NO SMOKE, THERE'S FIRE: Steve Zawatsky, 45, a former Santa Monica resident now living in the Valley, lights up on the Third Street Promenade. Some smokers are upset that a proposed ban could put an end to smoking here and in other public places.

City Council looks into expanding ban on public smoking

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

THIRD STREET PROMENADE — Smokers beware: The next time you light up here, you could be breaking the law.

Like the city's parks, beach and the Santa Monica Pier before it, the promenade could soon be off limits to smokers if the City Council decides to extend its ban on smoking in public.

The idea of a complete ban on the promenade, as well as in outdoor dining areas, movie theater lines, ATMs and all doorways is currently being studied by the City

Attorney's Office at the request of the council. The investigation follows a report from the California Air Quality Board that second-hand smoke is a dangerous and potentially deadly toxin that should be regulated on the same level as benzene, a known carcinogen.

City Hall has been at the forefront of the move to protect the public's health from second-hand smoke. It was the first city to enforce a statewide ban passed in 1998 on smoking in restaurants and bars. Shortly after that, City Hall prohibited smoking in public parks. That soon spread to the pier, beach, bus stops and within 20 feet of all public buildings.

If caught, violators can be fined as much as \$750. Smokers are usually given a warning before a cita-

See **SMOKING**, page 5

STATE

California wine is a risky liquid asset

BY MICHELLE LOCKE

Associated Press Writer

NAPA, Calif. — As investments go, wine's a risky liquid asset.

A slip of the hand can send hundreds of dollars crashing to the floor. Fire, flood or a simple power outage can ruin a rare vintage.

Even for those wines that stay safely tucked in their cellars, the cost of buying, selling and storing the stuff make it a questionable investment, say some economists.

None of which makes much of an impression on someone who's been bitten by the wine collecting bug.

"There's a lot of different reasons to do it," said wine collector John Cobus, who works in real estate banking in Southern California. "For me, it's a combination of using my real estate skills and talking with growers and being out in the countryside. It's just a vast education."

Cobus is hardly the first person to be sold on his cellar. One of America's first wine authori-

See **WINE**, page 6

SM public schools making the grade

BY KEVIN HERRERA

Daily Press Staff Writer

MAIN LIBRARY — The state of Santa Monica public schools is strong, with students from all grade levels making significant strides in academic achievement, according to a report from leaders of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

During a forum held Monday

entitled "The State of Our Schools: How Are We Doing?," parents learned that although California public school students rank dead last in English and second to last in math nationwide, SMMUSD is home to two of the top 300 high schools in the country, according to Newsweek, with a graduation rate of 98 percent, district officials said.

On top of that, student test scores

Student test scores have jumped by 33 percent overall compared to last year.

have jumped by 33 percent overall compared to last year, with the strongest gains coming from socio-economically disadvantaged students at 56 percent. Additionally, scores among Latinos improved by 52 percent, and scores among African Americans improved 46 percent.

"Growing up in Arkansas, we had a saying about our schools, and that was, 'Thank God for Mississippi,'" joked interim superintendent Mike Matthews about the level of government funding. "Now we say, 'Thank God for California,' because funding has changed that much. We're basically dead last."

But despite the odds, SMMUSD is making gains, much of which is credited to dedicated faculty, an active community and a City Council that has agreed to steadily fund the district in times of financial crisis that would normally force

See **SCHOOLS**, page 6

Sands of time



Fabian Lewkowicz/Daily Press

In preparation for summer and SoCal's dry season, a tractor gathers sand to fill the Pico storm drain where stormwater run-off flows during the winter.

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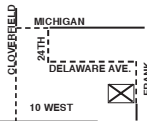
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HOROSCOPES

Ever playful, Gemini

Santa Monica Daily Press



JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS The stars show the kind of day you'll Have:
★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★-Average ★★-So-so ★-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ What you were sure of -- be it a person, goal or situation -- could become convoluted. Think in terms of gains and growing. A partner inspires ideas and helps you move in a new direction. Tonight: Easy does it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Pace yourself and double-check facts. Someone who acts as if he or she is in charge might be confusing or the source of a mix-up. Being sincere and honest could help you work with others. Think positively despite all the red flags. Tonight: Keep smiling.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ Your playfulness easily could be misunderstood. Perhaps a little less exaggeration and a little more decorum will draw positive results. You might cause a hassle out of the blue. Investigate your options. Tonight: Ever playful.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★ Someone or a situation could disappoint you. Anchor in and understand what a partner wants. You might need to make a choice between two people or two situations. Know who butters your bread. That will be the smart choice. Tonight: Happiest at home.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ Keep talking and opening up to others. You might be surprised, and at some point disappointed, by what someone else says. You might want to move a project ahead, and others might undermine you. Be diplomatic if you want to succeed. Tonight: Meet a friend at a favorite haunt.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Reach out for others and listen to the other side of the question. You might want or need to spend some money in order to get much-needed feedback. Not everything is as it appears to be, especially in your daily life. Tonight: Seek feedback.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ You might be able to move mountains because of your creativity and high energy. Your perspective changes considerably because you are willing to put yourself on the line. A partner or associate is difficult. Tonight: You're top dog.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ The slower the pace, the better off you are. Think through a question more carefully. Review a personal matter involving an important relationship. See what happens if you relax and let your feelings and instincts flow. Tonight: Take some well-deserved personal time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ Friends point the way. Still, you could be confused by someone in your daily life and what he or she says. You might want to lighten up and just focus on what you want. That would be the most successful path right now. Tonight: Wherever you want to be.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Taking charge works for you better than many. Though there might be ambivalence about a risk, you may decide to go with it anyway. Money could easily drip through your fingers. You don't want that -- do you? Tonight: A force to be reckoned with.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ You might want to do something very different. Laugh and relax with those in your life. Someone at a distance could make a big difference in your choices. Smile and relax with news. Nothing is impossible. Tonight: Read between the lines.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Work with others and deal with the basics. A lot of the information you get could be off, or you might not be getting all the facts. Confirm everything you hear. Brainstorm and be willing to share more of your thoughts. Tonight: Dinner for two.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS



Photo courtesy

Shotgun House to be highlighted this week

By Daily Press staff

The Santa Monica Conservancy's third lecture in its annual lecture series highlights a unique and endangered historic building known as the Shotgun House, built in the 1890s and designated as a Santa Monica landmark in 1999.

The lecture, to be held on Thursday, May 11, at 7 p.m. at the Santa Monica Public Library, will explore the house's historical significance to the development of Santa Monica. The presentation will be given by graduate students in USC's historic preservation program, taught by professor and conservancy board president Ken Breisch. The Shotgun House has been the subject of their case study in historical research.

A modest and small-scale structure, the wood-frame, one-story house has generated community support as its survival has been threatened more than once, conservancy board members said. Marked for demolition in 2002, the house has survived two temporary moves, one to the Santa Monica Airport and in November of 2005 to a vacant piece of city-owned land. The Santa Monica Conservancy is working hard to find a permanent home and to have the house restored in order to maintain it as a cultural resource with a new creative public use.

The Shotgun House derived its name from the fact that the design of the simple structure — one-story, one-room wide and two or three rooms deep, one behind the other — would allow a gunshot to enter through the front door and exit the back door without ever touching a wall. Around the turn of the century, more than 200 such cottages inhabited the area close to the beach, marking a time in Santa Monica's history when laborers lived in them and tourists used them as temporary housing. The affordable and quick set up of the houses made them popular. As a result, the Shotgun House chronicles an important part of Santa Monica's history as it grew from its identity as a frontier town into a prosperous city, conservancy board members said.

The lecture takes place in the second floor multi-purpose room of the new Main Library at Sixth Street and Santa Monica Boulevard. Parking is \$1 per hour in the library parking structure. For more information call the Santa Monica Conservancy at (310) 485-0399 or visit www.smconservancy.org.

This program is not sponsored by the Santa Monica Public Library.

'Love Letters' open to the public

By Daily Press staff

A play will be performed in Santa Monica that will raise money for a local social service group.

The CLARE Foundation, a social service group with 11 locations on the Westside, will host "Love Letters" by A.R. Gurney for one night.

See BRIEFS, page 7

CORRECTION — In the May 9 edition, a Web site address in David Pizarra's "What's the Point?" column was incorrect. The correct address is www.kellyforassembly.com.

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JUNE MOUNTAIN
CLOSED

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN
NEW SNOW 0" BASE DEPTH 156"-180" LIFT HOURS 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM RUNS OPEN 50 LIFTS OPEN 7/28
CONDITIONS: MACHINE GROOMED, SPRING

MOUNTAIN HIGH
CLOSED

MT. BALDY
NEW SNOW 0" BASE DEPTH 12" - 18" LIFT HOURS 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM RUNS OPEN 20 LIFTS OPEN 3/4
CONDITIONS: MACHINE GROOMED, SPRING

SNOW SUMMIT
CLOSED

SNOW VALLEY
CLOSED

SURF CONDITIONS WATER TEMP: 59°

SWELL FORECAST (3-4 FT)
TODAY IT LOOKS LIKE BOTH NW AND SW SWELLS WILL BACK OFF WITH WEST-FACING BREAKS SEEING SOME CHEST HIGH SETS, MORE LIKE WAIST HIGH FOR SOUTH-FACING BREAKS.

LONG RANGE SYNOPSIS
SW CREEPS IN SATURDAY, BUT BETTER ON SUNDAY...

TIDE FORECAST FOR SANTA MONICA

DAY	TIDE	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT
SATURDAY	LOW TIDE	5:20AM	-1.17FT	4:27PM	1.87FT
	HIGH TIDE	11:49AM	3.67FT	10:46PM	6.18FT
SUNDAY	LOW TIDE	6:10AM	-0.93FT	5:01PM	2.31FT
	HIGH TIDE	12:52PM	3.33FT	11:24PM	5.77FT
MONDAY	LOW TIDE	1:35AM	1.47FT	1:17PM	0.88FT
	HIGH TIDE	7:14AM	3.85FT	7:46PM	4.79FT
TUESDAY	LOW TIDE	2:09AM	0.92FT	1:41PM	1.09FT
	HIGH TIDE	7:59AM	3.84FT	8:04PM	5.11FT
WEDNESDAY	LOW TIDE	2:42AM	0.41FT	2:05PM	1.31FT
	HIGH TIDE	8:41AM	3.80FT	8:25PM	5.41FT
THURSDAY	LOW TIDE	3:14AM	-0.03FT	2:29PM	1.54FT
	HIGH TIDE	9:22AM	3.74FT	8:47PM	5.67FT
FRIDAY	LOW TIDE	3:48AM	-0.40FT	2:54PM	1.77FT
	HIGH TIDE	10:04AM	3.65FT	9:13PM	5.87FT

The Q Line PROUDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Pssst, do you want to sign a marijuana petition? Santa Monicans have been asked that question in recent weeks, as the Santa Monicans for Sensible Marijuana Policy is gathering signatures in the hopes of placing a measure on the November ballot that would make the drug's criminal enforcement a low priority.

Top police officials have already come out in opposition to the measure.

So this week, Q-Line wants to know: **Do you feel laws against personal marijuana use should be strictly enforced, or should police focus their attention elsewhere?**

Call (310) 285-8106 before Friday at 5 p.m. and we'll print your responses in the weekend edition.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Education salaries lacking

Editor:

First of all, I hope my neighbors and colleagues — as well as your readers — will forgive my tardiness in responding to Jim Jaffe's letter to the editor (SMDP, April 25, page 4). I was trapped on Catalina Island with 58 fifth graders for several days and unable to access the Internet.

Jim laments the apathy of some citizens and voters in holding their elected officials accountable for their actions. Well Mr. Jaffe, you've got no one to blame but yourself on that one. You yourself have been so diligent, so tirelessly and remarkably alert to the actions of the SMMUSD Board of Education for at least three decades that I am aware of, many folks simply shrug their shoulders and sigh, "Jim'll take care of it" or "Jaffe's got our back."

It is an effect that I have seen coast to coast in this middle-aged democracy of ours. Too many citizens worn down by the everyday wear and tear of making a living and ends meet, depending upon the occasional rare individual who seems to get up every morning determined to preserved the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of all his or her neighbors.

I'd just like to say publicly, "Thank you, Jim Jaffe."

My second point references Jim's point about the expansion of administrative pay. Now I'm all for administrators making every penny they can — Lord knows they earn it. Besides many are former colleagues, and I'm all for anyone and everyone in public education including secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, grounds keepers, etc., making enough money to be able to live in the community they serve so well. However, I am vice president of the Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers' Association (SMMCTA), and must confess a special interest to the needs of teachers.

To wit: From 2001 through 2005, state Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) from the state of California ran at a little better than 18 percent. Our teachers in Santa Monica received only 13 percent of that increase. Therefore, on New Year's Eve last, they were effectively working for 5 percent less than they had on Sept. 1, 2001. You may have noticed that gasoline, goods, rent — a great many things have increased dramatically over that time period.

This is made all the more troubling by the fact that the school board is sitting on top of a budget reserve of well over \$10 million. The state-mandated reserve is \$3.4 million. Why are they refusing to reward their other employees — besides the administrators — who also deserve better compensation?

On top of which, many of my colleagues, myself included, got hit with a \$500-plus increase in the cost of maintaining our family's health benefits — paying to maintain benefits is also a "new" concept this year for SMMCTA. That pretty much negated much of the mid-year increase we did receive, effectively only 1.6 percent of a 4.23 COLA for the year. Long-term substitute teachers lost their right to gain medical benefits for their families for reasons that have never been explained to me.

When the city and board go to the voters asking them to approve a bond measure for the district, they never fail to laud our excellent staffs and the need to hire and retain the best available teachers. But when it's time to ante up, teachers are left 5 percent short of where they were five years ago.

This bait and switch tactic needs to end. The board doesn't need a \$10 million cushion.

My thanks for your time and patience in these and all related matters.

Marc J. Sanschagrin
Vice President
Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers'
Association

Love works when time's short

THE
WITNESS STAND

BY CLIFF NICHOLS

Have you seen them? There are billboards appearing all over town that say something like, "6 + 6 + 06. The signs are all around you." Is this intended to mean that the Anti-Christ is now among us? If so, that could be important, don't you think? At minimum, it could affect what we put in our day-planners in the future. Time may be in shorter supply than we thought.

We all know time is in short supply anyway, but we soon forget it. We get busy with the doing of whatever the day has in store, and then are only too glad when it's over and we can get back to our homes. Then what? We eat and turn on the TV. Then we go to sleep, and that day is over. In the middle of it all and even if we assume the Anti-Christ's appearance may be delayed due to traffic, most of us rarely reflect upon the certainty that one more day in our lives is gone forever, and will never be recaptured. If we did, might we contemplate more carefully whether or not it was spent well?

Assume an average life span of 70 years. That comes to 25,550 days that most of us can anticipate spending on this earth. Sounds like a lot, especially to a newborn. But not if you're 50. At that point you have already spent 18,250 days and only have 7,300 left. And if the billboard is correct and the beast is soon to make his debut, maybe less. When viewed from that standpoint, would it not make sense to start considering those days that remain as increasingly precious? Doesn't the question then become how should they be spent, so that at the end we can know they were well spent?

The answer to that question, I guess, depends on our priorities. Say, for example, if you're into acquisition, I suppose that you would consider your days well spent if you are the richest SOB on the block, the city or maybe even the nation when you die. Who knows? If you're really good enough at it you may even get either a statue or freeway overpass named in your honor after you are gone. But even that won't allow you to escape the irony that all you will have acquired will go to others who will most likely have done little, if anything, to deserve it, and worse yet, who may even abuse the privilege it affords them by living lives that openly mock your memory. In that regard, Paris Hilton comes to mind. Don't you know Conrad would have been proud to know that all his life's work and the money it brought him ultimately resulted in making Paris' haughty lifestyle, not to mention the popularity of her XXX video, possible? Don't you think if he were to know that it would just warm the cockles of his heart?

Others, however, may suspect there is a better way. And the suspicion seems to increase the older, and hopefully wiser, one gets. Wealth is elusive, and relationships based upon it are hardly friendships to be cherished. True bonds established between us and the people who are put in our

lives are what increase the value of life, and I have come to believe they can only be predicated on one thing, and one thing only: love.

The fruits of our choice to express to others a love that comes from our hearts are many. We see it in some people's devotion to one another, their deference to other's feelings, their willingness to provide for the needs of others, their offering of a blessing to those who have abused them, their rejoicing when others are blessed, and their compassion to weep with those who are experiencing sorrow. Love never pays back evil for evil and always respects what is right in the sight of all men. Those who love others, so far as it depends on them, are at peace with all. They are people who seem determined to overcome evil with good. Not only do they live lives that reflect an abhorrence of what is evil, but they in fact seem to cling to what is good. The older I get, the more I see that it is the people who have molded their lives to conform to these principles who not only have lives worth living, but whom, in the estimation of all around them, have lives of worth.

We get busy with the doing of whatever the day has in store, and then are only too glad when it's over and we can get back to our homes.

People who have allowed a love for their fellow man to become ingrained in their heart, and who have also acquired the personal freedom to allow that love to be expressed to others seem to be the people who more and more I want to emulate as my time grows shorter. More often than not, they do not appear to be people who are angry, hurtful, jealous, prideful or arrogant, but rather are patient, kind, long-suffering, humble and hopeful to and with all those around them. They smile and wave when they see you; they hug you when they say good-bye; they mean it when they tell you they hope to see you again real soon. And, in between now and then, you just know in your heart they are busy doing something to make your life better. Perhaps that is why when they are gone their absence seems so much more notable. Perhaps that is why the longer I live the more I seek to be like them. It seems so much better than leaving those who remain after I'm gone just a note telling them where to find the key to my safety-deposit box and hoping that I remembered to ask them to please try to not use the contents thereof to finance their starring role in a XXX video. Even though Lucifer's Beastly Boy might find it entertaining, from everything I've read about the likely success of his anticipated global ambitions, I really don't think the movie will have a very long run.

(Cliff Nichols is an attorney practicing criminal defense/entertainment law in Santa Monica. He may be contacted at either 310-917-1083, cliff@cliffnicholslaw.com or www.cliffnicholslaw.com. You may join his blog at www.thedailystand.com.)

Bitch!
Whine!
Complain!

Check out our Q-Line™ question on Page 3.

Santa Monica Daily Press

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Some say ban may be bad for local business

SMOKING, from page 1

tion is issued, according to Deputy City Attorney Adam Radinsky.

"At first we were ridiculed, but the rest of the country soon followed our lead," said Radinsky, who is studying other smoking bans and will make recommendations for the council to consider in the coming weeks.

Radinsky said as of today, he is leaning in favor of recommending a full ban on the promenade, but he says providing designated smoking areas could be an option.

"The federal authorities really say there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke," said Radinsky. "In a 2004 study it was found that second-hand smoke in outdoor patios was just about equal to indoor levels."

There is some concern from business owners that a complete smoking ban on the promenade would drive away visitors, particularly tourists from other countries where smoking is still allowed in bars and restaurants.

Some also questioned how City Hall would educate the public about the ban, if it were approved, and how it would pay for the posting of signs, which would have to be in multiple languages.

"Tourists are looking for places where their freedoms aren't curtailed ... We could be shooting ourselves in the foot if we go with a blanket ban," said Barbara Bryan, owner of the Interactive Cafe and a member of Bayside District Corp.'s board of directors. Bayside is a public-private management company that advises City Hall on matters dealing with downtown.

"We need to be sensitive to this large segment of visitors to our city and not come across as having this American arrogance," Bryan added.

The Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce and the Conventions and Visitors Bureau have not taken official positions on a smoking ban at the promenade or other areas, according to the directors of both organizations. The chamber is currently analyzing responses from its members on a survey asking for their thoughts.

Misti Kerns, president of the bureau, said a ban "may not provide for a welcome feel" to tourists, with the enforcement and fines becoming potentially "upsetting for people, particularly foreigners."

"What about people who live and work here?" Kerns asked. "This is not tourism specific ... If Santa Monica prohibits smoking in certain areas, we have a responsibility to provide areas where people can smoke and to provide ashtrays to allow people ... to dispose of their cigarettes in appropriate receptacles, most particularly where there is a higher concentration of customers."

Radinsky said there are concerns about how bans will affect business on the promenade, but so far there is no research to support that fear.

"After the ban on smoking in bars, we heard from plenty of bar owners who were concerned about business, but that hasn't happened," Radinsky said. "In fact, we've talked with smokers who said they actually enjoy being able to go into a bar and enjoy the atmosphere without all the smoke."

According to Medical News Today, smoking among adults in California has dropped 33 percent since the smoking ban in restaurants and public buildings was introduced, putting the number of smokers in the state at around 14 percent.

News of the potential ban hit some promenade smokers hard.

"What do are they going to do, charge for air?" said Steve Zawatsky, who was smoking a cigarette on the promenade Tuesday.

"I think it's ridiculous," said Golda Ferguson, who moved from Atlanta recently and said she is still getting used to not smoking in bars. "By them putting all these restrictions, they're making us feel like second-class citizens. It's like they're telling me how to live my life."

Vikki Ridley, a smoker from London who works at one of the vendor carts along the promenade, feels the ban is unfair for employees like her who can't stray too far from their merchandise but still require a cigarette break.

"I think it's going to be bad for business," Ridley said as she lit a cigarette. "People often come buy things from the carts because they're standing outside smoking."

Ridley said she is all for protecting people's health, but she doesn't understand why smoking outdoors in the breeze causes much of a health risk.

"The time has come. This is not only good for public health, but it's good for businesses as well."

ROBERT BERGER
HEALTHIER SOLUTIONS INC.

"I guess it's all about the attitudes," she said. "In England, you can still smoke freely. Here, smokers are made to feel like total outcasts."

That's too bad, says Robert Berger of Healthier Solutions Inc., a Santa Monica-based company that has been heavily involved over the last six years in the fight to prohibit smoking in public spaces.

"People who choose not to smoke shouldn't have to breathe in other people's smoke. It's that simple," Berger said. "Santa Monica has so much going for it as a tourist destination that we think that far outweighs anyone's need to smoke."

Berger said he would love to see a world without tobacco, but realizes that may not happen in his lifetime. However, he believes the steps Santa Monica is taking are courageous and far overdue.

"The time has come," Berger said. "This is not only good for public health, but it's good for businesses as well."

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