

San Diego: Scandals

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"We couldn't stake that claim anymore," said Gina Lew, the city's director of public and media affairs. "We were taking too many hits."

The San Diego Union-Tribune recently asked readers to coin a new slogan, saying "America's Finest" had turned "creaky." Among the nearly 500 responses: "Scandalicious," "An Eruption of Corruption," "All Major Unmarked Bills Accepted Here," and "Bunglers by the Bay."

Lew said the title was erased from the Web site in August in response to the federal investigation of the city's finances.

The investigation led to the resignation of Mayor Dick Murphy in April, followed days later by the councilmen's conviction for taking bribes in exchange for efforts to allow touching at nude bars.

And just one week ago, Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham resigned from Congress after pleading guilty to pocketing bribes that helped pay for a Rolls-Royce, a yacht named the "Duke-Stür" and antique furniture.

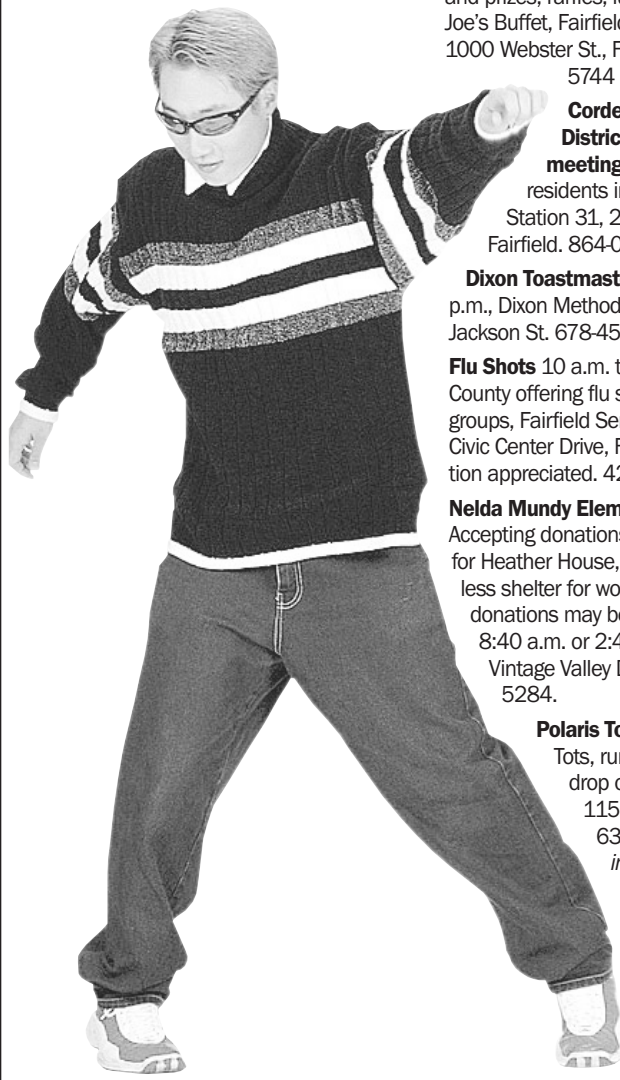
San Diego dubbed itself "America's Finest City" in 1972 — ironically, to get through another rough patch.

The Republican Party had moved its national convention from San Diego to Miami Beach with less than three months notice. There were allegations that the Justice Department dropped an antitrust suit against International Telephone & Telegraph Co. after it pledged \$400,000 to the convention.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

TODAY

Adopt an Angel The Salvation Army, unwrapped gifts collected until Saturday,



1216 Missouri St., Fairfield. 426-6244.

Annual Child Haven Luncheon 11:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Solano County communities to raise funds for preventing child abuse, guests receive ornaments and prizes, raffles, luncheon catered by Joe's Buffet, Fairfield Community Center, 1000 Webster St., Fairfield. \$18. 425-5744 or 421-1197.

Cordelia Fire Protection District Board of Directors meeting 7 p.m., fire district residents invited to attend, Station 31, 2155 Cordelia Road, Fairfield. 864-0468.

Dixon Toastmasters Meeting 7-8:30 p.m., Dixon Methodist Church, 110 N. Jackson St. 678-4583 or 678-2068.

Flu Shots 10 a.m. to noon, Solano County offering flu shots for high-risk groups, Fairfield Senior Center, 1200 Civic Center Drive, Fairfield. \$5 donation appreciated. 429-6291.

Nelda Mundy Elementary School Accepting donations through Dec. 14, for Heather House, temporary homeless shelter for women and children, donations may be dropped off 8:15-8:40 a.m. or 2:45-3:15 p.m., 570 Vintage Valley Drive, Fairfield. 344-5284.

Polaris Toy-Drive Toys for Tots, runs until Dec. 25, drop off at Dixon Polaris, 1150 N First St., Dixon. 631-8166 or e-mail info@dixonpolaris.com.

Sewing Class 9 a.m., sewing machines provided, Suisun City Senior Center,

318 Merganser Dr. 421-7203.

Solano Republican Women Federated Meeting 11 a.m., Rancho Solano Country Club, 3250 Rancho Solano Parkway, Fairfield. \$15 lunch. 425-5959.

Toy Drive Child Haven and Court Appointed Special Advocates Donations of new, unwrapped toys, books, games and gift certificates for books for children, infants through 14 years. Drop off locations: Legends & Heroes at Rancho Solano Golf Course 3250 Rancho Solano Way, the Millennium Club, Paradise Valley golf course at 3990 Paradise Valley Drive, Hopkins Honda & Acura at Auto Mall Parkway and the Fairfield-Suisun Rotary Club, toys collected through Dec. 12. 864-9311.

Vallejo Planning Commission Meeting 7 p.m., 555 Santa Clara St., Vallejo. 648-4326.

Yoga classes Vacaville Community Services Department, 9:30-11 a.m. Mondays and Thursdays, for people 50 and older, promotes physical flexibility, balance, reduces stress and improves health, McBride Center, 91 Town Square Place, Vacaville. Pre-registration required. \$14-\$42. 469-6671.

TUESDAY

An Herbal Christmas Solano Community College Community Services Department, instructor Kami McBride, 6:30-8:30 p.m., create inexpensive Christmas gifts: Bath salts, herbal skin care items, aromatherapy oils, herbal culinary delights, flower oils, and herbal aftershave for men. 4000 Suisun Valley Road, Fairfield. \$30. 864-7115.

California Retired Teachers Association Meeting and Luncheon 11 a.m., guest speaker Mark Sandeen to speak on Medicare D, Green Valley Country Club, Fairfield. \$20. 448-6342.

Dixon community blood drive Drink extra fluids and bring photo I.D., 1-7 p.m., American Legion Hall, 231 1st St., Dixon. 678-2919.

Facial-Spa Lotion Making Classes Vacaville Community Services Department, 6-8 p.m., Making Luscious Lotions Class, lotion for hands, body, and face using simple and pure ingredients; Facial Spa Class, 6-7:30 p.m. Thursday; Pre-registration required. McBride Center, 91 Town Square Place, Vacaville. \$20. 469-6660 or 467-6671.

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Meeting 1 p.m., Christmas luncheon and meeting, door prizes, Jack and Linda's Country Cafe, Banquet room, 2390 N. Texas St., Fairfield. 446-3321.

North Bay Hospice Tree Lighting 6:30 p.m., remember and honor a loved one, North Bay Medical Center, 1200 B. Gale Wilson Blvd., Fairfield. 429-7758.

Registration Deadline for Drum Making/Painting Workshop Vacaville Community Services Department, learn Native American art of making a drum from horsehide and wood, register for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday class, 18 and up, Three Oaks Community Center, 1100 Alamo Drive, Vacaville. \$100. 449-6185.

Pacific Union College: Bachelor's Degree Information Session 5:30-7 p.m., Solano Community College, 100 Building, Room 155, 4000 Suisun Valley Road, Fairfield. 965-6303 or (888) 311-4782 or visit www.finishcollege.org.

Keep us in the know

"Community Calendar" runs daily and includes meetings of interest to the general public as well as community events, fund-raisers, and activities. Write "Community Calendar" on your submission and e-mail it to community@dailyrepublic.net, fax it to 425-5924, or mail it to the Daily Republic, P.O. Box 47, Fairfield, Calif., 94533.

Rodriguez High School Financial Aid and Senior Information Night 7-9 p.m., guest speaker Bob Lortz from Napa Valley College, Rodriguez High School, 5000 Red Top Road, Fairfield. 863-7950.

Solano Employment Connection Resource Fair 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fairfield Community Center, 1000 Kentucky St., Fairfield. 399-4851.

UPCOMING

Selling on eBay for Fun and Profit Class Vacaville Community Services Department, 6:30-9 p.m. Wednesday, research, photographs, timing, auction management and shipping, McBride Center, 91 Town Square Place, Vacaville. \$45. 469-4660 or 469-6671.

Social Dance Classes Open Registration until Wednesday; Beginners I/II, learn to tango, waltz and salsa, 18 and up, 9:30-11 a.m.; Social Dance for Children, ages 7-14 years, 11 a.m. to noon; Saturdays from Dec. 10-28, Three Oaks Community Center, 1100 Alamo Drive, Vacaville. \$60. 449-6185.

▲ **Strictly Dance, 5-5:45 p.m., today, Tiny Tot Hip-Hop Class, 6 and younger, \$30 per month; 6-7 p.m., Gold Hip-Hop-Intermediate Level, \$35 per month; 7:15-8:45 p.m., Strictly Dance Gold Competitive, \$45 per month; 419 Georgia St., Suite 19, Vallejo. 642-2840.**

Video: 15-year-old Vinnie Langdon creates programs on a variety of topics

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vacaville resident involved in television. "He's consistent and has fresh, new shows. Nobody has done that in Vacaville as long and as consistent as he did."

While Langdon works on another comedic short film — "Life Savers," about two teens helping a choking blind man — he's filming shows that will air this month.

From an interview with a Vacaville School Board member to a live taping on New Year's Eve, Langdon will keep his viewers entertained with something new every week in December.

His shows on Channel 27 fill the morning and evening spots with tapings of music groups in local venues and businesses, car shows, historical site documentaries and the grand opening of the police station.

In other shows, Langdon snagged interviews with celebrities including country singer Kevin Sharp and actress

Lalaine Miranda from the "Lizzie McGuire" television show.

Add city and state politicians to his list of shows, such as Assemblywoman Lois Wolk, Vacaville Mayor Len Augustine, former Fairfield Mayor Chuck Hammond and Michael Machado, California state senator.

Langdon even dedicated a show to inform viewers about CALSTAR, the life flight system called California Shock Trauma Rescue.

CALSTAR assisted in transporting Langdon when he had open heart surgery at 2-months-old from North bay Medical Center to Oakland Children's Hospital.

"He has a passion for it," Burger said, alongside the "Life Savers" set — which is a quiet residential street in Vacaville.

"He doesn't give up. You can't give up. You gotta be out here and shoot eight hours of tape and end up having five minutes or less of video... He's OK with the processes needed in this," he added.

When Vinnie knew he wanted to take part in the television and film industry, he didn't waste any time.

At 14, Langdon opted to attend a school that would help him further his goals to work around a camera and a set.

Buckingham Charter has a video production class where Langdon is a director and producer of his school news show.

The school's principal, Bob Hampton, said Langdon is in the right place for his interests.

"For him to pursue his passion, for him to have an outlet, it's a rigorous program that's a great opportunity for him," Hampton said.

And without the help of his family and community members, Langdon said he wouldn't have had such a diverse television show.

"No show is the same," he said. "And it wouldn't have been possible without my supportive friends and family."

Langdon doesn't keep a close track of how much money he's spent for his shows, but says his

parents are very supportive and willing to pay for tapes, DVDs, cameras, editing software, computers and trips to film sites.

Langdon has traveled out of Vacaville and even across the nation to film some of his television show clips, he said.

While on vacation with his parents, Langdon took his camera along and filmed shots in New York, Sacramento and many other places across the state, he said.

His next goal? To put on humorous skits like the show, "Saturday Night Live", make an informative video about how to be a dispatcher with the Vacaville Police Department, and get in touch with more Vacaville restaurants to feature on his show.

Forget Hollywood. Langdon continues to use hometown in Solano County as his film set.

Reach Stephanie Jucar at sjucar@dailyrepublic.net or 427-6955.



VINNIE LANGDON

One variety show of the many . . .

- 2005 Antioch Safety Fair**
- Episode opens with Vinnie Langdon talking about his open heart surgery when he was 2-months-old.
 - To thank the team for saving his life, Langdon dedicated an episode to them.
 - Langdon interviewed folks from CALSTAR in a life flight helicopter.
 - He takes a brief look into the history of the rescue team before giving a few safety tips and chatting with police.

On the web
<http://musicvideoca.tripod.com/vinnielangdonshow/index.html>

Suisun: Plan unclear

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project."

DaSilva expects developer Mike Rice of Main Street Partners will get a better reception than he got two months ago. That was when he asked for a two-month extension, as well as a waiver releasing him from having to come up with a major tenant before moving the project forward.

"Now, it is more of a multi-tenant idea," daSilva said. "There has been a lot more work done with the core project. It is more refined."

Just what those refinements are is not known. Rice could not be reached for comment at his Old Town offices Friday.

The Suisun City-based developer is expected to show more specifics of his revised plan before the council enters closed session to discuss if it will sell Main Street Partners

the Redevelopment's Old Town holdings.

Rice and Frank Marinello of Marinello Real Estate formed Main Street West Partners shortly after getting a deal to exclusively negotiate with Suisun City's Redevelopment Agency.

The city wants the partners to help reinvigorate Main Street's economy with new development on a dozen different parcels the Redevelopment Agency owns.

Main Street West Partners asked for the extension and waiver after efforts to get a single anchor tenant came up empty.

The Suisun City Council meets at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Suisun City Council chamber at 701 Civic Center Blvd.

Reach Ian Thompson at 427-6976 or ithompson@dailyrepublic.net.

Too busy: Time vs. money

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Inc., a Texas-based company with 375 franchises in 48 states and Canada that will put up holiday decorations for 40,000 customers this year, according to Christmas Decor marketing director Brandon Stephens. The company has been adding 30 to 40 franchises and 5,000 to 6,000 customers a year, he said.

For a price, the company will design a Christmas display, install the lights and decorations, take them down after the holidays and store them until the next year. The average initial cost is \$1,500, with the cost going down in subsequent years because the commercial-grade lights already have been purchased.

In Maine, Lucas Tree will put up lights, wreaths, silhouetted Santas and other decorations on about 50 homes and businesses for prices ranging from \$500 to \$10,000. Gendron declined to reveal what he paid, other than to call it a "good value for the money."

Customers include working couples who have little spare time and older folks who don't want to climb ladders, said Chuck Cotton of Lucas Tree. Others don't have the skills or the equipment needed to put up intricate displays.

"It's more a convenience

than anything," he said. "They don't have the time or the ability to do some of the things that we can do."

Hiring people to hang lights was once considered something only the wealthy could afford.

But with the cost of lights going down and companies able to install them in an efficient manner, the jobs are no longer reserved just for the rich, said Virginia Postrel, author of "The Substance of Style," a book that examines the link between aesthetic pleasures and American commerce and culture.

Many people who hire contractors to install Christmas decorations could be described as upper-middle class who simply want nice-looking holiday displays, she said.

"Their time is worth more than their money," Postrel said. "And if you don't have a giant mansion, it's not that expensive of a job."

Brite Ideas Decorating Inc., a national Christmas decoration installation company based in Omaha, Neb., says its distributors will decorate more than 23,000 homes this year — up from just over 1,000 five years ago. Customers include tennis player Andre Agassi, country singer Travis Tritt, boxer Evander Holyfield and basketball player Grant Hill, said Reed Nyffeler, national sales director.

Attack: Trial resumes

From Page One

Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said he survived an assassination attempt as a group of about 60 men armed with pistols, knives and swords tried to attack him while he prayed in a Shiite holy city in southern Iraq.

Allawi, a secular Shiite, said the group wore black uniforms and were chanting slogans against him as they moved toward his delegation at the Shrine of Imam Ali in Najaf. Footage shown on television stations showed Allawi running from the shrine as shoes and stones were thrown at him.

Allawi said at least seven bullets were fired from the crowd.

"They were planning to kill the whole delegation, or at least me," Allawi told reporters shortly after he arrived back in Baghdad. "One of them took out his pistol, but he panicked and it fell from his hand."

Earlier in the day, police said that about a dozen people, some of them carrying clubs, tried to prevent Allawi from entering the shrine. Allawi's bodyguards fired shots in the air to disperse the crowd.

Allawi said Shiite clerics had invited him to the city.

In August 2004, when Allawi was prime minister, Iraqi and

U.S. troops took over Najaf from firebrand cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's followers after heavy fighting. Many Shiites have not forgiven Allawi for his role in the assault.

Meanwhile, unidentified gunmen killed a parliamentary candidate and an Iraqi police commander in separate attacks Sunday. A bomb also detonated as a police patrol passed through central Baghdad, killing three civilians.

The attacks came one day after insurgents killed 19 Iraqi soldiers in a coordinated ambush northeast of Baghdad. On Thursday, 10 U.S. Marines died in the deadliest attack against the military branch in four months.

U.S. and Iraqi officials have been warning of a surge in insurgent attacks ahead of national elections set for Dec. 15.

Saddam's trial resumed Nov. 28, with the deposed leader lashing out at his treatment by American "occupiers and invaders" and lecturing the chief judge.

It then adjourned until today, only 10 days before the country's parliamentary elections, to give the defense time to replace lawyers who have been assassinated since the trial opened Oct. 19.

The slow pace of the proceedings has angered many Iraqis.

California Lottery

Daily 3/Sunday	Daily Derby/Sunday
Afternoon numbers picked 2, 2, 7	1st place 11, Money Bags
Night numbers picked 2, 9, 5	2nd place 10, Solid Gold
Match three in order for top prize; combinations for other prizes.	3rd place 4, Big Ben
	Race time 1:46.52
Fantasy 5/Sunday	Match winners and time for top prize. Match either for other prizes.
Numbers picked 17, 22, 23, 36, 37	
Match all five for top prize. Match at least three for other prizes.	

On the Web: www.calottery.com