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ENJOY READING AND ANALYZING ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

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У посібнику представлено автентичні статті, які відображають сучасний рівень розвитку англomовного суспільства. Статті класифіковано відповідно до лексичних тем, які зазначені у робочій програмі з англійської мови для студентів немовних спеціальностей. Тематика статей відповідає таким напрямкам підготовки як історія, географія, біологія, спорт, образотворче мистецтво.

Посібник адресований викладачам та студентам немовних спеціальностей.

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PREFACE

In recent decades linguists have generated a burst of insight into the representation of language in mind and into the interactions between language use and community social structures. In this book you will uncover a glimpse of language as we now understand it.

“Enjoy Reading and Analyzing English Newspapers” is a developmental skills manual for students of English as a foreign language. While focusing on reading it promotes the development of all language skills. The chief difference of this manual is the inclusion of articles, which cover additional grammar areas that are important at the intermediate level. A major objective of “Enjoy Reading and Analyzing English Newspapers” is to present comprehensive coverage of real-world concepts and equip learners with essential skills. It is divided into units which deal with key specializations of future teachers. Students learn to communicate by analyzing information – not just by reading. The exercises in the book will help you to: employ language and techniques of communication; structure conversations and become more effective; sound confident and positive in most social situations.

We express our gratitude to Shkolyarenko V. I., Danilyuk S. S and Lytvynko O. A, who have offered first-rate reviews for this manual, for a simple acknowledgement must suffice, along with an expression of regret that time and circumstances did not permit us to incorporate all their excellent suggestions.

UNIT I

SPORT

CHINESE BADMINTON PLAYER RETIRES

LONDON - The disgruntled crowd at Wembley Arena booed and loudly urged the now-dishonored badminton players to get off the court. **Yu Yang** of China apparently is going one step beyond that, putting down her racket good; and will hit the shuttlecock no more. She took the step of announcing the move herself through social media – Tencent Weibo – saying goodbye to “dear badminton.”

This came after eight female badminton players from China, South Korea and Indonesia – including Yu and her doubles partner, **Wang Xiaoli** – were kicked out of the Olympic Games by the sport’s international federation Wednesday for seeming tank round-robin matches to get an easier draw in the quarterfinals.

The fallout from the seemingly unprecedented mass disqualification continued. Reports in China added to the intrigue behind the scenes. Team officials said that Wang injured her right knee in the midst of pre-match warmups, causing the highly regarded doubles team to hold back against the South Koreans.

The online badminton publication Badzine ran an article late last year, analyzing match statistics from tournaments in 2011 and concluded: “More than 20 percent of matches is either not finished or not played when Chinese shuttlers play against their own compatriots. Chinese shuttlers met each other 99 times on the circuit this year, and 20 matches were either not played and all (11 walkovers) or played partially before one of the opponents retired (9 retirements)”.

“This shows that 20.20% of matches between Chinese shuttlers were not completed in 2011. These figures have to be put in perspective as China has the largest contingent of players at high level – more than a third of matches played between compatriots (99 of 289 matches) are played between Chinese shuttlers. Never the less, it has raised some questions amongst the badminton community.” – Lisa Dillman

Swimmer Weltz enjoys the ride

If the U.S. swim team were to present a Pierre de Coubertin Award, to

the athlete who most exemplified the Olympic founder's motto that participating in the Games was more important than winning, Scott Weltz would win in a landslide. He placed fifth in Wednesday's final of the 200-meter breaststroke, with **Daniel Gyurta** of Hungary setting a world record. "I feel like a part of history," Weltz said. "I'm just happy with his whole Olympic experience. I don't have any regrets." To say Weltz was a longshot to make the Olympic team would be a severe understatement. He never had won any event in a major meet. He swam four events in the 2008 Olympic trials, finishing 30th, 38th, 65th and 67th.

In 2010, after Weltz had concluded his NCAA career at UC Davis, the school cut its men's swim team. Although Olympic-caliber swimmers generally train with one another, and with a club team, Weltz trailed with the UC Davis women's team. USA swimming did not, include his biography in its media guide for the Olympic trials. Weltz stunned the swimming community by winning the 200 breast, and with it a ticket to the Olympics. "I'm just enjoying the ride," he said. "Obviously, I wanted to medal. But I'm not going to hang my head. I did the best I could. I had fun with it." Before the trials, **Michael Phelps** had no idea who Weltz was. Before Weltz, swam here, Phelps wished him good luck. - Bill Shaikin

Race tightens

Updating the always-fascinating medal race at the Olympics: Heading in to Thursday's action, China led the overall table with 17 golds and 30 medals, and the United States was second with 12 golds and 29 overall and after Thursday? Talk about a dead heat, in terms of gold. The Chinese picked up one gold and the Americans collected six, giving both countries 18. - Lisa Dillman

U.S. WOMEN EARN GOLD

WINSOR, England - After capturing the gold medal four years ago in Beijing the U.S. women's eight filled a bottle with water from the rowing venue and brought it home.

It remained sealed for nearly four years, until the American crew arrived last month at Eton Dorney, the bucolic rowing center where the 2012 Olympic regatta is being held. Once there, they christened their boat with the Chinese water in an effort to infuse some of that previous good fortune.

It apparently worked.

The American women's eight boat beat Canada in a much-anticipated showdown Thursday, winning them U.S.' first rowing gold at these Games and contorting the crew's six-year winning streak.

Covering the course in 6 minutes 10.59 seconds, the United States led the entire racer, Canada finished second after a slow start, and the Netherlands claimed third.

The U.S. crew members – coxswain Mary Whipple and rowers Caryn Davies, Caroline Lind, Eleanor Logan, Meghan Musnicki, Taylor Ritzel, Esther Lofgren, Zsuzsanna Francia and Erin Cafaro – threw up their arms and screamed in celebration after crossing the finish line. Many of them wobbled as they stepped off the boat, their legs shaking like jello from 2,000 meters of sheer exertion.

And though several members joked about the magical powers of their Beijing bottle, they all acknowledged it required more than a few ounces of brownish water to protect a rowing dynasty.

"I think it takes selflessness and the ability to come together as a group," Whipple said. "On the one side, it's just one 2K race. But on the other side, it's the Olympic Games. We just wanted to be up there, look each other in the eye – even though we are facing backward – and just enjoy it, one stroke at a time."

The U.S. boat is unbeaten in major competitions since 2006, though Canada came within .03 of a second of the American crew at the World Cup in Lucerne, Switzerland. In this year's U.S. eight, there are six holdovers from the Beijing Games, two of whom also won silver in 2004.

Having stood atop the podium for the third time, the U.S. is now tied with Romania and the most gold medals in the event.

"That is an American dynasty, baby," said Francia, the Hungarian – born model who has won two Olympic gold medals and four world championships with the U.S. crew. "It's just so special."

A few members of the Canadian boat appeared to have been crying shortly before a post-race news conference, though they insisted they all had shed happy tears. At least two rolled their eyes when asked how they could end America's rowing reign.

"They won't be the same USA team (four years from now) and we won't be the same Canadian team, so you cannot predict anything," said longtime Canadian coxswain Lesley Thompson-Willie, 52, whose silver medal Thursday made her the second-oldest person ever to win a rowing medal.

Canada made a strong final sprint Thursday, as it bested the U.S. boat in the last 500-meter split but still lost by 147 second. Despite a shaky finish by the U.S., Whipple says she never doubted her crew would be adding another medal to its trophy case.

“When we launched, it was game over,” she said. “I felt so much power. When we took our stride, that was beautiful. We were a little high. I just told them to breathe... to be present that whole time. It was magical.”

BILLINGSLEY HAS ANOTHER GOOD EFFORT

“This shows what this team wants to do,” outfielder Shane Victorino said. “It’s about now. We don’t want to wait around.”

The Phillies want more than salary relief in exchange for Lee. They now have the option of holding onto Lee, which is what General Manager Ruben Amaro Jr. told reporters in Philadelphia they would do, or trade him to the Dodgers by Sunday.

Victorino, who was acquired from the Phillies on Tuesday, guessed it would be “tough” for the Dodgers to acquire Lee.

“He’s Cliff Lee,” Victorino said. “The Phillies are going to want a lot for him.”

Major league player involved in a trade would have to first clear waivers, meaning the Dodgers probably won’t be able to offer anyone of value from their active roster. The Dodgers are also short on premium prospects.

Lee is owed about \$7 million for the remainder of this season. He is owed \$25 million annually from 2013-2015 and his contract includes a \$27.5 million option for 2016 that becomes guaranteed if he meets certain performance benchmarks. Lee will be 38 at the end of the 2013 season.

Even before making a play for Lee, the Dodgers added more than \$40 million to their payroll in the previous 10 days by adding Victorino, Hanley Ramirez, Randy Choate and Brandon League. They took on almost \$3 million more Friday when they traded for Blanton.

The Dodgers off-the-field activity overshadowed affine performance on the field. With F.J. Ellis hitting two home runs in a game for the first time in his career, Chad Billingsley winning his third consecutive start and Ramirez driving in a pair of runs, the Dodgers ended a three-game skid to remain half a game behind the first-place San Francisco Giants in the National League West.

Ellis has hit 10 home runs this season, more that he hit in the last four

years combined between the majors and triple. His second homer of the game was to the opposite field.

“I’m waiting for the drug tester to come and find me,” Ellis said, jokingly.

Meanwhile, Billingsley improved to 3-0 since returning from the 15-day disabled list on July 23. Billingsley held the Cubs to a run and four hits over seven innings.

Ramirez, who was 0 for 10 in his first three home games as a Dodger, was two for four. He stretched a single into a double and scored in the fifth inning, then drove in two runs with a single to right-center that knocked Cubs starter Jeff Samardzija out of the game in the sixth.

MORA’S SENDING A NEW MESSAGE

Richard Brehaut missed six games with the broken leg last season. He has yet to prove he can be consistent. Freshmen Jerry Neuheisel and T.J. Millweard are even less experienced than Hundley, who at least has a year of practice under his belt.

Hundley can run at least as well as he can pass. He doesn’t have the strongest arm in the quarterback competition, but his accuracy improved significantly during the spring. His elusiveness as a runner could give the Bruins an effective wrinkle.

UCLA has a new sideline leader in Mora, two new coordinators and, in Hundley, a likely new leader on the field too. That’s one question answered.

Here are six others:

Can the new guys coach?

Highly regarded recruiting classes have not developed into highly respected teams in recent season.

Mora has set a no-nonsense tone. Assistants Adrian Klemm, Demetric Martin and company have shown their recruiting prowess. Offensive coordinator Noel Mazzone is an out-of-the-box thinker. But how will it play on Saturdays?

ULCA went 38 years without firing a head football coach. Athletic Director Dan Guerrero has fired three in 10 years. Bruins fans will have to give Mora two, maybe three season before asking whether the \$11.235 - million (plus incentives) investment was well spent.

Can the Bruins tackle?

The basics have eluded the Bruins at times, as was evident from the 11

white-clad pylons that USC players ran around, over and past in a 50-0 victory last November.

The Bruins gave up 400 or more total yards seven times last season, and 500 or more three times. Arm tackling was too often in vogue. Mora switches to a 3-4 alignment this season, but whether you play a 4-3, a 3-4 or a 1-10, you have to tackle.

Can the Bruins block?

Last year's offensive line produced a solid running game, but the Bruins' pass protection was hit-and-miss-meaning the quarterback was often hit after a lineman missed. There were 29 sacks.

The return of tackle Xavier Su'a - Filo from a Mormon mission is a big help. Guard Jeff Baca is the only other lineman who goes into camp having already won a starting job.

Can the Bruins cover?

The Bruins are thinnest in the secondary, a dangerous thing in a conference that added offensive swashbucklers Mike Leach at Washington State and Rich Rodriguez at Arizona.

Cornerbacks Aaron Hester and Sheldon Price are solid, but there are depth issues. Antony Jefferson, who has battled injuries the past two seasons, could be a key component.

Safety is just as thin. Free safety Tevin McDonald seems ticketed for a big season, but the most experienced strong safeties are Dalton Hilliard, who was moved to running back, and Andrew Abbott, a converted cornerback.

Can Johnathan Franklin do what USC couldn't do in 1986, catch Gaston Green?

Franklin ran for 976 yards last season and 1,127 in 2010. He sits 1,162 yards shy of Green's UCLA career record of 3,731 yards. And he seems well-suited for Mazzone's philosophy of getting players in one-on-one situations.

Can newcomers help?

Freshmen defensive lineman Ellis McCarty was the best bet to play immediately, but he will miss the start of camp after undergoing arthroscopic knee surgery.

Carl Hulick has a good shot at center and tackle Simon Goines will get a long look. Cornerback Ishmael Adams, cornerback Marcus Rios, wide receiver Jordan Payton, linebacker Jeremy Castro and linebacker Aaron Porter could also be in the mix.

BARKLEY ISN'T A LOCK FOR HEISMAN TROPHY

Beginning Sunday

Times staff writer Chris Dufresne takes a daily look at college football's best teams, starting with No. 25 and ending with No. 1

USC is not to blame, nor is Redd. Nor is, really, the NCAA. But this is what happens when you make rules up as you go.

2. The Heisman Trophy is USC quarterback Matt Barkley's to lose, but he can lose it. Remember, last year, the trophy was Stanford quarterback Andrew Luck's to lose, and he lost it to a Baylor quarterback.

Robert Griffin III put instant pressure on Luck's campaign with his breakout performance in Baylor's 50-48, opening-weekend win over Texas Christian.

The opening-week game that could put similar pressure on Barkley: Michigan, with quarterback Denard Robinson, plays Alabama at Arlington, Texas. An RGIII- type performance against the defending national champion on national TV would instantly elevate Robinson's status.

3. Strike up the bans. The one-year bowl penalty imposed on Central Florida this week sets up two games this year in which both schools will be ineligible for the postseason. Central Florida plays at sanctioned Ohio State on Sept. 8, and Ohio State travels to Penn State on Oct. 27.

It should be noted that UCF is appealing its bowl ban. And good luck with that.

4. Zach Mettenberger, the incoming quarterback for Louisiana State, started in college at Georgia. Former Oregon State starter Ryan Katz is at San Diego State throwing passes to onetime USC receiver Brice Butler.

Lache Seastrunk, the highly touted tailback from Texas who got Oregon in an NCAA mess, is eligible this year at Baylor. Connor Wood, a former quarterback at Texas, is at Colorado.

Wisconsin, which last year used North Carolina State transfer quarterback Russell Wilson to win the Big Ten, is counting on Maryland transfer Danny O'Brien. And ex-Notre Dame pass thrower Dayne Crist has joined forces at Kansas with former Irish Coach Charlie Weis.

5. Three teams outside the NFL East capable of ending the Southeastern Conference's six-year BCS title reign:

- USC. History bodes well for the Trojans. This year's BCS title game is in South Florida, where USC scored historic postseason wins in 2002 (Orange

Bowl versus Iowa) and 2004 (BCS title versus Oklahoma).

- Oregon. The Ducks have won three straight Pac-12 Conference titles and played Auburn to a last-second loss two years ago in the title game.

- Oklahoma. You don't have to remind Sooners fans that it's been more than a decade since Bob Stoops won that national title against Florida State.

6. First-year Washington State Coach Mike Leach will pull off at least one significant upset. Best hunches are the opener at Brigham Young, his alma mater, or home games against California (Oct. 13), UCLA (Nov. 10) or Washington (Nov. 23).

7. Jim Mora, UCLA's new sheriff, is moving training camp this year to San Bernardino, where Wild West lawman Wyatt Earp spent part of his life. Earp was famous for his part in the "Gunfight at the OK Corral."

Mora has his hands full with "The Over-the-Wall Gang."

8. When did Steve Spurrier become Chuck Knox? Coaching the Tampa Bay Bandits in the United States Football League, Spurrier once ordered an on-side kick on the opening kickoff. His pass-first Florida offense was called "Fun-and-Gun." Entering his eighth season at South Carolina, though, Spurrier won a school-best 11 games last year with a cloud-of-dust blueprint.

South Carolina finished 95th nationally in passing, but its defense was No. 2 against the pass and No. 3 nationally. The Gamecocks this year will lean on running back Marcus Lattimore, returning from a knee injury.

"If we can't throw it very well, we're not going to try," Spurrier recently said. Who is this guy?

9. School not ranked in USA. Today coaches' preseason top 25 poll that should have been: Utah.

School in the top 25 probably ranked too high: Florida State at No. 7.

10. The Insight Bowl has changed sponsors and will now be called the Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl. Ticket prices, we hear, will range from "mild" to "Jammin' Jalapeno" and "Blazin'.

OLYMPIAN TAX HURDLE

A bill would exempt winners from paying on prizes

WASHINGTON – Getting into the Olympic spirit before leaving for summer recess, lawmakers introduced legislation to exempt U.S. medal winners from paying taxes on their "hard-earned medals."

"Only the U.S. tax code can turn the 'thrill of victory' into the agony of

victory,” Reps. Mary Bono Mack (R- Palm Springs) and G.K. Butterfield (D-N.C.), sponsors of a bill to eliminate the tax, said in a statement.

The issue has caught fire on Capitol Hill since Americans for Tax Reform highlighted Olympic medal winners’ potential tax liability.

Lawmakers from both parties have jumped on the issue.

“Leave it to our government to punish team USA for their success on behalf of all Americans,” Rep. Ted Poe (R-Texas) said on the House floor after the U.S. women’s gymnastics team won gold at the London Games.

On Friday, Rep. Dave Camp (R-Mich.), chairman of the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee, added his influential endorsement to letting Olympians “enjoy their medals and awards without having to worry about whether they can pay the taxes.”

Olympians who win medals also receive a cash prize: \$25,000 for gold, \$15,000 for silver and \$10,000 for bronze from the U.S. Olympic Committee.

A gold medal winner will pay the IRS up to \$8,986, according to the Americans for Tax Reform Foundation. Silver medal winners face a tax of up to \$5,385, and bronze medal winners up to \$3,502, the group says.

But the group’s calculations have generated controversy of their own.

PolitiFact, a fact-checking project of the Tampa Bay Times, noted on its website that athletes can deduct un-reimbursed expenses. “Any accountant worth their salt should be able to get the rate of tax on medal winnings much below \$9,000, and maybe even to zero,” it said.

Americans for Tax Reform responded that its primary claim stands up: the prizes are taxable.

And so Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) introduced the Olympic Tax Elimination Act.

“Olympians who dedicate their lives to athletic excellence should not be punished when they achieve it,” he said.

Ken Johnson, an aide to Bono Mack, added: “For every Michael Phelps, there are hundreds of other U.S. athletes who don’t ‘cash in’ on their fame. This is more about the teenage gymnast who comes home with a \$10,000 tax bill, but can’t write off the cost of a personal trainer.... It’s a simple – and pretty inexpensive way – to say ‘thank you’ for their hard work and sacrifices.”

At Northwestern University School of Law, senior lecturer David Cameron said he’d be surprised if the IRS goes after medalists for taxes on the fair-market value of their gold, silver and bronze medallions. But he

believes the agency does pay close attention to dollar prizes.

“Paying your taxes is not punishment,” said Cameron, associate director of the school’s tax program. “Why should we treat someone who earns \$25,000 by running a race differently than a person who earns \$25,000 by digging a ditch?”

Matthew Gardner at Citizens for Tax Justice also questioned assertions about the potential tax liability medal winners could face. The legislation, he said, would “add to the complexity and loopholes that everyone agrees are a problem.”

“Our revenues are dwindling; the rich pay less and less in taxes every year and the tax code needs reform yesterday,” he said. “With this kind of opportunistic legislation, these lawmakers are part of the problem, not the solution.”

Given the gridlock in Congress, this bill might require legislative gymnastics worthy of a gold medalist to advance.

U.S. GYMNASTS BACK ON TOP

This is only the second team gold for the United States and the first on foreign soil. The other came in 1996 in Atlanta, when Bela Karolyi ran the team. Now Bela’s wife, Martha, is in charge, and Bela gave her his full appreciation. “This is her team,” he said. “It’s all her.”

The Americans were great front-runners in the final. The team competed first on vault. As if destiny wanted a good joke, the first American competitor was Wieber. She had left the same floor in tears two days earlier when her error-filled qualification performance kept her from advancing to the all-around final.

But Wieber landed a solid vault, and the 17-year-old let herself smile when a score of 15.933 was posted. (The maximum score possible on an exercise varies according to difficulty).

Douglas came next and was a little better, soaring through the air, her toes pointed, her knees unflinching on the landing. She earned a 15.966, but that seemed almost nothing after Maroney finished. Even though she is competing with a broken toe, it seemed as if Maroney launched herself so high she might never come down.

And when she did land, a person in the crowd yelled, “Holy Maroney. Her score of 16.233 was, by far, the highest of the night on the apparatus, and

from there no team was ever within a point of the Americans”.

John Geddert, the personal coach for Wieber, said this team gold was some good consolation for Wieber, the defending world all-around champion. She stunningly didn't reach the Olympic all-around final after finishing third among the Americans in qualifying; only two women per country can qualify.

“And this is the best team all-time,” Geddert said. “Others might disagree, the 1996 team might disagree. But this is the best team. Difficulty-wise, consistency-wise, this is USA's finest.”

That 1996 Olympic team earned the name “Magnificent Seven” for its Atlanta performance.

Maroney, the 16-year-old from Long Beach, came up with a name for this team. “Fierce Five,” she said. “We're the fiercest ever and we're all babies.”

Teams can have only five members now, down from 1996's seven, and none of these five is older than the 18-year-old Raisman.

The youngest is 15-year-old Ross, from Aliso Viejo, who kept pretending to take a bite out of her new jewelry. The gold medal seemed almost heavier than Ross. “It feels so fabulous,” she said. “That's a good word, right?”

The Americans have now earned a team medal in six straight Olympics. Only Romania, which has been on the Olympic podium every year since 1976, has a better record.

Floor exercise became a team celebration for the up just before them, imploded. Both Anastasia Grishina and Ksenia Afanaseva had major falls, and by the time Raisman started her dancing, tumbling party, all the U.S. girls were jumping and hugging.

“I was screaming so loud I almost passed out,” Maroney said. Of all the Americans, competitors and coaches, it was Martha Karolyi who was the calmest at the end.

“This is a fantastic achievement,” she said. “But we don't need to get our noses up”.

“We will just keep working hard. Without work, you don't achieve anything.”

THEY'RE ON LITERAL FAST TRACK

Jessica Ennis of Britain, Carmelita Jeter of U.S. highlight strong first day

LONDON — When Britain's Jessica Ennis set an Olympic heptathlon hurdles record Friday morning, she also set the pace for the opening day of

track and field competition.

In the first event at a jampacked Olympic Stadium, she ran the 100-meter hurdles in 12.54 seconds, breaking the Olympic heptathlon hurdles record set by Jackie Joyner-Kersey in 1988. In Friday's finale Tirunesh Dibaba of Ethiopia defended her 10,000-meter Olympic title in a world-leading time of 30 minutes 20.75 seconds, followed by Kenyans Sally Kipyego (30:26.37) and Vivian Cheruiyot (30:30.44) in personal-best times.

Thirteen of the top 14 finishers in the 10,000 ran national-, personal- or season- best times. Americans Amy Hastings at 31:10.69, Janet Cherobon-Bawcom at 31:12.68 and Lisa Uhl at 31:12.80 hit personal bests while finishing 11th, 12th and 13th.

In distances short and long, with hurdles to conquer or nothing between them and the finish line but raindrops, athletes covered ground in astonishingly fast times Friday. "It felt nice," Cheruiyot said of conditions in the stadium. "The wind was very quiet. I enjoyed it."

Besides Ennis, who led the heptathlon through four events, the most eye-opening performance was by Carmelita Jeter of Gardena, whose blazing 10.83 in the first round of the 100 was the fourth-best time in the world this season. Blessing Okagbare of Nigeria ran a personal-best 10.93 in another heat.

Jeter will be joined in Saturday's semifinals by teammates Tianna Madison — whose 10.97 was .01 off her season best — and a slowstarting Allyson Felix (11.01).

Jeter dashed past reporters without discussing her performance, but other athletes said the Mondo track had helped them fly and fans' enthusiasm had kept them aloft.

"It's a very fast track. I love it. I loved the crowd," said Kerron Clement, whose season-best 48.48 in the first round of the 400 hurdles led all three Americans into Saturday's semifinals. "The crowd's great on the first day. I'm pretty impressed by that."

Rain was falling Friday morning when Sanya Richards-Ross ran a strategically low-powered 400 in 51.78 and advanced to Saturday's semifinal with Francena McCorory (50.78) and Dee-Dee Trotter (50.87). But Richards-Ross said she could still tell that the track would produce good times.

My turnover felt really great on this track and I didn't feel like I was giving 100%, so I think it's going to give us a lot back when we're actually running very hard," she said.

Felix didn't like her start — "I completely missed it," she said — but liked the track. "It feels really good," she said. "It feels great to have it be a full stadium and feel all the energy. It's exciting to finally be underway."

Ennis felt the energy too. "I never knew I was going to run as fast, but to get a personal best on day 1 is amazing," she said.

Ennis is the heptathlon leader through four events with 4,158 points, but Austra Skujyte of Lithuania set an Olympic heptathlon shotput record and is second with 3,974 points. Canada's Jessica Zelinka is third at 3,903, a point ahead of Ukraine's Lyudmyla Yosypenko.

Hyleas Fountain of Daytona Beach, Fla., the Beijing heptathlon silver medalist, is fifth with 3,900 points. Sharon Day of Costa Mesa couldn't get her rhythm on the high jump and ranks 18th with 3,740 points entering Saturday's three final events. Chantae McMillan of Rolla, Mo., is 25th.

Thrower advances

Defending women's discus gold medalist Stephanie Brown Trafton of Galt, Calif., advanced to Saturday's final with the day's fifth-best throw, 212 feet 10 inches, on her third and final attempt. The other U.S. competitors, Aretha Thurmond and Gia Lewis-Small-wood, didn't advance.

U.S. competitors

Leonel Manzano of Marble Falls, Texas, led the three Americans in the men's 1,500 into Sunday's semifinals. He was timed in 3:37.00, Matt Centrowitz of Arnold, Md., at 3:41.39 and Andrew Wheating of Eugene, Ore., at 3:40.92. Evan Jager of Algonquin, 111, the U.S. record holder in the 3,000 steeplechase, qualified for Sunday's final with a time of 8:16.61, second-best of the day. Donn Cabral of Glastonbury, Conn., also moved on but Kyle Acorn of Mesa, Ariz., didn't advance.

Long jumper Marquise Goodwin of Dallas led his qualifying group with a leap of 26 feet 7¹/₄ inches to reach Saturday's final. Will Claye of Phoenix also advanced with a jump of 26-23¹/₄. But George Kitchens Jr. of Augusta, Ga., was eliminated.

Kibwe Johnson of Sacramento qualified for the hammer throw final with a sea-season-best toss of 253-2. A.G. Kruger of Ashland, Ohio, was eliminated.... Amanda Smock of Melrose, Minn., the lone U.S. entrant in the women's triple jump, didn't advance past the qualifying round.

UNIT II NATURE

WHAT YOUR NOSE KNOWS

And other amazing facts about your senses

Sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell: our five senses are what help us make, well, sense of the world around us. But scientists are still discovering how they work – and how you can sharpen yours. Read on for a comprehensive look at the new science of your senses.

SIGHT

THE HUMAN EYE IS AN exceptional tool for gathering light; it can distinguish among 500 shades of gray spot the light of a candle 14 miles away. But for all the eye's extraordinary ability, seeing is a function of the brain – humans' visual cortex is more developed than that of any other mammal.

Vision demands that the brain differentiate foreground from background, and edges from lines - skills that even the world's most powerful computers have been unable to match. Your brain makes sense of shapes and symbols by putting them together like a jigsaw puzzle, organizing fragments into a coherent whole. (Movies work because the brain stitches a series of frames into an unbroken stream.) We develop this ability as infants - which explains why patients who grew up blind but have had their sight restored often struggle to understand what they are seeing: their brains can't initially distinguish an object from its background, or accurately separate two over-lapping objects. (A chair and desk would be perceived as a single fiat image, like an abstract painting made of rectangles). Optical illusions work by exploiting the mind's tendency to try to find order in patterns - a face in the pock marks on a cement wall or make sense of an impossible image, like the endless climbing staircase in an Escher drawing.

HEARING

IN SOUTH SUDAN, NEAR the border with Ethiopia, a tribe known as the Mabaan reportedly live in a place of such quiet that their ability to hear has become astonishingly acute. The legend has it that even the oldest Mabaan can make out the words of another tribesman whispering to him from across a wide field. In theory, at least, any one of us could do the same,

provided we spent our lives similarly sheltered from noise. At birth, our ears are pristine organs, capable of discerning among more than 300,000 sounds. (After years of exposure to loud noises, the hair cells on the cochlea, in the inner ear, flatten, becoming less sensitive). Yet even as we age, our eardrums remain finely tuned - they can pick up sounds so faint that the eardrum itself moves a distance less than the diameter of a hydrogen molecule. (This sensitivity developed to protect us from predators).

Our brain processes sounds a thousand times faster than images and feigns sounds even as we sleep. This constant bath of noise affects everything from our concentration to our health. Researchers have found that living in loud areas can raise blood pressure by an average of 5 to 8 percent. Even our ancestors understood how sound could damage as well as delight: the word noise comes from nausea, the Latin word for sickness. But sound can also be a positive force. A study conducted on premature infants, for instance, found that they were able to leave the hospital sooner if soft music was played while they slept.

TASTE

TASTE, DESIGNED IN part to help us reject harmful foods, has long served as the body's primary defense against poison. As befits its role, the system is lightning fast: the body can detect taste in as little as .0015 seconds, compared with .0024 seconds for touch and .013 seconds for vision.

To be tasted, food molecules must fall into a cluster of cells called a taste bud, more than 10,000 of which are spread over the tongue, palate, and inner cheek. The taste bud sends a signal to the brain, which then determines everything from whether a food tastes "safe" which in most cases means it's not too bitter - to whether we enjoy it. In a part of the brain known as the anterior cingulate, tastes get married to an emotional reaction: disgust for rotten meat, say, or delight for a sweet strawberry. But while some tastes are innate - nearly all humans are born with a sweet tooth - there's also evidence that taste can be nurtured. Studies have shown that babies prefer foods they first "tasted" in the womb, or while nursing. (Traces of certain flavors, including garlic and vanilla, turn up in amniotic fluid, and also in breast milk.)

More recently, food scientists have found ways to manipulate our likes and dislikes. One chemical, extracted from a West African fruit, binds to taste receptors in a way that makes even the sourest lemon taste as sweet as lemon

pie. Food scientists have jumped on the discovery, scrambling to devise additives that would trick our taste buds into perceiving sweetness in the absence of actual sugar.

TOUCH

OF ALL YOUR SENSES, touch is the most difficult to fathom doing without. With hundreds of nerve endings in every square inch of skin, your body functions like an antenna, receiving a constant stream of information ranging from the firmness of the chair you're sitting on to the heat of the sun through the window. Touch is the first sense we develop in utero, and it is crucial to survival. Babies can die from lack of it, and as adults, touch helps to protect us from harm. Some nerves are specialized to feel texture and pressure, others to detect temperature or register pain. Nerves known as proprioceptors sense the position of our body parts in space enabling us to cross our arms with ease, or lean out a window without falling. But touch influences us more subtly as well. A recent study from Yale University found that people seated on soft chairs during mock negotiations with a car dealer were likely to make an offer several hundred dollars greater than people who were seated on hard chairs sign of how the brain interprets comfort (the physical sensation) as evidence of broader well-being.

SMELL

SMELL MAY BE OUR MOST evocative sense. Studies have shown that people can recall a scent with 65 percent accuracy after one year; visual memory sinks to 50 percent after just a few months. And because smells are processed by the same part of the brain that handles memories and emotions - the temporal lobe - we respond to them with rare intensity. Decades later, a passing scent may summon a memory of our first-grade classroom, one so vivid that we seem transported across time and space.

Though not on a par with our canine friends', the human nose is still something of a marvel. An ordinary person can pick up a whiff of skunk when the amount of scent in the air is less than one ten-trillionth of an ounce. The nose can also determine where a smell is coming from, pointing you - for better or worse - toward the source. Still, our sense of smell is deeply individual: some people can't smell mushrooms; others can't sniff out freesia. These differences are mostly genetic, but simpler things - small physiological changes and factors like mood and medication (antibiotics, statins, and blood pressure drugs can all

affect our sense of smell) - enhance or diminish our ability to detect odors. In fact, it's believed that we never experience a smell the same way twice, since the sensitivity of our nose changes from hour to hour and day to day.

GOING FOR THE GOLD

Looking for a fun - and profitable - way to spend your next free Saturday? Join the thousands of amateur prospectors digging for buried treasure.

THE MOTHER LODGE Goldhounds meet the second Friday of every month at the Veterans Memorial Hall in Auburn, Calif. On a recent night, a burly member named Mike Bowers was at the podium, sharing the tricks he's used to unearth gold nuggets over nearly three decades. In the audience, men with wild beards and weathered faces seemed to be channeling the forty-niners who first settled this historic town in the Sierra foot-hills. But they were joined by moms in sweatpants, retirees in golf jackets, and hipsters in knit caps. What brings them together is one of the nation's fastest-growing pastimes: gold hunting. In the past five years, membership in the Gold Prospectors Association of America (GPAA) has risen 83 percent, to 45,000. The reason isn't hard to fathom: since 2008, as household budgets have tightened, the price of gold has doubled, soaring past \$1,500 an ounce. And the U.S. Geological Survey estimates that 18,000 metric tons remain undiscovered, scattered through two dozen states. "There's gold from Alaska to Alabama if you know where to look," says GPAA spokesman Brad Jones. Seasoned prospectors consult vintage maps, geological records, even diaries from prospectors of yore. In the field, they "read" the ground for telltale signs, like quartz outcroppings or gravel bars. But for newbies, the surest way to learn how to pinpoint the shiny stuff - and extract it - is to join an organization like the GPAA or the Goldhounds, which can offer training, equipment, and weekend outings. "We're getting more and more families," Jones says. "Kids love to dig around looking for treasure."

Bowers, 57, leads expeditions through the Mother Lode - the 120-mile ribbon of mineral-rich outback that inspired California's original gold rush. His biggest find: a nugget worth \$5,000. But coming home empty-handed hardly fazes him - he just loves the thrill of the hunt. "When you're out there digging, you feel like part of the old miners' clan," he says.

The morning after the Gold-hounds' meeting, my wife, Julie, and I join a group of members in the parking lot of an Auburn diner, then caravan

down a muddy track into a pine-forested canyon, where we park near a mine abandoned in the 1850s. As the others fan out through the gullies, Julie and I follow Bowers up a red clay dome. We pass a rusty tin coffeepot hanging from a branch - left by a 19th-century prospector, dug up by a modern one.

The air is crisp and the view is gorgeous, with snowy peaks lining the horizon. After taking in the scenery for a few minutes, we get down to business. Gold hunters choose their tools to suit the setting: pans and sluice boxes for probing river muck; motorized dry washers for sifting desert dust. Today, we're using metal detectors, ideal for locating nuggets hidden under thin topsoil. "You can find gold the old-time miners never knew was there," Bowers says.

He shows us how to calibrate our borrowed detector and listen for the shift in its mosquito like whine that indicates a "hit." Within minutes, Julie gets one. Bowers scrapes up soil with a plastic scoop and pours it out incrementally. At last, a nugget the size of a rice grain glitters in the sun. I find my own fleck soon after, by late afternoon we've collected half a dozen more.

TREES GET MYSTERIOUS CLIPPING

Caltrans says the rogue trimming improves the visibility of enormous signs, but an ad firm denies involvement.

The mysterious felling of roughly two dozen trees near city billboards has provoked finger pointing between state transportation officials and an advertising firm, and added fuel to a heated debate involving outdoor advertising in Los Angeles.

Vandals apparently used chain saws to cut back the trees, which had been planted along the 10 and 405 freeways under a California Department of Transportation landscaping initiative. It seems the rogue tree cutters wanted to increase the visibility of enormous ads erected by the World Wide Rush advertising company, said Daniel Freeman, a Caltrans deputy district director for maintenance.

"I can't imagine why anyone else would want to cut down these trees," Freeman said.

The advertising firm says it had nothing to do with the matter.

Paul Fisher, a Newport Beach lawyer representing World Wide Rush, accused officials of looking for ways to get around federal rulings that limit the city's ability to ban digital signs and large ads known as "supergraphics," which cover entire buildings.

Freeman said the trees were cut back in December and January, just before World Wide Rush put up supergraphics for Tropicana juice on a parking structure at the Sherman Oaks Galleria and a six-story building on National Boulevard, near the 10 Freeway.

The damaged landscaping included a row of 15-foot Brisbane box evergreens that were cut down to 3 or 4 feet, Freeman said. Caltrans had planted the trees near the Galleria at a cost of about \$2,500 to \$3,000 each, in order to screen the 405 Freeway, he said.

“I am particularly annoyed that these were the ones that got hit,” Freeman said. “These were essentially brand new.”

Five or six more trees were felled near the building on National Boulevard, he said, along with five belonging to the shopping mall.

Katherine Defever, a Galleria representative, said mall officials were baffled when they noticed the destruction and had initially assumed that Caltrans officials were cutting back landscaping themselves.

Freeman said Caltrans was notified of the cutting by City Atty. Rocky Delgadillo, who filed criminal charges in January against World Wide Rush and National Investment Co. — owners of the building at 10801 National Blvd. — for allegedly putting up an unauthorized sign and violating safety regulations.

World Wide Rush contends the charges are in contempt of a federal ruling that found a 2002 city ban on new billboards unconstitutional. Although that decision is under appeal, the company won an injunction preventing officials from banning supergraphics at 34 buildings, including the one on National.

Freeman said the sign on National violates the California Outdoor Advertising Act, which gives Caltrans control over advertising displayed within 660 feet of a freeway. The department is conducting its own investigation into the matter, he said.

While Freeman hopes to replace the damaged landscaping, he said the department would not be able to afford to put in mature trees like the ones that were lost.

PINNACLES MAY REACH NEW HEIGHT

The House passes a bill to make the Central California volcanic wonderland a national park.

WASHINGTON — Pinnacles National Monument in Central California — known as a volcanic wonderland and a climber’s paradise —

would become the 59th U.S. national park under a bill that cleared the House on Tuesday with bipartisan support.

The bill creating Pinnacles National Park is aimed at raising the national profile of the site, named a monument by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908. The bill now goes to the Senate.

The 26,000-acre site, with its towering rock formations, has played a crucial role in the recovery of the California condor and draws its name from the volcanic spires that were formed by the eruption of the Neenach Volcano more than 23 million years ago.

“Pinnacles is a rare American landscape that will be even more significant as a national park, attracting new visitors to experience its oak savannas, grasslands, dramatic volcanic spires and caves,” said Paul Spitler, director of wilderness policy at the Wilderness Society.

If approved by the Senate and signed into law by President Obama, the bill would make Pinnacles — already a unit of the National Park Service — the first new national park since Great Sand Dunes National Monument in Colorado was elevated to a national park in 2004.

The Pinnacles bill moved through the House after its chief sponsor, Rep. Sam Farr (D-Carmel), lined up a Republican, Rep. Jeff Denham of Atwater, as a co-sponsor and agreed to GOP demands to drop a proposed nearly 3,000-acre expansion of wilderness areas within the new park.

Farr said the new designation would more accurately define “this jewel of Central California and all it has to offer.” He told colleagues on the House floor Tuesday that the change also could increase tourism and boost the economy of the area.

The designation has the support of California Sens. Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein.

But Fair, who has spent a decade seeking the designation, expressed concern that the end of the congressional session was approaching. “Our biggest enemy is time,” he said.

Filmmakers Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan, who produced the PBS documentary “The National Parks: America’s Best Idea,” wrote in a letter of support to lawmakers that elevating a monument to a national park “alters its place in the American imagination.”

“The Grand Canyon was just as wide and deep when it was a national monument as it is now as a national park, but the change enhanced its status

in the eyes of the public – and in doing so increased its lure to visitors from our nation and abroad,” they wrote.

“So, too, a Pinnacles National Park, simply by its new designation, would attract and demand greater attention to the remarkable treasures the monument has to offer.”

The 397 units of the National Park Service range from battlefields to historic sites. Eight of the 58 national parks are in California.

GROWERS EYEING CROPS

‘You worked hard all year to get your crops, and there’s a chance you’ll lose it all tonight.’

Temperatures on Saturday night were expected to dip as low as 25 degrees, triggering freeze warnings across Southern California.

“It’s not unusual for us to get these cold snaps this time of year, but it’s one of the colder ones we’ve had in a while,” said Curt Kaplan, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service’s Oxnard office.

Starting Monday, cold Santa Ana winds will sweep in from the desert, keeping temperatures low but stirring up the air enough to eliminate most of the threat to the citrus crop. By Wednesday, temperatures should begin to rise.

“These next few nights will be extremely critical nights,” said John Nelsen, president of California Citrus Mutual, an association of the state’s 3,900 citrus growers, the majority of which are family farmers.

The year had been off to a good start, with a particularly flavorful crop of mandarins and good sugar content across the state. The association has sold up to \$300 million in citrus already, with another \$1 billion still on the trees.

“We were looking at a very profitable year,” Nelsen said.

But a cold snap can change that in hours. In January 2007, citrus growers lost 60% of the state’s crop to freezes. In 1998 it was 85%. The worst season in memory was the Christmas freeze of December 1990, when a week of temperatures in the teens defoliated the orchards, leading to a total loss for that season and the one after, Nelsen said.

It’s those memories that keep citrus farmers like Gless up patrolling their orchards all night like an expectant father pacing outside the delivery room.

Gless’ great-grandfather raised citrus and melons in Texas. His grandfather moved the family to El Toro, Calif., and slowly bought up acreage in Riverside, Hemet and the Coachella and Central valleys.

Gless grew up in Riverside and learned to drive a tractor at 8. Patrolling the orchards during winter cold snaps has become a way of life, one his wife and 2-year-old son are still getting used to. As he wends his way through the dark orchards in Hemet, his father is doing the same in the Central Valley while his grandfather monitors the frost alarms from Riverside.

When low temperatures are forecast, they'll order extra water and run it all night, helping the ground to hold on to some of the heat it absorbed during the day.

With 3 ½ acre-feet of water needed for every acre of land, that can quickly get costly.

Each of their citrus ranches has an automated thermometer that can be called from the warmth of bed.

But small changes in topography can mean a swing of several degrees across an orchard of a few hundred acres.

That leads to long, tedious nights of patrolling and waiting for the temperature to hit that magic number for citrus farmers: 29 degrees.

When it does, Gless springs into action. Thanks to air-quality rules, the smudge pots citrus farmers once used to bum sooty diesel fuel are a thing of the past.

Instead, Gless and his crew will fire up dozens of giant propane-powered wind machines. With one machine for every 10 acres of grove, it can take hours to get them all started.

The wind they create stirs up the inversion layer, mixing the cold air that settles low with the layer of warmer air that sits atop it like a blanket.

Taken together, the water and wind can raise the temperature in an orchard by as much as five degrees, enough to save a year's worth of work from being sold for juice.

It will be a few days before Gless and his fellow citrus growers cut into their fruit and look for the signs of freezing that tell them if their measures worked.

SPRING STORM DOESN'T EASE DROUGHT FEARS

System snarls roads and drops half an inch of rain on downtown L. A., but totals are still only 21% of normal for the season.

A late-season rainstorm that swept through Southern California on Friday provided some respite from what has been a parched spring.

But the area's heaviest rain in 11 months didn't budge this season from its distinction as the driest on record.

The storm hit Ventura County in the morning and swept east through the South land, bringing half an inch of rain to down-town by late afternoon. That bumped the total rainfall since July 1 to 3.16 inches – 21% of where it should be at this time of year: 14.65 inches.

Although the slick roads inconvenienced commuters and led to numerous traffic accidents, the storm provided a welcome shower of moisture to the area.

"From the national forests to the coasts, we needed this," said Bill Patzert, a climatologist at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La Canada Flintridge. "This doesn't put a ding in the drought, but it's sure going to look nice this weekend. Everybody's garden is going to be greened up."

March, typically one of the wettest months, was bone dry this year. Downtown Los Angeles saw a paltry 0.05 inches.

Rainfall typically starts to drop off in April, making this storm a bit of a surprise to meteorologists.

"It's a little late to get the heavy storm of the season," said Jamie Meier, meteorologist with the Los Angeles / Oxnard office of the National Weather Service. "April storms are very unpredictable. It seems more unusual than it is because we've gotten so little so far this year."

The lack of rainfall was a factor in early season wildfires that swept through hillsides in the last month, including one near Burbank and another that damaged homes in Beverly Hills.

Fire officials said the rains would do little to prevent more fires.

"Even if there is a little bit of growth with these rains, it's not going to do too much good in the long run because so much dead vegetation has accumulated from the dry spell," said d'Lisa Davies, spokeswoman for the Los Angeles Fire Department. "We've been lucky that we haven't experienced any mudslides."

EPA SAYS ORMOND BEACH TOXIC WASTE HAS STABILIZED

An 11-week project has made the Halaco slag piles less of a threat to the nearby wetlands.

A mountain of hazardous waste created by a shuttered metals recycling plant adjacent to Oxnard's Ormond Beach wetlands has been stabilized,

federal regulators announced Friday as they took government officials on a rain-soaked tour of the site.

Ventura County Supervisor Kathy Long and representatives of Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and Rep. Lois Capps (D-Santa Barbara) piled into two sport utility vehicles and were taken on a guided tour of the 43-acre beachside property formerly operated by Halaco Engineering Co. The tour was organized by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officials, who are over-seeing the \$5-million project.

Rob Wise, the agency's on-site coordinator, said the 11-week stabilization project involved reshaping the giant slag piles on the eastern side of the property into one pile to make them less susceptible to erosion and to keep them from sloughing into wetlands. The consolidated pile remains 40 to 50 feet high, but Wise said most of the man-made mountain is now covered by coir matting, made of coconut fiber, which reduces dust and helps keep the heap intact.

New surveys will provide a better estimate of just how much waste is left after nearly 40 years of smelting aluminum and magnesium at the Halaco facility, which shut down in 2004 after the company went bankrupt. Wise's current estimate of 710,000 cubic yards of waste is enough hazardous material to fill more than 1,000 standard-size homes.

Concerns about trespassers — who left behind graffiti and tire tracks from off-road vehicles and bicycles — have prompted the city of Oxnard to consider condemning buildings on the property so they can be removed.

"What the community wants is to demolish, tear down and get rid of the ugly eyesore that we now have great concerns about," said Long. "If I could just wave a wand and this whole site is gone tomorrow, that would be our best possible outcome."

At Tuesday's supervisors' meeting, Long is expected to urge her colleagues to formally support placing the Halaco property on the national priority list so it can be designated a federal Superfund site. The designation would provide additional funding for long-term cleanup.

Friday's tour was also a chance for officials to meet Wayne Praskins, regional EPA project manager for the Superfund program, who will oversee longterm cleanup at Halaco. Praskins estimated it would take at least two years just to determine what needs to be done to make the property safe for humans and the wetlands' wildlife.

Preliminary estimates suggest it could cost more than \$150 million to remove the Halaco waste and transport it to approved landfills, Wise said.

HOTELS BEGIN TO WARM TO 'CARBON OFFSETS'

EVERY day you stay at a hotel, you may burn enough fossil fuels to release more than 33 pounds of carbon dioxide, the bad boy of global warming, into the atmosphere.

But don't worry. Open your wallet, and all is forgiven, or at least that's the pitch of a growing number of programs.

Among the latest is Travel Green, announced in February by Sustainable Travel International, a nonprofit company in Boulder, Colo. It markets what it dubs Mini-Green Tags to hotels and guests. The proceeds, it says, will fund conservation and renewable energy, such as solar and wind power.

The idea is based on so-called carbon offsets that Expedia and other companies offer as optional purchases to customers who take air trips. Such offsets, designed to help counter carbon-dioxide emissions that travel generates, are spreading through the lodging industry.

Since March, Brussels-based Rezidor Hotel Group, which runs Radisson, Regent and other chain hotels in the Mideast, Europe and Africa, has allowed guests in these regions to use loyalty points to buy carbon offsets through London-based Carbon Neutral Co.

Leading Hotels of the World, a New York-based marketing association of 440 luxury hotels, was planning to implement Travel Green by the end of last week. And at Bonneville Hot Springs Resort in Bonneville, Wash., which helped pilot the program, some guests attending a conference last fall bought Mini-Green Tags.

But what were they really buying? And should you buy it too?

The answer is complicated. Such efforts are helpful but not a panacea, some activists say.

"These kinds of programs are useful tools for raising awareness about global warming," said Jenny Powers, spokeswoman for the Natural Resources Defense Council in New York. "But the first goal should be to reduce your carbon footprint."

As a guest, you can reduce your footprint by patronizing hotels that reuse towels, recycle water and waste, garden with drought-resistant plants, use solar heat and take other conservation measures.

Look for action, not talk, said Brian T. Mullis, president of Sustainable Travel International: “Are they engaged in sustainability or ‘green-washing’?”

Among hoteliers highly regarded for conservation is Denver-based Xanterra Parks & Resorts, which uses alternative energy and tracks waste output at its lodges in Yellowstone, Grand Canyon and other national parks. A few hotels, such as the Orchard Garden in San Francisco, are built to eco-friendly guidelines.

Despite these initiatives, Mullis said, “The bottom line is that some amount of greenhouse gas is inevitable.”

Just how much takes some calculating, much of it theoretical. On the basis of government statistics on energy use, and figuring that a typical hotel room maybe 300 square feet, Mullis estimated that a one-day stay results in the release of 33.7 pounds of carbon dioxide. The cost to offset that with renewable energy is about 48 cents, he added.

Mullis expects Mini-Green Tags to retail for \$1. Depending on how the hotel runs the program, less than 43 cents may go to alternative energy funded through the program’s partners, the nonprofit Bonneville Environmental Foundation in Portland, Ore., and My Climate, a Swiss-based nonprofit.

Indeed, a Travel Green brochure touts “additional revenue” for hotels. One version would work like this, Mullis said: his company sells tags to hotels for 50 cents per tag, of which 42.5 cents goes to eco projects and 7.5 cents covers program costs. The remaining 50 cents of the \$1 that the guest pays goes to the hotel, an amount that “we hope they’ll use” for eco projects, he added.

On the other hand, Leading Hotels of the World plans to absorb the full cost, said Marshall Calder, senior vice president of marketing. He said it would donate 50 cents for each night’s stay booked on its new website, www.lhwgreen.com (which was expected to go “live” by today); by phone using a special code; or through a link on www.sustainabletravelinternational.org — but not on Leading Hotels’ main website.

The booking data allow them “to measure consumers’ enthusiasm” for sustainable tourism, Calder said.

However hotels handle carbon off-sets, there’s potential to do well by doing good. Sales of Mini-Green Tags, Mullis said, will develop wind power in Washington and Oregon and build hydroelectric power stations in India.

They may also help eco-guilty guests sleep more easily — after switching off all the lights.

SPACE CASE

AS SHIPMENTS GO, IT WAS ROUTINE – about half a ton of supplies – except it was delivered by the first commercial flight to the International Space Station. Space X partnered with NASA in this new model, the brainchild of Elon Musk, who's behind Tesla electric cars as well.

Musk left South Africa at 17, earned two U.S. undergraduate degrees and then made serial piles of dough pioneering online payment systems, including the one that became PayPal. Musk's persona inspired aspects of the portrayal of Tony Stark in "Iron Man," but his aspirations seem more like Buzz Lightyear's – to infinity, and beyond.

When the rover "Curiosity" lands on Mars on Sunday, will you be thinking, "That's what SpaceX will be doing one day"?

That's always been a goal of SpaceX. We're hoping to develop the technology to do that in probably 12 to 15 years.

Would you go to Mars?

I would. The first flight would be risky; if I felt comfortable that the company's mission will continue, that my kids have grown up, then I'd be on the first mission.

People mention you in the same breath as Richard Branson and Virgin Galactic, but his space effort seems more tourist-driven and yours more industrial and scientific.

I've nothing against tourism; Richard Branson is brilliant at creating a brand, but he's not a technologist. What he's doing is fundamentally about entertainment, and I think it's cool, but it's not likely to affect humanity's future in a significant way. That's what we're trying to do.

The thing that got me started with SpaceX was the feeling of dismay – I just did not want Apollo to be our high-water mark. We do not want a future where we tell our children that this was the best we ever did. Growing up, I kept expecting we're going to have a base on the moon, and we're going to have trips to Mars. Instead, we went backwards, and that's a great tragedy.

Shouldn't government be doing projects like this?

Government isn't that good at rapid advancement of technology. It tends to be better at funding basic research. To have things take off, you've got to have commercial companies do it. The government was good at getting the basics of the Internet going, but it languished. Commercial companies took a hand around 1995, and then it accelerated. We need something like that in space.

SpaceX couldn't have gotten started without the great work of NASA, and NASA's a key customer of ours. But for the future, it's going to be companies like SpaceX that advance space technology and deliver the rapid innovation that's necessary.

But government can fund a space program without worrying about profits or stockholder returns. A commercial company could run into trouble, and there goes the program.

That's why I'm the majority shareholder in SpaceX. When I've recruited investors, I've made sure they're like-minded. SpaceX will create a great deal of value over the long term, but there will be times when that horizon is beyond what some investors would be comfortable with. I'm going to make sure I have sufficient control of the company to optimize for the very long term.

The movies provide us with two space future models: "Star Trek," where a government agency governs space, versus "Alien," where a private space mining company makes its own rules.

We need a new archetype. I've talked to James Cameron about this. He's got a script for a realistic Mars mission because there's not been a good Mars movie. That's another thing that bugs me: The Mars movies have been so bad. I mean, honestly! And it's going to be tricky getting funding for another Mars movie after "John Carter." It was a good comic book, and they totally screwed up the movie.

The plaque the NASA astronauts left on the moon says, "We came in peace for all mankind." Would that be true if there were a commercial free-for-all in space?

I think the body of regulation will grow – hopefully not too much. Sometimes we are a little over-regulated, and this can be difficult for new industry, particularly one that involves physical safety. There must be some ability to experiment to advance the state of the art.

In the early days of aviation there was a great deal of experimentation and a high death rate. We don't want that – the public would not be accepting – but by the same token we can't have a situation where no deaths are ever allowed, because that would put innovation in a coffin too.

Apropos of Tesla Motors, you've said in 20 years half the new cars produced will be electric. What, we'll still have to drive cars? We won't move by means of molecular disassembly?

That'd be nice! There may be something cooler than a car in 20 years,

but the most likely outcome is that we'll still have cars and they'll be predominantly electric.

When you came to the U.S., it was the primary destination for the kind of enterprise you wanted to do. Is it still?

It is. If you want to have a significant impact on the world, the United States is the best place to do that. I'm not suggesting that things couldn't be better. We should be asking ourselves, have we made the environment better or worse? And I think it's really important that we stop sending college and graduate students back to their home countries.

Don't we have enough homegrown talent for those jobs?

If you're trying to create a company, it's like baking a cake. You have to have all the ingredients in the right proportion. There's certain special skills, especially in advanced engineering, that are the limiting factor in creating new companies; we send these people home after training them in our graduate schools.

One of the toughest things I've found is to recruit top-notch manufacturing talent. That's where I've had to go overseas. For a few decades, it just wasn't where the smartest kids in the class in America went. We had far too many smart people in the U.S. go into finance and law!

Speaking of finance, you must make Wall Street nervous with your companies' roller-coaster fortunes.

SpaceX has been profitable for four years and probably this will make it a fifth, and Tesla should be profitable next year and for the foreseeable future.

Profit is simply more money coming in than going out, and for a company where that's not true, it will cease to exist at some point, and it should.

Commercializing space, electric cars – aren't you spread a little thin?

I've been going past the red line on the gauge for a while now. It's honestly not been fun, but I have to continue for a bit longer because for Tesla in particular, we're at the stage where the company's survival is in question.

The market has given us a good evaluation. We have great supporters and great detractors. The detractors have a point, that the last successful car company started in America 90 years ago. DeLorean and Tucker brought cars to market, but they were unable to scale up production and reach profitability. The next six months will decide whether Tesla will be the first new successful car company in a century.

Do you think the last best hope of Earth isn't on Earth?

I'm reasonably optimistic about the future, especially the future of the United States, for the century at least. But it's important we get out there and explore the stars, both for defensive reasons and ensuring the continued existence of consciousness.

PRIVATE LIVES

The three founders - Carly Brien, Hayden Slater, and Hedi Gores, all L. A. natives devised a perfect plan for a simple idea while fulfilling a need. In 2009, Brien, who had been living in New York City, returned home to take care of her mother, who had fallen gravely ill. She immersed herself in the teachings of holistic medicine and consulted with Slater, a childhood friend, who had just returned from a wellness-and-cleansing workshop in Asia, and with Gores, who was also well versed in the concept of a healthy mind in a healthy body. After finding a dearth of "pressed-juice shops where I could easily get my mom the nutrients she needed (and that I needed!)," explains Brien, she and her two friends decided it was time to start "juicing." "Our goal was simple: to get juice to as many people as possible," says Brien. Together, they took the next year off to set up their juice business.

Pressed Juicery offers all types of elixirs, from the stable of green and root blends (which include ingredients such as kale, spinach, ginger, and carrots) to detox brews (lemon, cayenne, mint, grapefruit, and so forth) and fruitier concoctions. And yes, there are three- and fiveday cleanse kits too. Added supplements for specific needs - including energy, antioxidants, and cold- and fluster-busters - are also available. And not to be missed are the delicious signature drinks: coconut mint chip, coconut cinnamon, and almond milk - they taste like dessert, but they're actually good for you. Swear to God.

The company, which now has two more locations - one in Malibu and one in West Hollywood - and a delivery service, has not advertised. It has grown through word of mouth and has benefited from celebrity tweets - the Olsen twins, Zooey Deschanel, Gwen Stefani, Demi Moore, and Reese Witherspoon are all devotees - and other forms of social media. The partners never set out to be the next cool thing or part of any juice trend. And yet, "one of our proudest moments," says Brien, "was when, weeks after we opened, we learned that Pressed had become sort of a status symbol among kids in elementary and middle school. That's right. Kids thought it was cool to drink green juice. It is unbelievably gratifying." No matter what your age, it's never too early to start drinking.

UNIT III CAREER

A PROPER GREETING

HEY, READER. If you bristle ever so slightly at the presumed familiarity of that salutation, you're almost surely over 40, and you likely grew up well north of the Mason-Dixon line.

If you say "hey" back, the demographic possibilities are a lot broader. Everyone from anywhere who was born after 1980 seems to have adopted this one time Southern regionalism, as have over 40s who work in a business that uses "trending" as a verb and requires them to stay forever young.

I get "hey" emails and in-the-hallway greetings from students who've never been as far south as Philadelphia, who hail from India and Austria, from the Northeast and the Midwest and Canada. If you doubt "hey's" ubiquity, I refer you to anchors and reporters on any nightly TV news show, to the fictional guardians of our national security on "Homeland" and to your local barista, who is as good a barometer of spokenword trends as anyone, given the volume of greetings he or she fields each day.

On the surface it's just style, the equivalent of hollow-center earrings or bell-bottoms in their first or second or third iteration. Heysayers like the greeting because it seems more immediate, more genuine, less fussy than an old-school greeting like the spoken "hello" or "good evening" or the written "Dear Dr., Mr., Mrs. or Ms.," now all but extinct. It has a bit more of an edge than the more demure "hi." "Hey" is so right now.

Or so in your face, at least to people who grew up with indented paragraphs. "Hey" can sound dismissive; in the long ago, it's what people yelled to get the attention of someone they didn't know or care to know, as in, "Hey, you." I remember an adult, possibly my fourth-grade teacher, muttering, "Straw is cheaper and grass is for nothing" when a child said, "Hey." It was a sloppy place holder. Along with its descendants – "like" and "y'know," or the dread combo, "like y'know" – it indicated a lazy mind.

That's a lot of freight for a little word to have to carry, and I don't mean to give it too hard a time. I'd just like to suggest that we hesitate before we turn our backs on the salutational past and rush blindly off the linguistic cliff, like so many texting lemmings.

To its credit, "hey" aspires to be democracy in action, the same short

syllable for everyone regardless of status or class, which has a certain egalitarian appeal; it makes sense if, like me, you're a devout believer in earned, not presumed, respect. A partisan could even argue that we should all start at "hey" and then win the right to be called "sir" or "madam," "dean" or "doctor."

Still, I worry about deeper meaning. There's a prevalent disdain for all authority these days, which seems healthy when we're talking about Congress' behavior but not so smart when the topic is prohibiting the use of cellphones while driving. We need to be able to distinguish, to maintain standards with case-specific vocabulary, and "hey" inadvertently wipes out judgment – what feels like fair is really just vague.

Here's an analogy: In Steven Soderbergh's film "Contagion," a healthcare official being harassed by a venal blogger blurts: "Blogging isn't writing. It's graffiti with punctuation." OK, I don't entirely agree with him, but that's beside the point. He's talking about the good that comes from considering how you say what you say, about the happy synergy of discipline and communication.

My problem with "hey," I guess, is that it doesn't tell me much. I like considered variety, which to me is real democracy in action. Everyone gets what fits, from "Hi, kiddo" for someone I'm trying to cheer up to "Dear First-and-Last Name," because for me the standard honorifics all fall short, and what if a stranger has a genderless name like Dana? A friend calls me her "little chicken," which might not sound like much of a compliment to you, but I wear it like wings; it's mine and mine alone.

I say, have a little fun. Make a conscious choice. Be a true rebel, tied neither to the old nor the new. Try "Excuse me, so-and-so, do you have a moment to talk?" Or use a title for starters and wait for the gracious, "Oh, just call me Mike."

I've waited for years for a language expert to identify the person I think of as Speaker Zero, that teen (probably female, given the way this has played out) who first tilted her sentences to rise in inquiry at the end and spawned a trend big enough to have a name – uptalk - and virulent enough to have infected the occasional big-issue sound bite. But language moves fast, in waves, and by the time somebody with a research grant gets interested in "hey," it will surely have been replaced by the next greeting du jour.

My imagination doesn't stretch far enough to guess what that will be. I'll settle for being grateful if, unlike bell-bottoms, the Stallonian "yo" never gets a second chance.

ARE YOU WORKING TOO HARD

AMERICANS MAY BE THE MOST overworked, vacation-deprived people on Earth. On average, we get 14 vacation days a year less than other Western countries and the typical U.S. employee only uses 10 of them. And 37% of workers take less than seven consecutive days off a year.

At the same time, the number of Americans working more than 50 hours a week is steadily growing. "Overwork in America," a study by the Families and Work Institute, found that one in three employees experiences feeling overworked as a chronic condition. "The very skills that are fundamental to succeeding in this global economy moving quickly from task to task with little time for recovery in between, facing many interruptions and working outside normal work hours, including vacations can become detrimental," the study reported.

E-mails, computers and beepers have blurred the line between work and home. In addition, many firms tie raises to performance. In service businesses that have no clear-cut way to measure performance, this means rewards sometimes go to those who work the longest hours.

The respondents to PARADE'S annual survey emphasize that having some control over their hours is a major plus. "The flexibility is the beauty of my job," says Linda Lutich, a flight attendant who earned \$48,400 last year. "My hourly wage is \$50.65, and it's my choice as to how many hours I fly each month."

Niedja Fedrigo, who earned \$34,500 teaching at the University of Michigan, also prizes the flexibility she has. After "the inspiration I get from my students," she says control over her schedule is the No.1 reason she enjoys her job. Fedrigo has Fridays off and four months free to do research and travel.

Few workers are that lucky. Some companies have made changes, but many haven't responded to employees' desire for flexible schedules that make it easier to balance work and family life.

HOW TO WRITE A COMPLAINT LETTER

Certain problems can be fixed in the moment an undercooked steak in a restaurant or a long wait at the salon. Others such as lost luggage or erroneous credit card charges can't be resolved so quickly. If you've talked to customer service and are still not satisfied, it may be time to send a letter. Here's how to write one that gets results.

- **Take a deep breath.** Don't write while you're fuming it won't help your case to be hostile. Instead, wait until you're calm. And always send a hard copy emails can easily be ignored.

- **Address the right person.** It is critical to send the letter to the company's CEO or president. In my experience, the higher the rank, the faster the response. Call the company's corporate headquarters or check its website for the appropriate name.

- **Document everything.** Begin the letter by describing the problem (for example, a pair of shoes from a mail-order catalog never arrived) and the ways in which you attempted to resolve it. Attach copies of all receipts, and list the dates of any correspondence you've had with the company. This not only gives the person you wrote to the information he needs, but it also shows that you're organized and persistent.

- **Clearly state your expectations.** Do you want something repaired or replaced, or a full refund? Detail exactly what it is you want, and when you need an answer. For example, "I expect to hear from you within two weeks regarding this situation."

- **Send it off.** Your letter should be no longer than a page; be sure to end with a polite thank-you. If a month passes with no satisfactory response, don't give up. You may have to write several times, but I've found that most companies do respond to complaint letters. Eventually, you'll get compensation and peace of mind.

GOING NOWHERE FAST

OVER THE YEARS, I'VE heard many unusual "How I Found My Career" stories, from the hairdresser who became a millionaire with an invention that came to her in a dream to the stay-at-home mom who catapulted to CEO of an Internet company five years after going back to work. But none surprised me more than the account offered by a 45-ish finance manager I once sat next to on a plane. "I started with my company right out of grad school," she told me, when we got to chatting about work, "and it's been a steady climb from there. A promotion every four to five years. Very linear."

She could see the astonishment on my face. I had literally never heard a career narrative, especially one covering 20 years in duration, that didn't include a period of lull — a stall — or some measure of disappointment along the way.

“I know I’m kind of unusual,” she said, reading my reaction.

How about *extremely!*

Don’t get me wrong; not all career stalls are bad. You might hit a plateau as you wait (patiently or not) for a promotion to open up at your company. Or your career may stall if your company hits a tough economic stretch. A classmate of mine from business school has held the same middle management job in the automotive industry for the past seven years. At a reunion not long ago, she described herself as “stuck in the breakdown lane” but noted, “it’s better than the scrap heap.”

Sometimes women will design plateaus into their careers for personal reasons. When my kids were toddlers and I was a management consultant, I curtailed my travel and cut back on my client load for several years, telling my boss, “I don’t expect a promotion and I don’t want one, if that’s okay” Fortunately, it was, and after a few years, when my kids were in school for longer hours, I was able to crank up my performance again, and my career trajectory (eventually) followed.

But most stalls aren’t normal or intentional. Instead, they tend to creep up on you like a bad cold. At first you may notice you’re not being included in meetings the way you used to be, a realization that comes on like a dull headache. Then you may begin to sense that your boss and teammates aren’t talking to you as often. That gives you the shakes. Finally, you may not be able to avoid the fact that pay raises and promotions are passing you by, at which point you’re overcome with the dizzying, stomach-churning insight, “Oh my God, I’m dead in the water around here.”

YET THE FIRST REACTION to a career stall, I’ve observed, is usually denial. Once, in Chicago, when I was giving a speech about career management, a woman in the audience asked me why newer employees in her company kept moving up the ladder before she’d had her turn. It wasn’t fair, she lamented – after all, she’d been working in the same position, as a logistics supervisor at a trucking company, for five years. “Are they passing me by because new hires are cheaper for the company?” she wanted to know. I told her it was possible but unlikely. “Given how companies usually work,” I said, “it’s probably because their performance is better.”

She winced, and I cringed. My intention had not been to hurt her feelings but to snap her into reality, because the longer you deny a career stall, the more likely it will turn into a nosedive. Later, when we spoke after

my speech, I began to explain as much, but she cut me off to say that, deep in her gut, she already knew she was in trouble.

As we started talking about why, it turned out that this woman's story embodied all three of the most common reasons careers stall. First of all, she was dying of boredom. Her job, coordinating the movement of her company's Midwestern fleet of 200 trucks, had become rote and lost any meaning it once held for her. "I loved it when I started," she said. "I made mistakes. I was learning something. But now I could do it in my sleep."

Her disillusionment reminded me of a letter I'd just received from a woman who worked at a national child welfare agency "I passed up a six-figure offer at a consulting firm to take this job because I believed I would help change the world," she wrote. Instead, over time, she found herself paralyzed within an organization riddled with bureaucracy and internecine warfare, her days spent deflecting memos and preparing reports no one would read. She could barely drag herself to work every day. "Nothing I do makes a difference," she wrote. "And I've lost all interest in trying."

Such disengagement often leads to the second common reason for a career stall, which is underperformance. Who shines on the job when she's bored? But boredom isn't the only reason performance suffers. Not long ago, I received an e-mail from an architect who was practically in despair, describing how hard her job had become. "Count me among the old dogs who cannot learn new tricks," she said. "But here I am at a certain age, unable to keep up with the pace that one advancement in technology after another has brought to my profession." Another woman I know, a medical researcher, started to stall when a new boss in her department at a Boston hospital tried.

ADVICE, ETC

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, I watched a speech online about time management given in 1998 by Randy Pausch, PhD, a professor at Carnegie Mellon University. Pausch cautioned listeners not to waste energy on activities that seem urgent but aren't important. Choose instead, Pausch suggested, to spend time on activities that are deeply important, even if they don't seem critical.

That was an excellent speech. It would become extremely poignant in 2006, when the then 45-year-old Pausch was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Watching another of his speeches online – the famous "Last Lecture" (now a

best-selling book), in which he teaches his three young children how to make their dreams come true – I wondered if this time management expert sensed, even back in 1998, that he'd spend less time on earth than anyone wished.

Pausch's work and his personal story frequently forget: To live richly and avoid regret, we must give priority to things of real importance. But in a world where everything from your BlackBerry to your car's oil filter to your grandmother is competing for your limited time, this requires deliberate, consistent choice. The good news is that we can develop the habit of choosing what's really important over everything else. Life seems designed to teach us how to do this. Pay attention, and you'll notice that even when you're under "urgent" pressure to do something unimportant, it feels discordant and wrong. Do what really matters, and your life comes into harmonious alignment. Don't believe me? Apply the concepts below, and call me in the morning.

First (and Second) Things First

To me, Stephen Covey will always be the smart, funny guy on my high school debate team who, when it was time to be cross-examined by an opponent, would drop the "c" from the traditional phrase "I'm now open for cross-ex," so that it came out "I'm now open for raw sex." The judges never noticed, and the rest of us debaters thought Steve was hilarious. We also sort of knew that his dad, Stephen Covey Sr., was a renowned management guru. Randy Pausch was quoting Steve's dad when he proposed categorizing all activities on a matrix of apparent urgency and ultimate importance, like this:

QUADRANT I	QUADRANT II	QUADRANT III	QUADRANT IV
Important, Urgent	Important, Not Urgent	Urgent, Not Important	Not Important, Not Urgent

As Covey observed, we almost always do the things in Quadrant I (stuff that's both important and urgent, like feeding the kids and paying the rent), and almost never get to Quadrant IV (like reading junk mail). That's good. However, we tend to focus on Quadrant III (urgent but not important things, like talking to a demanding coworker about her rotten boyfriend) to the detriment of Quadrant II (no-deadline pastimes like writing a book, basking in nature's beauty, or taking time to be still). Covey proposed devoting less time to the dinky tasks, even those that are urgent, and more time to those things that are really important.

Here's an exercise he proposed:

1. Get 20 or 30 notecards. On each card, write down one thing you should

do, want to do, hope to do, plan to do, or dream of doing. Include everything, no matter how large or small. Keep this up until your brain runs dry.

2. When you've written down all your goals, plans, and ideas, separate the cards into two piles: things that have to be done right this minute (or feel like it) and those that don't.

3. Now go through both of these piles, separating each into "important" and "not important" stacks. The four resulting stacks correlate with the Covey Quadrants.

4. Carefully place both your "not important" card stacks in a safe spot. This, if my experience is any indication, will ensure that you'll never find them again. If you do happen to stumble across them at any time in the future, burn them.

5. Commit to eliminating from your schedule all the activities that didn't make it into the "important" stacks. If you have time after doing your important and urgent things, use it on important but not urgent activities. No matter how pressing something may seem to be, if it's not important, just don't do it.

From Theory to Practice:

Living a Quadrant II Life

Planning to live this way is one thing; changing habits of thought and action is another. You're subjected to daily pressure to do things that, while unimportant in the long run, may seem unavoidable in the middle of a PTA meeting. Congratulate yourself every time you drop a Quadrant III activity and replace it with something from Quadrant II. Here are some substitutions I made after doing this exercise:

- Postponed promoting new book to raise money for research on Down syndrome.
- Canceled client meeting to bake my daughter's birthday cake.
- Blew off e-mail to chat on the phone with dear friend.
- Blew off e-mail to volunteer at local methadone clinic.
- Blew off e-mail to exercise.
- Blew off e-mail to bathe.
- Blew off e-mail to sleep.
- Blew off e-mail to sense a theme developing here.

At this point, I'd like to apologize to all of you who didn't receive an e-mail response from me this month. Blame Covey and Pausch. (Actually, thanks, Covey and Pausch!) E-mail may be crucially important to you, in

which case it should get your consistent attention. But it amazed me, when I did the Quadrant exercise, how many of my urgent-seeming e-mails felt less important than working for people in need, caring for my health, or being with friends and family. I realized that I could easily spend all my time shoveling out the electronic Augean stables, missing countless small experiences that add up to my life's purpose.

How to Determine What's Important

As powerful as this exercise was for me, it posed a few vexing questions. Highly effective people seem to cut through life's complexities in bold, clean strokes; reading their books or watching their lectures, you can practically hear them telling their secretaries: "No, no, Mabel, can't you see".

HOW DID YOU DO

BY MOST ECONOMIC MEASURES, 2006 was a great year. Despite rising interest rates, high oil prices and the sharpest housing downturn in 15 years, inflation was low, productivity rose steadily, corporate profits reached a 40-year high, the stock market soared and the unemployment rate dropped to 4.6% – the lowest level in more than five years. Strong hiring in service businesses like education, health care, finance, travel and entertainment more than offset big job losses in the auto and housing sectors.

But in the midst of this booming economy, more than two-thirds of Americans told pollsters that they don't believe life for their children's generation will be better than it has been for them. Only 27% of those surveyed last year thought the nation was headed in the right direction; and this year, 71% of respondents said the country was on the wrong track.

One reason for the widespread pessimism is that most Americans haven't seen the nation's economic boom reflected in their paychecks. Last year's 1.1% average raise was their first real pay increase in a long time. Workers' productivity grew an impressive 18% between 2000 and 2006 – but most people's inflation adjusted weekly wages rose only 1% during that time. This was the first economic expansion since World War II without a sustained pay increase for rank-and-file workers. Typical 2007 raises will be small, experts say. They predict slower economic growth and higher unemployment this year.

In the last five years, all the salary gains went to the highest-paid workers, says Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's *economy.com*. "Average income" is a misleading statistic, he explains: If one of 300 million

workers gets a \$300 million raise, for example, and the other 299,999,999 get none, the average salary has risen – but only one person is earning more. “A better measure is *median* income – the midpoint between the top 50% of earners and the bottom 50% “, says Zandi. “And median income has struggled to keep up with inflation.”

Statistics vs. Real Life

Many Americans feel that government statistics don't match their daily experience. “Inflation seems worse than official reports indicate,” says Arden

Davis, who made \$94,300 teaching geological engineering at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology last year. His view is widely shared. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) says inflation is low, but the cost of necessities like housing, utilities, health insurance and education is rising faster than wages for most Americans. “The CPI is heavily influenced by the wealthy, who do most of the spending,” explains Zandi “It doesn't reflect the budget of most Americans.” Gary Earl Ross, who earned \$64,900 as an English professor and author in Buffalo, N.Y., agrees: “Any wage increase I've gotten is offset by increases in the cost of living,” he says, “and in the fall I'll have two kids in college.” Marie Ouano made \$75,000 last year performing X-ray and MRI exams as a radiology technician but says housing in San Francisco is so expensive, she's not sure she can afford to buy a home on one income.

High Anxiety Among Workers

“People are worried about the future,” says Gary Fearn, who earned \$9,000 last year as a minister in Pueblo, Colo. For many Americans, being employed no longer means being free of financial insecurity. One reason is that employee benefits have been steadily shrinking. Only 18% of private-sector workers now have a traditional pension plan and 40% have no retirement plan of any kind at work. A majority of baby boomers – Americans born between 1946 and 1964 – say they expect to continue working after they reach retirement age.

The cost of health care keeps rising faster than wages or inflation. Fewer employers offer health coverage and fewer employees can afford to buy it. The upshot: Almost 47 million Americans now are uninsured, and most of them are in families with at least one full-time worker. Only 47% of parents in families earning less than \$40,000 a year are offered health insurance at work.

The Rich Get Richer

Many Americans are troubled by the income gap between the nation's highest earners and everyone else a gap that has grown dramatically in recent

decades. In the last five years, inflation-adjusted wages rose less than 1% a year for the vast majority of households. But for the top 5% of earners, they jumped 2.5% a year. And for the top 1% of earners, the gains were much bigger: In 2005, the average CEO made 369 times as much as the average worker, compared with 131 times as much in 1993.

"I'm sorry to say I feel the rich are getting richer, and the rest of us are fighting to survive," says DeAnna Forman, who made \$25,000 as a bartender in South Lake Tahoe, Calif. "I feel like I'm always trying to catch up." Kirk Kuchera, who earned \$8,300 as a behavioral counselor for youth in Austin, Minn., agrees. "It appears to me that the lower middle class continues to work its way down the economic ladder, while those at the top of the corporate ladder move higher and higher at an unbelievable pace," he says.

Experts are concerned about wage inequality too. "We're in an economy that provides outsized, almost lottery-style gains to certain people in certain professions," says John Challenger, president of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, a global outplacement firm. He worries that, with college so expensive, graduates are forced to seek higher-salaried jobs to pay off their debts, avoiding critical lower-paying fields like education and social services. Income inequality has a negative impact in well-paid fields too: The extremely lucrative business side of medicine has drawn so much interest, for example, that more than 40 medical schools now offer an M.B.A. degree as well as an M.D. for graduates who want to go into healthcare management or to Wall Street, where a doctor can.

CHANGE YOUR CAREER, CHANGE YOUR LIFE

"MY KIDS THOUGHT I'd lost my mind," Stephanie Manriquez says. "They couldn't figure out why I'd want to quit my job, give everything up."

But to Manriquez, leaving her job with a bakery supply company made perfect sense. "When I turned 50, I asked myself. 'If time and money didn't matter, what would I want to be?'"

She moved in with a friend and worked in a coffee shop while earning her certificate in massage therapy. Now, at age 59, Manriquez has her own practice with six offices and 15 massage therapists.

"People think I'm bold," she says. "But I didn't want to be 70 and think, 'Gosh, I wish I'd made that change.'"

A growing number of Americans are leaving their jobs to pursue their

real passions. “When times are tough, people get more introspective and seek meaning in their lives,” says Bruce Grierson, an expert on career change and author of the new book *U-Turn*. “If you’re in a kind of ‘Dilbert job,’ that can start to weigh on your psyche.”

Sometimes, change is born of necessity; Janet Mohr, 45, found a new career after she lost her job teaching English at a local college. Today, Mohr designs gardens that attract birds to her clients’ yards in Appleton, Wis.

“I still love teaching,” she says. “Now I use the knowledge I have to own lives. If you’re doing what you love, and you have a passion for your job, it will work.”

Bruce Sabath was once a successful businessman, but each highpowered job was less satisfying than the last. He fantasized about being an actor, but the idea of pursuing a career in theater seemed ludicrous. Things changed 10 years ago, when a colleague Sabath admired told him she was quitting her job to paint.

“It blew the doors off my conception of what was allowed in life,” he says. “If she could decide to go paint, what did that mean for me?”

Before long, he’d quit his job to study acting full-time. Now 45, he’s performing on Broadway in a revival of the Sondheim musical *Company*.

“There was always that voice in my mind saying, ‘Is this just nuts? Am I kidding myself?’” he admits. “But I always figured that, if I kept working at it methodically, eventually I could make things happen.” That special blend of confidence and fear may be the force behind every successful career switch. “You’re going to be scared,” Mohr says. “

UNIT IV PERSONALITY

JILL ABRAMSON

Now that she's set to take the reins as the first female executive editor of *The New York Times*, what does Jill Abramson do to relax? She releases a new book, *The Puppy Diaries*, out next month. Here, she ruminates on motherhood, Metro-North, and a dog named Scout.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Reading the *Sunday Times* on a sunny beach.

What is your greatest fear?

Falling.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?

The Unsinkable Molly Brown.

Which living person do you most admire?

My sister, Jane O'Connor, who has written many charming children's books.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

Interrupting.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?

Interrupting.

What is your greatest extravagance?

Replacing a pair of Lucchese cowboy boots after my dog, Scout, gnawed the toes off the first pair.

What is your favorite journey?

The 7:05 p.m. Metro-North train on Friday to my weekend house in Connecticut.

On what occasion do you lie?

On Thanksgiving about dishes that aren't necessarily made from scratch.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?

The invariable ink stains on my hands and clothes.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

"Good dog."

What is your greatest regret?

That I didn't cross West 44th Street five minutes later, after a truck came and mowed me down.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?

My family, both four-legged and two-legged.

When and where were you happiest?

When I was pregnant, in New York and Virginia.

What is your current state of mind?

Excited (and anxious).

If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?

That everyone would love walking our dog, especially in a rainstorm.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

Raising humorous, empathetic, well-adjusted kids whose favorite place to collapse is my couch.

What is your most treasured possession?

My uncle Philly's autographed Yankees pictures, especially one with Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?

Walking Scout and forgetting to bring a bag.

What is your favorite occupation?

Rereading *The Great Gatsby* every year.

What is your most marked characteristic?

My peculiar Upper West Side drawl.

What do you most value in your friends?

Getting me to laugh over life's inevitable disasters.

Who are your favorite writers?

Robert Caro, Maureen Dowd, and Jane Mayer.

Who are your heroes in real life?

The *Times's* foreign correspondents and shooters who work in war zones.

What is it that you most dislike?

Phonies.

How would you like to die?

Reading something juicy in the *Times*.

If you were to die and could choose what to come back as, what would it be?

The Gray Lady.

What is your motto?

"Good for One Fare" — the motto on the old New York City subway token.

ESTHER WILLIAMS

She made a splash 70 years ago as Hollywood's favorite poolside pinup girl, starring in MGM's popular aqua-musicals of the 1940s and 50s. Now, at 90, "America's Mermaid" admits that swimming is still the greatest love of her life.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

A warm, sunny day at the pool.

What is your greatest fear?

The pool is unheated.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?

Perhaps a Roman goddess – Neptune's daughter.

What is your greatest extravagance?

Too many swimsuits! (I finally decided to make them.)

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

I'm late. My clock seems to be different from others'.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?

Arriving on time – unless it's a call to casting!

On what occasion do you lie?

When I arrive late. I have a full arsenal of reasons, none of which are true.

What is your greatest regret?

The cancellation of my Olympic Games, in 1940. I was sure I would be a champion, a gold medalist and all that as a cancellation prize they gave me stardom at MGM.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?

Besides swimming? Swimming with my husband, Edward. I taught him his backstroke. Now we can swim in tandem.

Which talent would you most like to have?

Gene Kelly told me I was too tall to dance [with] when we did *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*. He would have preferred Judy [Garland], but she was ill. June Allyson was pregnant. All they had available at MGM was me. I wanted so to be the best. The picture was a smash at the box office. Was it my dancing?

What is your current state of mind?

Forgetful – but fertile!

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

Being a movie star at MGM – without a doubt.

What is your most treasured possession?

My ability to survive this lifetime!

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?

The loss to me of my son Kimball too early on.

Where would you like to live?

How could I wish for anything better than Beverly Hills?

I live on a knoll with a view of the Pacific that is breathtaking.

What is your favorite occupation?

Being a Movie Star.

What is your most marked characteristic?

My mind. And sometimes a wicked tongue.

Who are your favorite writers?

I love biographies, particularly those of my colleagues.

They fill in all the blanks.

Who are your heroes in real life?

My mother, Bula. She was a minister and a psychologist.

She spoke her mind. She was the voice of reality — and she was there when I needed her most. She was from Dodge City, Kansas. That had to be real.

What are your favorite names?

Susan, Kimball, and Benjamin, the names of my children.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?

Would I lie if I said a mermaid? (A million-dollar mermaid — this economy is tough!) or Ingrid Bergman.

What is your motto?

“Everyone in the pool!”

HOROSCOPE

Aries (March 20 — April 19)

A friend becomes a rival near the 6th when ruling planet Mars travels through your house of secret enemies (yes, there is one). By the 23rd you won't believe how she's managed to win over so many of your friends. On the 29th, however, she'll overplay her hand, and that's when you can send her packing.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

The Venus-and-Saturn square gives you patience, which is a good thing considering you'll need it the week of the 2nd when your significant other will be stressed. Just be a good listener — he doesn't actually want advice. (It's the same mechanism in the male psyche that refuses to ask for directions.)

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

Venus, planet of confidence and sexual energy, enters your sign on the 11th. You'll be turning so many heads that you'll wonder if your pheromones are on overdrive. This couldn't have come at a better time, as you've been feeling a little down lately. Soak up the extra attention through May 8th.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

Whether it's a diet or a budget, you can't seem to stick to anything – your heart isn't in it. On the 9th and 19th, however, fiery energy will encourage you to seek out a new experience such as a philanthropic project. Once you regain a sense of purpose, you should feel ready to engage in your life again.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

With so much heavy Saturn energy in your horoscope, you've been feeling generally overwhelmed. But if anyone can pull herself up by her platform heels, it's you. Take care of yourself: find the extra time to blow out your hair, spruce up your wardrobe, or speak frankly with your partner about your needs.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

Things get chaotic when combative Mars enters Pisces on the 6th, so try to stay calm. The mood swings of loved ones are so extreme that you'll wonder if everyone made a collective decision to go off their meds at the same time. Your tranquil energy will encourage those around you to regulate their emotions.

Libra (September 23 – October 22)

Your relationship may get rocky due to the Venus-and-Saturn square. It seems he has come down with a case of commitment phobia. Don't panic – just make plans to hang out with friends. You're still the fun-loving woman you were when you met, after all. His issues should resolve themselves.

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

A vacation might be just what you need, since you've been expending so much energy on others lately. Let your imagination roam to the unimaginable on the 17th. Think glamorous, exotic locales. You'll be ready to act on those plans and actually take flight by late summer.

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

Jupiter turns retrograde on the 5th, which signals that over the next four months you might take a chance on a new life direction, potentially even a career change. All the upheaval won't be too stressful though. Sagittarians

have lots of strength and character. You'll like where you land in August.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

You've been trying to ditch the daily grind and pursue your passion, but things just haven't come together yet. An important phone call on the 17th could change all that. While you won't be able to quit your day job yet, the life-transforming energies at play suggest this could be a possibility by year's end.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 17)

The Saturn retrograde has turned you into a pack rat, so it will be important to clean house on the 19th, when the phenomenon ends. This is the time to clear out the half-used lip balms rattling around in your purse and reorganize your closets. You'll feel lighter, healthier, and more powerful.

Pisces (February 18 - March 19)

You're on the verge of a breakthrough at work. As for your significant other, however...you're wondering whether your support of his dreams has impeded his ability to pay the bills. Encourage him to get out there and connect with people who can jump-start his career. You'll both be happier for it.

FANFAIR

Jon Grisham AQUARIUS JAN. 20 - FEB. 18

People talk a lot about spiritual relationships, often without the faintest idea of what one is. You, however, could probably write a book on the subject by now. With the ruler of your 12th house deep in your 7th, you have to be compassionate, forgiving, thankful, and attentive to the needs of others, even if it means you can't get all the love and help you think you deserve. The only catch in these so-called higher-consciousness unions is that you can never be totally sure whether you are playing on a higher level or just playing the fool.

Reggie Bush PISCES FEB. 19 - MARCH 20

The older we get, the more we have to realize that freedom is not about living a wild, chaotic life of abandon. We have to be sensitive to what is best not only for ourselves but also for others. This is especially true for you now that your 6th and 11th houses are so active. To make a worthwhile contribution to humanity, you just need to pitch in and serve humbly without bitching and moaning that you think you're being used.

Lucrezia Borgia ARIES MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

Inhibitions be damned! Your reputation and public standing hang on your ability to express yourself to the fullest now. With the planetary rulers of

your solar 5th and 10th houses in mutual reception, you'll find that to be truly creative you have to carry yourself like a consummate professional instead of a temperamental artist. So even if you suffer from stage fright, writer's block, or performance anxiety, get out there and show your stuff. Unrelated side note: kids can be an awful drag, but can you live without them?

Jack Nicholson TAURUS APRIL 20 - MAY 20

A new moon at the end of your solar 9th house will fill you with that old restless yearning to explore what lies beyond #31 the horizon. You're still tied to your domestic responsibilities, however, so it won't be easy to take off without leaving behind a frozen dinner or two for the family to pop into the microwave. All Tauruses adore seeing new places and having new experiences, but you love your creature comforts just as much. You'll make it to the moon – just as soon as you're assured they've got nice towels up there.

Natalie Portman GEMINI MAY 21 - JUNE 21

Before you read another word, stop for a moment and breathe. Close your eyes and take one long, deep, calming breath. That's your message right now. To lower your blood pressure, allay your anxieties, and make sure the oxygen in your blood is flowing to all the right places at all the right times, you need to take time to inhale and exhale. Now that the rulers of your 3rd and 8th houses are so dominant, many Geminis are having trouble performing this simple operation. That's right: in, out, in, out.

Calvin Coolidge CANCER JUNE 22 - JULY 22

You're never going to get a true picture of what a real relationship is if you sit around reading bridal magazines or watching old romantic comedies on TV. Romance may ring true for some people some of the time, but you can't fall into that sort of fantasy when there are such powerful forces at work between planets in your 7th house and your solar 2nd. Successful relationships are based on mutually agreed-upon conditions, and in your case right now they are strictly about money and who is in control.

Kelis LEO JULY 23 - AUG. 22

Jupiter's in Sadge now, so by all means live it up and have a ball. You're a 5th-house person at heart, and as a Leo you have been put on this earth to enjoy life and love to the max. If anything happens to be bugging you, there is no sense subsisting on pain pills when the path is as clear as it is: change your life. Get rid of anything (or anyone) who's a drag. Make your health – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual – your No. 1 priority. Nobody is

going to clean up your act but you, so grab the broom and go for it.

Peggy Guggenheim VIRGO AUG. 23 - SEPT. 22

In your best moments, you are absolutely unmatched as a performer, creator, and lovmaker. So congratulations. With Saturn transiting Leo and the recent lunation in your solar 5th house, you're at it again, allowing yourself at last to be raw, real, vulnerable, and, best of all, known. And if, when you're all alone, you weep now and then for everything that cannot be, well, frankly, it's nobody's goddamned business.

Bruce Springsteen LIBRA SEPT. 23 - OCT. 23

It's such a great feeling when you rack up a few thousand frequent-flier miles or have a shiny new set of wheels in the driveway. It shows that you've still got mobility and you haven't run out of options. That's the feisty, optimistic attitude you can get when Mars and Jupiter pass through your solar 3rd house. The only problem is, with Saturn as a singleton in the 11th, you don't know where to go. With the future so uncertain, maybe it's safer to stay put close to home and family. Duller but safer.

Condoleezza Rice SCORPIO OCT. 24 - NOV. 21

With money no longer a source of agita, maybe you can stay focused on your career. If you've got the gift of gab, God bless you, because it's going to come in handy now that the ruler of your 10th house is in your solar 3rd. Not only can you express your views professionally and publicly, but you will also be able to talk your way out of all the sticky political situations you've gotten mixed up in over the past few months as you endeavored to climb to the pinnacle of success without stepping on too many heads along the way.

Katie Holmes SAGITTARIUS NOV. 22 - DEC. 21

It's probably safe to say that, on the subject of money, we're all a little nuts — some of us more than others. When the ruler of your 2nd house becomes a singleton planet in your solar chart, however, you've got to get sane, and fast. You don't have the luxury of denial in these circumstances, so your mind has to be sharp and your practices above reproach. You can still be generous, but since you'll be dealing with the big boys, you'd better learn what the dollar is really worth, at home and abroad.

Julia Bond CAPRICORN DEC. 22 - JAN. 19

Getting you to stop obsessing over the future would require nothing less than a flock of angels flapping their fluffy white wings and telling you there's nothing to worry about. Even then you'd probably demand proof that miracles

can happen to Capricorns. You are so accustomed to wincing at the machinery of life that you can't imagine how a transit of Jupiter in your 12th house could lift you out of a funk brought on by an 8th-house Saturn. It absolutely could, but only if you stop dwelling on catastrophes that haven't happened yet.

HOROSCOPE

A forecast of what's in the stars for your sign by Susan Miller

Happy Birthday, Gemini!

What we love you're witty, curious and up on the latest trends, not to mention a brilliant communicator. On the other hand ... with so many varied interests, follow-through is not always your strong suit. You choose clothes in classic shapes and styles but continually reinvent your look by wearing them with statement pieces from your vast collection of accessories. Love personality: ever independent, you're slow to settle down — and even when you do, you never give up the hobbies you love. Wise partners know that the way to win your heart is by stimulating your mind.

Gemini (May 21 to June 20)

You're feeling adventurous, confident and ready to make changes. **Updating your wardrobe with a few key pieces will let others know you're serious about redefining your image, inside and out.** Travel of all kinds is likely this month, but a short trip on the 6th may prove the most fun. If a friend invites you to his nearby summer cottage, be sure to accept. **STAR MATES** *Nicole Kidman, Brooke Shields, ShiaLaBeouf*

Cancer (June 21 to July 22)

This month you'll revitalize yourself: mind, body and spirit. Start by stepping back on the 3rd to reflect on the past and plan for the future. Then **get jump on a healthier lifestyle with help from a trainer, nutritionist or other professional.** Don't get rattled by an emotional confrontation on the 18th. Instead, view it as a way to gain insight into the character of those around you. **STAR MATES** *Selma Blair, Giselle Bündchen, Tobey Maguire*

Leo (July 23 to Aug. 22)

It's time to break out of tired ruts. **Parties, dinners and festive events this month will give you plenty of opportunities to make new friends.** Not only will they urge you to dream big and be bold, but they'll also introduce you to fresh ideas. A tiff with a pal or partner on the 18th will blow over by the 23rd, but even so, you may want to rethink the future of your

relationship. **STAR MATES** *Kate Beckinsale, Kim Cattrall, Dustin Hoffman*

Virgo (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)

A turning point in your career is just ahead. **If you've been dreaming about taking a new direction professionally, get going** (and don't be discouraged by minor setbacks). Around the 18th, you'll need to focus on an issue at home, so keep your schedule light. Love may take a backseat this month, but go out and circulate on the 25th. Someone you meet will have real staying power. **STAR MATES** *Rachel Bilson, Jennifer Hudson, Charlie Sheen*

Libra (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)

You're yearning for a break from the daily grind. Luckily, there's almost no chance you'll be stuck in town, so grab your suitcase and hit the road. **If you can, bring along a friend and bond over some serious shopping.** On the 18th it seems like everyone needs you at once. When demanding relatives and an issue at home intrude on your tranquility, take refuge in your work.

STAR MATES *Catherine Zeta-Jones, Ashanti, John Mayer*

Scorpio (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)

It's time to focus on your finances. If you'd like to get a hefty bonus or secure a loan, ask around the 3rd. **Recognition comes easily now as others see and appreciate your talents.** Take advantage by scheduling interviews or meetings so you can shine. Rocky romantic times on the 12th improve by the 20th.

Plan to spend time with your sweetie then. **STAR MATES** *Julia Roberts, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Owen Wilson*

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)

All kinds of partners play big roles in your life this month. Healthy relationships flourish before the 14th, so **book a private getaway if you're happily involved.** You're in sync with almost everyone close to you, but surprising facts unearthed on the 18th will shed an unflattering light on one supposed ally. However you handle it, the air will clear by the 30th. **STAR MATES** *Katie Holmes, Teri Hatcher, Kiefer Sutherland*

Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)

Life is just how you like it: busy and productive. You're anxious to start checking things off your to-do list, but think through your plan before diving in. Your best bet is to **focus on finishing old projects and reconnecting with friends before the 18th,** then turn your attention to new ventures on the 19

th. Book a spa day for the 21st; you've earned a little rest and pampering! STAR MATES *Zoey Deschanel, KaU Moss, Denzel Washington*

Aquarius (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)

You've been looking for love and this month you'll find it. **You'll easily meet new suitors or find quality time to spend with a current one** – but watch out on the 12th, when attempts at romance could be disastrous. Around the 18th you may clash with a domineering friend. Don't be bullied into changing your ways. Instead, speak your mind; you may find it impossible not to. STAR MATES *Elizabeth Banks, Sheryl Crow, John Travolta*

Pisces (Feb. 19 to March 20)

Start thinking of ways to make your home more inviting. Clip inspiring photos, gather estimates and clean out clutter so you're ready to redecorate next month. **No desire to renovate? Host a dinner party on the 6th to delight your pals.** Work projects will monopolize your time after the 18th.

Trust your instincts – your judgment will be recognized on the 30th. STAR MATES *Carrie Underwood, Kristin Davis, Terrence Howard*

Aries (March 21 to April 19)

You're bursting with new ideas and fresh ways to express them. If you work in a creative field, this is your moment to shine. **All month your love life will be lively, but the 6th promises to be romantic and glamorous.** Be sure to dress accordingly. Traveling will also bring you joy, though delays along the way are likely, so bring a book or iPod to pass the time. STAR MATES *Reese Witherspoon, Mandy Moore, Zach Braff*

Taurus (April 20 to May 20)

Already pining away for fall fashions? Shore up your slush fund by asking for a raise or seeking a new job this month. **For the best outcome, make career decisions from the 23rd to 25th, if you can.** Plans to move or spruce up your home are best put off until after the 18th. Wherever you land, plan a pizza night or other casual gathering at home on the 28th. STAR MATES *Uma Thurman, Rosario Dawson, George Clooney.*

UNIT V

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

ONE BITE AT A TIME DIET MAKEOVERS

Has mindless munching got the best of you? Are you one of those women with a fridge full of nothing but film? Or is it that you simply have too much on your plate? Whatever your eating style, our genius food expert teases, tricks, and makes over your diet without ever making you feel deprived.

SARAH WILDMAN reports.

JO PIAZZA IS A PARTY GIRL, and anyone who reads her New York *Daily News* gossip column knows it. In *Full Disclosure*, she dishes about the boldfaced names that make up Manhattan's nightlife, which means she has to go out — a lot, as in two to three evenings a week, working the red-carpet circuit of movie premieres, TV show launches, and fashion galas. Dinner often comes in a wineglass with whatever finger foods float by.

Jo was the first subject in Os "mindful eating makeover" experiment. The idea: Take four women — a glamorous, out of the town city girl in her 20s; a new mother (once an adventurous cook, now an aficionado of cheese puffs and kiddie waffles) in her 30s; a 40-something fast food lover with a busy job at a brokerage house and a desire to lose weight; and an entrepreneur in her early 50s whose diet is admirably healthy other than a penchant for snacking — and see if food behavior expert Brian Wansink, PhD, could gently get them to improve their eating habits.

Wansink is the John S. Dyson professor of marketing at Cornell University and author of *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think*. He is also a nontraditionalist when it comes to diet. Through ongoing research at his Food and Brand Lab, he's found that a number of surprising factors, having more to do with perception than taste, influence our decision to take a bite (or sip): Fancy wine labels, for instance, entice us to drink more, big plates make us eat more, and exotic descriptions on menus coax us to order dessert. Based on such information, Wansink has developed a series of simple tricks to help people change unhealthy eating patterns. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, impressed by his unique approach to food, appointed him executive director of its Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP). Now he's overseeing the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and new additions to My Pyramid, an interactive nutrition

program. For our makeovers, asked Wansink to share his insights into which cues might be prompting our subjects to eat poorly, and to recommend the kinds of switches that could encourage behavioral shifts.

After agreeing to participate, each woman opened her door to the food makeover team – Wansink, Jackie Haven (a registered dietitian and director of nutrition marketing and communications at the CNPP), and me, a fly on the wall with a tape recorder. Wansink would start our visits by explaining, “There are five major diet danger zones: meal stuffing, snack grazing, party bingeing, restaurant indulging, and desk or dashboard dining. The subjects would nod in recognition. “Make three small changes in a problem area,” he promised, “and you’ll jump-start the rest of your life without even knowing it.” All four of our volunteers were eager to try.

JO PIAZZA, 27

The night starts at 9 P.M. We stand on the red carpet at the trendy Bowery Hotel near Manhattan’s East Village, where Bravo and the CW Network are hosting a party to showcase their new season’s shows. Thin and deeply tan from a recent vacation, Jo is wearing a black satin miniskirt, a skintight blouse, and white patent leather heels. For the next hour and a half, she interviews a series of television actors outside the hotel. She has eaten nothing since 2 P.M., when she had a baked potato with cheese, sour cream, and bacon bits. Women are moving from foot to foot to relieve the tension on their heels. When we finally get inside, every corner is filled with celebrities from popular shows including Gossip Girl and The Real Housewives of New York City. But there’s hardly any food. A waiter offers us cucumber slices topped with a tab of Tuscan bean, a tiny mushroom cap, a kiss of goat cheese, and a chive or two, each less than the size of a thumbnail. Jo grabs an asparagus wrapped in prosciutto off another hors d’oeuvre tray. “I like it for the prosciutto,” she says, reminding me that she hates vegetables. Over the next hour, she has two glasses of red wine, a couple of cigarettes, and two more appetizers. “What will I eat when I get home?” she wonders aloud. “Feta cheese? That’s all I have in the fridge. You know, I often forget to eat.”

Back at Jo’s West Village apartment, Wansink and Haven open her refrigerator and find – Jo was right – alone package of Feta, along with one Greek yogurt and a child-size serving of applesauce. Wansink snaps a picture on his iPhone. The kitchen is so bare it looks like the place is for rent. Jo admits she never eats at home, except for her daily breakfast of yogurt and

honey. She also says she tends to order steak and skip the veggies when she goes out; she's a meat and cheese kind of gal, and she'll eat bread only if it's served with olive oil. (Wansink tells her that, although olive oil is healthy, people take in more calories from it than butter when it's on the table.) She adds that many days she'll go from 2 P.M. until 11 P.M. without a bite to eat; only then will she snag a few appetizers at an event or, if she's "really cranky," a slice of pizza for dinner on her way home. Jo is worried that her eating habits might have something to do with her energy level, which she admits is low for a 27-year-old. Wansink's advice: Jo's irregular eating is the first thing Wansink addresses; she needs a steadier supply of healthy calories to keep up her stamina. And he wants those calories to be mostly from fresh produce. He encourages Jo to buy a tray of precut.

A BEAUTIFUL MIND

*The adage "you're only as old as you feel" may need an update. If the latest research in brain function is right, "you're only as old as you think" might be closer to the truth. Gary W. Small, director of the UCLA Center on Aging and author of *The Longevity Bible* (Hyperion) and *The Memory Bible* (Hyperion), explains how we may be able to keep our minds fit the same way we do our abs: through exercise.*

Can we protect our brains from aging the way we protect our bodies and skin? Absolutely. I hear from patients all the time who are concerned about their memory. They walk into a room and they can't remember why they are there, or they walk by someone and they can't pull that person's name out of their hat quickly enough. I talk them through a few healthy brain strategies and many see a difference right away. That tells you how plastic the brain is.

What do you mean by "healthy brain strategies"? There are four elements: mental exercise, diet, physical conditioning, and stress reduction. We published a study last year that found that when people made a few simple changes in each of these areas, they showed considerable improvement in memory scores. Brain scans also showed a highly significant increase in brain efficiency.

Can you give us some examples of the mental exercises you prescribe? There's a specific cognitive technique called Look, Snap, Connect. First, look – focus your attention. The biggest reason people don't remember something is because they weren't paying attention. Then snap – create a mental snapshot or visual image of the information. It's easier to remember visual imagery than other types of information. And finally connect – link

up those visual images into a story or pattern for easy recall later. For instance, let's say you have to remember to pick up eggs and stamps. Visualize in your mind's eye the postman carrying a dozen eggs, and I guarantee that image will stick with you.

What do you think of all the brain exercise books and games that are on the market right now? I collaborated on one, called Brain Games, which is a handheld device with puzzles and memory games. I think they're a great, fun way for people to keep challenging themselves. People notice their scores improving, and they're motivated to cross-train their brain.

Do you actually have to perform puzzles like this? What about just learning something new? Beyond the brain gymnastics, keeping your mind active is the most important thing. There are studies that show that people with a college education have a lower risk for Alzheimer's disease. People who do crossword puzzles or board games or spend time reading also have a lower risk. Don't feel you have to do only one kind of thing. Think in terms of trying new things, expanding your mind.

Does physical conditioning affect brain health? A recent study found that walking ten minutes a day lowers your risk for Alzheimer's disease. You don't have to become a triathlete. And if you're under chronic stress, your body secretes cortisol and other stress hormones, which have been found to shrink the memory centers of the brain. People under stress have increased risk for depression, which is also a risk factor for Alzheimer's. And when you're stressed out and anxious, you're not focusing your attention.

You've said that multitasking can be stressful and distracting, but I would have thought multitasking might qualify as brain exercise. You're right to some extent. But the challenge in today's digital environment is not to overdo it. I frequently talk to my patients about mindful awareness: staying aware of yourself and your environment from moment to moment. Being mindful enhances brain health and our quality of life in general. If you're mindful, you're going to be less likely to trip on a stair and hurt yourself. You're going to eat less because you'll be aware of when you're full, and you'll stop. You're going to have better relationships because you're going to listen to your friend when she talks to you. By paying attention to a task, you are giving the information meaning and putting it into context immediately. It's going to be easier to remember when you do that.

We've heard that both genetics and the environment can affect brain

health. Does that mean toxins? Sure, toxic exposures to mold, smog, and smoke can be detrimental. But I also mean the quality of your personal environment, how you arrange your living spaces. If you minimize clutter, you minimize stress and anxiety. Get rid of things that you don't use and organize the things you do use every day. And we can also declutter our relationships. We have toxic relationships that we hang on to that bring us down and distract us. Maybe spend less time with people who are not important to you.

There aren't a lot of peer-reviewed studies about decluttering your desk, are there? *[Laughs]* *The Journal of Clutter Control* hasn't weighed in, no. But even if something has not been studied systematically, it doesn't mean we can't think about it and try it. There's controversy about the training of your brain. Skeptics will say there isn't conclusive proof, and I think there are some important questions still to be asked. But I don't have a problem recommending that people try organizing their desk or cleaning out a closet. I think the risk is minimal, and there is plenty of evidence that it will do you some real good.

IT'S NOT THE DIET, IT'S CALORIES - RESARCHERS FIND

The findings should free people from the notion that it's necessary to eat a specific ratio of fat, protein and carbohydrates. They should choose, instead, what works for them.

"There isn't any one way. That is the nice thing about none of these diets in particular winning," said Christopher Gardner, a nutrition researcher at Stanford University's Prevention Research Center; "We don't have any right to push low-fat or low-carb or high-protein. If one of these approaches is more satiating, where you will not be hungry and have cravings, that is the one that will work for you."

The study did not prove, however, that every dieter succeeds. Instead, it reinforces numerous other studies showing most people lose a modest amount of weight in the first few months of dieting and regain some or all of it over time. In Wednesday's study, the average weight loss was 13 pounds at six months and 9 pounds at two years.

The research followed 811 overweight or obese people, 62% of whom were women, enrolled at one of two study sites: Harvard School of Public Health in Boston or the Pennington Biomedical Research Center of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. The participants were assigned to one of

four diets: low-fat, average-protein; low-fat, high-protein; high-fat, average-protein; and high-fat, high-protein.

The diets ranged from 1,200 to 2,400 calories a day based on each individual's body mass index and gender, but everyone was asked to cut about 750 calories a day from what they normally ate. All the diets were low in saturated fat, the kind linked to heart disease and found in many fried or processed foods. Participants were asked to do 90 minutes a week of moderate exercise. They kept a food diary, and a Web-based program provided feedback on how close they had come to their goals. Individual and group counseling sessions were held over the two-year study.

"We were trying to focus on just those three nutrients – fat, protein and carbohydrates – and keep everything else, such as saturated fat and fiber, as consistent as possible," said Catherine M. Loria, project scientist at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which funded the research. "This shows people can just focus on counting calories. They have a lot of flexibility. It's a great finding." The study refutes the notion that any one nutrient has a special power to accelerate weight loss, said Dr. Frank M. Sacks, lead author of the study and a professor of cardiovascular disease prevention at Harvard. "We used to think there could be a biological effect of certain diets. That is probably not true."

There may be a strong behavioral effect in the success of a diet, however. The people who attended two-thirds or more of the counseling sessions over the two years lost an average of 22 pounds, compared with the average loss of 9 pounds.

The study was highly anticipated because previous research on diets over the last two decades has come to dramatically different conclusions.

"Some studies showed a very lowfat, strict vegetarian diet was best," Sacks said. "Others had Atkins diets doing better. So the question we had was, how do we reconcile all that?"

Many of the previous studies lasted six months or less, enrolled small numbers of people (usually women) and sometimes involved feeding participants prepared meals instead of allowing them to follow the diet on their own in real-life conditions, Gardner said.

Some studies also attracted media attention and marketing type that may have contributed to the success of specific regimens, Sacks said.

"In this study, we wanted to neutralize these diets," he said. "No

marketing. No expectations. All the diets were healthy. We told the participants that experts are completely at odds about which would be better. I think that is a lot of the reason why our study showed they were equal.”

Another study, published in July in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, found that both the Atkins and Mediterranean diets were somewhat more effective than a low-fat diet.

But that study’s authors also recommended choosing a diet “according to individual preferences.”

Few of the people in the current study strictly adhered to the calorie limits and the composition of their diets, suggesting it is just too difficult to do so, Gardner said. For example, those assigned to consume 35% of their calories as carbohydrates actually consumed an average of 43%, and groups that were supposed to eat a 20%-fat diet averaged 26%. In the end, many of the participants were eating diets that were more similar than dissimilar.

“If the diets are blurring together, then one might expect that the results would be similar,” Gardner said. “In reality, trying to follow a low-fat or high-protein diet really has a negative impact on adherence.”

URUGUAY’S ROAD TO VINTAGE STATUS

Wind-tousled grapevines, marching in comrow-straight lines and hung with pearl-like clusters of light-green fruit, stretch as far as the eye can see across gently rolling farmland near the village of Juanico in the Canelones District. Flowering red rosebushes punctuate the ends of each row, and tiro birds, named for their unique call, nest on wooden fence posts. Stalwart pine trees shield the vines from unkind winds along the 34th southern parallel.

The Canelones District is home to the Juanico wine region, just a 45-minute drive from the Rio de la Plata, the broad, slow-moving river that flows between Argentina and its northern neighbor Uruguay.

Surprisingly, the Juanico region is not part of Argentina, a well-known wine producer and exporter. It belongs to tiny Uruguay and serves as a gateway to the Wine Roads, a stretch of 15 bodegas where wine aficionados can stroll through vineyards, tour century old cellars and sample fine wines and local cuisine.

“All the wineries in our wine tourism association export their wines, which guarantees excellent quality,” explains Wine Roads coordinator Ana Ines Motta. “Visitors can take organized winery tours from Montevideo, rent

a car or hire a private car and driver who will take them on a self-directed tour of the vineyards. Many vacationers also like to combine winery visits with golfing and trips to the beach on the eastern seacoast.”

We arrived in Montevideo aboard Celebrity Cruises’ Infinity during a two-week trip around Cape Horn in January. This was our first port-of-call after leaving Buenos Aires the day before. While fellow passengers scurried off to the beaches or joined city tours, we chose to spend our day learning more about the wine industry in Uruguay.

YOUR BEST ENERGY SOURCE – SOUND SLEEP

ONE OF THE COMMENTS I frequently hear from patients is “I don’t need a lot of sleep.” A corollary of this is the oft-repeated phrase “I don’t have enough time to sleep.” As gently as I can, I break the news that adequate, regenerative rest is a critical foundation of health as well as a source of abundant energy.

Inadequate sleep is now associated with heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, among other chronic diseases. Recent investigations have helped prove that eight hours a night is optimum for cellular rejuvenation, and yet, according to one study, 71 percent of Americans get less than that – and are sleep deprived. Much of our sleep debt has been run up by choice – people just don’t want to turn out the lights.

But insomnia is also on the rise.

One study put the national price tag of treating it at 14 billion.

Most people probably don’t have time to catch up on lost sleep by napping in the middle of the day (God bless the cultures that encourage a siesta), but you can make adjustments in your habits to improve the quantity and quality of regenerative rest at night.

I’ll share some very simple and practical – nonpharmaceutical – ways to improve your sleep. Before you try them, consider talking to your doctor if you’re averaging less than seven hours a night or always feel tired. Snoring, stress, heartburn, and chronic pain can all disrupt your rest and may be symptoms of serious health issues.

Good Bedding

A 2001 German study found that a medium-firm pillow significantly improved sleep (the firmest was of no advantage). Bottom line: A pillow should support your head, not bury it.

Pillows also frequently contribute to allergies that impair breathing. The source of allergens can be the filling (down allergies are common) or dust mites. I highly recommend getting a nonallergenic foam pillow and a dust-mite-blocking protector. You should toss your pillow into the dryer every few months to kill dust mites and replace it every couple of years.

If you're in the market for a mattress, *Consumer Reports* found that people who spent 15 minutes testing a bed in the store – spending at least five minutes on each side, especially in their preferred sleeping position – were as satisfied as those who were allowed to take the beds home for a test sleep.

Light Therapy

By exposing sleep-deprived people to specially designed full-spectrum lights (10,000 lux fluorescent bulbs) for 30 minutes in the early morning, scientists have helped them get to sleep earlier and stay asleep longer. One theory is that regular exposure to such light in the morning triggers a more advantageous nighttime release of melatonin, the hormone that keeps your body clock on a regular schedule, ensuring that you feel sleepy in the evening and stay asleep through the night.

Light therapy can work wonders for people who find it difficult to fall asleep before midnight and are sluggish in the morning. For serious insomnia, it's best to work with a sleep specialist to devise a treatment program, which usually requires that you commit to waking up earlier each morning. But if you're suffering, it's worth a try.

Dark Therapy

Scientists studying the light-melatonin connection have discovered that the blue spectrum of light can disrupt circadian rhythms and keep you awake. Exposure to blue light late at night – it's emitted by computers, televisions, even digital clocks – can wreak havoc with your body clock. Keep your room pitch-dark at night, and cover all digital clock or DVD player readouts.

Behavioral Therapy

Here's the Catch-22:

Obsessing about not getting enough sleep can stop you from getting enough sleep. This is so common that therapists have developed a protocol of behavioral modification that's been shown to work 70 to 80 percent of the time when this is the case.

The drill goes like this: Go to bed only when sleepy, and get up if you haven't fallen asleep in 20 minutes. Avoid nonsleep activities in bed

(watching TV, eating, planning, or problem solving). Try to get up at the same time every morning. Don't get attached to unrealistic expectations of sleeping soundly every night, and try not to blame insomnia for any daytime problems. And don't catastrophize (imagine the bad things that will happen as a result of a poor night's sleep).

Acupuncture

Because research suggests that acupuncture helps balance neurotransmitters (elevating levels of the feel-good hormones called endorphins, for example), there's a logic for its use in promoting relaxation, which results in a better quality of sleep. In China acupuncture has been used successfully for thousands of years to treat sleep problems, though this effect has not been sufficiently studied in controlled trials in Western medicine. In my own practice, I use acupuncture as part of a comprehensive approach to insomnia.

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

An interview with Jerome Groopman

Groopman is a physician, a professor at Harvard Medical School, and a staff writer at The New Yorker magazine. His latest book is *How Doctors Think* (Houghton Mifflin).

Communicating with your doctor can be daunting especially if you have a medical problem that is lingering, complicated, or difficult to diagnose. But it's also profoundly important, since it's ultimately you who provides the information your doctor needs to find a solution. Here's how to help your physician help you.

- **Tell a story.** If you are going in for a general checkup, it's fine to write down a prioritized list of concerns you'd like to go over with the doctor. But when you're sick, don't prepackage the information you are going to present. Give the time frame for your illness, then start at the beginning and describe how it has evolved since. Dwelling on what your last internist said the problem was or how it seems to fit with something you read online just limits your doctor. An open-ended narrative can allow him or her to consider all the clues.

- **Don't hold back.** You should never be embarrassed to tell your doctor anything. Whether it has to do with your sex life, your mental state, or anything else society stigmatizes, it all falls within the confidential, intimate relationship that should exist between physician and patient. If you hesitate, you may end

up holding back critical information. It's also important to get things off your chest; I recommend that people be up-front with their doctor about anything that is frightening them about the state of their health. Voicing your worst fears about an illness seems to be particularly helpful in getting a physician to take your concerns seriously and consider all possibilities.

- **Ask the tough questions.** Your physician is under a lot of pressure from insurance companies and policy people to stick to standard practice guidelines and use rigid diagnostic formulas. The problem is that different disorders can cause the same sets of symptoms. You can help your doctor by asking certain questions – the kind that senior physicians ask medical students all the time. To me, the three most important ones are: “What else could it be?”; “Is it possible I have more than one problem?”; and “Is there anything that doesn't fit with this diagnosis?” Doctors tend to get wedded to their first impressions. If you ask them the questions they should be asking themselves, you might end up discovering that what's really wrong with you is something else entirely.

- **Get some clarity.** Whether its a diagnosis, a course of treatment, or results from a test, when processing new information it can be a good idea to repeat back what you are hearing to make sure you are getting it right. (For example, “Let me make sure I understand what you are saying: I have an enlarged spleen, which could be due to an infection, or it could possibly be cancer. The next step is more tests.”) A neurologist friend once told me that there's nothing in medicine that is so complicated that it can't be clearly explained to a layman. Admit what you don't understand, and your doctor should clarify it – there's no reason to walk out of an office still confused.

- **Take your time.** Over the years, the average length of an appointment for a new patient has been cut from an hour down to 30 minutes; follow-ups are only 15 minutes – and there's pressure to get that down to 12. While it isn't a bad idea to ask the receptionist how long the doctor has for you (just so you know), don't let her answer rush or limit you. If at the end of your appointment you have unanswered questions, it's OK to say, “What are your plans for following up? I still have issues I'd like to go over.”

SLEEP IS ANTI-AGING

If you could make every American woman under 40 clean up her act in one area, what would it be? It would have to be smoking. It's the most

preventable cause of cancer. Unlike junk food, which is at least cheap if you want to go out for dinner, or sun exposure, which at least provides vitamin D, smoking has no redeeming value. And if the thought of your lungs charred with black substance isn't troubling enough, it also shortens some of the collagen fibers in your skin and facilitates early wrinkles. And it decreases the oxygen supply to the skin, dries it out, and parches your lips.

What should someone in her 20s be eating now to look and feel good in the future? Make sure you eat seven different-colored healthful foods a day. By the way, red wine and dark chocolate count.

What matters more, eating well or eating less? Eating less makes you live longer. There's fascinating speculation that the concept evolved for humans for the same reason that grapes grown under stress produce resveratrol, a stress-busting substance. Eating less seems to help our bodies better tolerate the stresses of life. What has science found out about the habits of people who live to a healthy old age? They eat less. The Okinawans, who are famously long-lived, have a tradition called "hara hachi bu" of pulling away from the tables when they're only 80 percent full. Admittedly, it's difficult to know when that is. But most Americans finish a meal in 15 minutes or less, and it takes your brain that long to signal that you're full. So first of all, it's important to eat really slowly. We also find that people who live longer eat more water-dense foods, such as melons and soup, that saturate you with less caloric intake. The Okinawans also eat many smaller meals throughout the day, which causes their insulin and glucose levels to remain stable instead of wildly fluctuating.

You say in your book that upper-body workouts are especially crucial.... Why?

Aerobics are great, but they don't really change your body. Upper-body exercises work some of the largest muscles and therefore change your metabolism so that you're burning more calories when you're doing nothing at all — which is the way to really change the way you look. Upper-body strength is also a real feather in your cap much later in life. Pulmonary disease is the fourth-leading killer. If you manage to survive one of the three biggest killers — heart disease, cancer, and stroke — and you're in the hospital recovering, your doctors will be worrying about pneumonia. People who have strong upper-body strength simply can rebound better. Kayaking and rowing are great, as is resistance training. How is abdominal fat related to aging? Having an "apple"

rather than a “pear” shape is predictive of a shorter life span, so abs exercises are critical. The upside of abdominal fat is that you can see it every day and watch it start to disappear as you get in shape.

How important is getting a good night’s sleep? Sleep is restorative – it’s the time that many cells, including cardiac cells and neurons, have the ability to regenerate. It’s probably fair to say that the people who claim they can get by on five or six hours of sleep a night are simply fooling themselves and are aging more quickly than they would if they were getting eight or nine hours. That said, it also appears that the state of rest – when you’re awake but sleepy – may also be restorative. Plus, it turns out that there are different configurations and patterns of cells all over your body, and there’s some evidence that just changing your activity level to something less strenuous gives some cells a chance to rest. So sleep is anti-aging – and catnapping, resting, and just chilling out may be, too.

Is stress aging? The term is overly used and ill defined, but we do find that people who self-report a lot of stress tend to have higher oxidative levels in their bodies. You can measure the impact of oxidative stress on your body – the free radicals that cause aging – just like rust on a car. There’s a blood test called hydroxydeoxyguanosine, or 8-OhDG, that measures the amount of free radicals in your bloodstream, and there’s a breath test as well, called 8-isoprostane.

As for lowering your stress level, we’ve found – and this comes up again and again – that if you go off to a fabulous spa or a wonderful vacation, you will indeed reduce your stress.... But ultimately, these things won’t change your set point. Even winning the lottery won’t change your set point, although it will temporarily make you very happy. We’re a country of home runs and knockdowns, and we tend to think in terms of major changes. And if you’re living under a bridge and you win the lottery, you may permanently reduce a lot of stress. But for the average person, the way to permanently reduce stress is to incorporate simpler things that make you happy into the ordinary fabric of your life. I interviewed a guy who is almost 100 years old who has rituals he abides by – just reading the papers and cooking certain things and driving his car to a particular place every day. For someone else it might be taking a walk in the park or eating ice cream at your favorite store. For me, it’s taking my little daughter out to lunch a couple times a week.

What research is being done now on aging that might make a difference to someone who’s still young? There are some people who

believe that in the next couple of decades we are going to get to the point of practical immortality, that you'll be able to live as long as you want. The promise of stem-cell research is that we'd be able to grow artificial organs and replace our old ones, just as you would exchange car parts. There is technology coming that may allow people to tinker with their DNA. There's also talk about nanotechnology – creating nanobots in your bloodstream to find cells that are problematic and fix them. Whether you believe any of this will pan out or not, the important thing to realize is that our rate of scientific knowledge is now doubling every few years – we already know twice as much about this stuff as we did in 1997.

UNIT VI

TRAVELLING

AFLOAT, NOT ADRIFT

Question: We have made a reservation on a Norwegian fiord / Baltic cruise next summer through my alma mater. It is on a small cruise line, and I am worried about the possibility of financial default. Because of our age, the insurance premium quoted for this trip is about 20% of the cost of the trip. Also, the tour operator's brochure specifies that it does not accept credit cards for the final payment. What options do we have to protect ourselves? ALAN JOHNSON Seal Beach

Answer: Danger, Will Robinson! Danger! Each trip we embark on is fraught with a list of things that can go wrong, but Johnson's trip is a veritable encyclopedia of potential problems.

He is right to be concerned about travel provider defaults; this year alone, we've seen the demise of GrandLuxe Travel and ATA and Aloha airlines, among others. If travelers who booked with those companies paid by credit card, they were, for the most part, covered.

But Johnson's final payment can't be made by credit card, according to the terms of the agreement.

And he may not be able to get insurance to cover financial default of a travel provider anyway, especially if he waited more than 15 or 21 days (depending on the provider) from his first payment. (He did.)

And because he's not protected by the California Seller of Travel Law (because the seller isn't in California), the deck appears to be stacked against him.

"In the absence of these backup measures, the best that a consumer can do is acknowledge the risk and make an informed choice in regard to whether to do business with the vendor," Lori J. Forcucci, a California deputy attorney general in the Consumer Rights Section, said in an e-mail to me.

The part of this dilemma that sent me reeling was the "no credit card" edict. The provider, Thomas Gohagan & Co. of Chicago, said this was done to keep travel costs low because alumni travel is highly competitive, but this trip is so expensive that charging the traveler 3% for the credit card protection seems like a whisper of an increase.

If the cancellation penalties aren't too severe, Johnson's best bet may be to cancel his trip, then turn around and rebook it – with insurance that

includes financial default (that's not automatic, so check) and with a policy that may be considerably cheaper than the quote he got. Look at such sites as *www.insuremytrip.com*, *www.squaremouth.com* and *www.quote wright.com*.

If a provider goes belly up – and given the economy, who knows? – better safe than stuck in a Baltic backwater.

PARK IS GREAT BUT NOT GRAND

Among the things I never envisioned myself doing was frolicking barefoot in a fountain with Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina.

But when she kicked her shoes off on Monday afternoon at the city's newest playground, how could I not follow her in?

The water at Grand Park in downtown L.A. is perfect, by the way – not too cool or warm, and bubbly soft – and the finish on the pavement is skid-proof. This is a good thing, because I had to step quickly and grab an 18-month-old tyke named Augie whose nanny asked Molina for help chasing him down. It was time to go home, but Augie, an amphibious child, refused to leave.

This was not my first trip to the park; I'd taken a gander on Sunday, eager to see the end result after several years of planning and construction. Actually, only part of the park is now open, with the stretch between Hill and Broadway set to open soon and the Broadway-to-Spring section ticketed for a fall debut.

My first surprise was that Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, whose bold attempt to extend term limits was beaten back Tuesday, hadn't sneaked a statue of himself into the plan. Whether as a man of stone or from the grave, Antonovich is determined to hang around, if for no other reason than to keep his weekly pet adoption circus in business at board meetings. Even if the pets have been mounted by taxidermists.

My second surprise was that the park truly exists. Given the history of petty contempt city and county officials hold for each other in Los Angeles, it's nothing short of a miracle that members of the Grand Avenue Committee saw this thing through without any major injuries. And best of all, they built a park without tax dollars, having hardballed Related Cos. into committing \$56 million for the park in exchange for the right to develop its currently stalled Grand Avenue project.

OK, so what's not to love?

Call me an ingrate, but I have to ask if Grand Park is grand enough.

I feel the same way about the Dodgers getting Hanley Ramirez and

Shane Victorino but not a great starting pitcher.

I feel the same way I do about building a subway to the sea that's going to stop three miles short of the ocean.

I'll eat lunch in the park, watch concerts with my family, run through the fountain with my daughter and feel good about having this nice new gathering place in a city with too few of them. And who knows, maybe I'll be wowed when the rest of the park opens.

But as a professional curmudgeon, I'm contractually obligated to point out that in a city short on green and long on asphalt, they've built a park that will be surrounded by vehicles and broken up in two places by traffic. It's not a contiguous stretch of green from the Music Center on Grand to City Hall on Spring. It's three separate park blocks, so you'll have to wait at traffic signals to cross from one section to the next.

"I think it's a great addition," said Eli Broad, cheerleader-in-chief for the larger Grand Avenue vision. But, he added: "If I had been involved in the design, it might have ended up differently."

How so?

"I don't want to be critical of it," he said, offering plenty of praise, "but I would like to have seen more lawn and green space and less hardscape."

I don't know about that. Some of the great public spaces in Europe have no grass, and we do, after all, have water-shortage issues in California.

When I suggested Grand Park was no Millennium Parks in Chicago, Broad said that both Millennium and New York's Bryant Park come to mind as great models.

But he also said there could be improvements later on if ugly and outdated county buildings can be bulldozed and offices relocated and better integrated into the downtown landscape.

Still, Broad said he's been lamenting since 1979 that every great metro area needs a "vibrant center where people from all communities can come together" to celebrate, say, a Dodger World Series title or the end of a millennium. And now, he said, Los Angeles has one.

Molina politely bristled at my comment about great parks in other cities.

"I'm really kind of tired of being compared to every other city," said Molina, who argued that a perfectly dead zone in the middle of the Civic Center has now been transformed, much for the better.

And to be fair, she's one of the people who made it happen.

Trying to be helpful, I suggested pedestrian bridges to volley park-goers up and over the traffic, but this didn't go over particularly well.

"I think it works very nicely as is," said Molina, arguing that each section of the park will have a different feel and can host different kinds of events simultaneously. At times, she said, the cross streets can be blocked to make for a carfree festival all the way from Grand to Spring.

My quibbles about the park notwithstanding, I do think it could become the piece that gets more young folks, empty-nesters and unemployed screenwriters throughout the city thinking about a move closer to downtown.

The rent is lower, no car is necessary and services, dining, culture, sports and night life offerings are expanding, and now you can sleep it off in the park.

And for the information of those who've never visited, the days are warm and the nights are cool, because the marine layer often travels east of Robertson, even if you never do.

CALIFORNIA'S MOTHER ROAD

And this time of year, less than a week before trout season begins (Saturday), 395 is the gateway to the state's premier fishing lakes and streams.

In late March — well before the anglers, the peak baggers, the photographers and the Tahoe-bound tourists hit the road — I took a few days to explore the character, the vistas and the fishing holes of this backcountry treasure. These are a few of my snapshots.

1. WHITNEY PORTAL

The two-lane paved road winds and climbs past desert sage, gray rock formations and deep green pine forests. I leaned forward and looked through the car's windshield at the famed peak. From the road, the summit — at 14,495 feet, the tallest peak in the Lower 48 — looks close enough to hike in a couple of hours. That's the appeal — and hazard — of Mt. Whitney.

Although it was spring, a thick layer of snow blanketed the trail head. At the Whitney Portal campground, a waterfall had become a cascade of ice. The A-frame Whitney Portal Store, where hikers carboload on pancakes the size of Frisbees, was closed for the season, but it would be packed again in a few months. And I was told that bright green and yellow leaves would border the cascade by the time the spring thaw started splashing over the black granite slabs. The smell of pancakes and pine trees would all the air.

At Lone Pine, take Whitney Portal Road 13 miles west to the Whitney Portal campground. Mt. Whitney Ranger Station, (760) 876-6200

2. ALABAMA HILLS

Giant, worm-like creatures are tunneling under the desert, gobbling up the simple folks of a small Nevada mining town. Sure, the premise to the 1990 horror movie "Tremors" was laughable, but the location was perfect. The Alabama Hills near Lone Pine cover 30,000 acres of desert, festooned with Dr. Seuss-world rock formations. Even without special effects, these rocks look like molten monsters, granite boils and bulbous faces, the result of a cataclysmic uplifting more than 100 million years ago and shaped by centuries of wind, rain and snow.

More than 400 movies and television shows, including 1939's "Gunga Din" and 1960's "Hell Bent for Leather" have been filmed here. I didn't recognize any backdrops, but I spotted a few places ideal for an ambush.

Take Whitney Portal Road, west from U.S. 395 in Lone Pine and turn right on Movie Road.

3. BEVERLY AND JIM ROGERS MUSEUM OF LONE PINE FILM HISTORY

The only real night life in Lone Pine — besides a couple of saloons — is at the local film museum. I pulled into town on a Thursday night and found a crowd gathered for a showing of "North to Alaska," starring John Wayne. Unfortunately, the projector broke before the show started.

I took in the exhibits of movie costumes, posters. Fatty Arbuckle's belt from "The Round-Up," a Fender guitar designed for Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, a life-size stagecoach and, my favorite, a killer earthworm from "Tremors."

701 S. Main St., Lone Pine; (760) 876-9909.

4. SEASON'S RESTAURANT

The California Beef Council named Season's one of the top 31 beef restaurants in the state. If eateries were ranked by the views, Season's would be near the top of the list. At sunset, I found a booth near the entrance. I was tempted to order a Mt. Whitney — coffee with brandy, amaretto, peach schnapps and whipped cream. Instead, I asked for a cold beer and a steak and watched clouds swirl and envelop the famous jagged peak as the sky darkened.

206 S. Main St., Lone Pine; (760) 876-8927.

5. DOW HOTEL

Since the 1920s, the Dow Hotel in Lone Pine and, later, the adjacent Dow Villa Motel, have hosted stars like Wayne, Rogers, Gene Autry, Errol

Flynn and Robert Mitchum, who worked on films in the nearby Alabama Hills. The accommodations range from a single room with a communal bathroom down the hall to a suite with a whirlpool tub, a wet bar and a plasma-screen TV. Hollywood still loves this place. When a movie production is in town, the Dow gets the booking.

310 S. Main St., Lone Pine; (760) 876-5521.

6. MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

A wooden tower. A few stone guard stations. A pale green gymnasium. These few buildings are all that remains of the Manzanar War Relocation Center, where 10,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans were interned during World War II because of their ancestry. When the center closed in 1945, many of the original buildings were sold and moved throughout the Owens Valley and used as apartments, homes, a bar and grill and even a Boy Scout meeting hall. But you can't conceal the past that easily.

In the interpretive center, I saw how those interned at Manzanar played, studied, farmed and worshiped. Late in the day, I drove around the 814-acre site to the cemetery, where six graves remained. Coins and bits of shiny porcelain were scattered on the graves, a tradition to honor the dead. On a white, spired memorial, silhouetted by the Sierra Nevada peaks, I studied the black Japanese characters etched on the front. "Soul consoling tower," they read.

Eight miles north of Lone Pine, look for the signs on the western side of U.S. 395. Manzanar National Historic Site, (760) 878-2194, www.nps.gov/manz.

7. EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM

Inside this air-conditioned museum, behind glass cases, I discovered the history of the Owens Valley: handmade baskets, Civil War-era pistols, arrowheads and dog-eared photos of Paiute and Shoshone Indians. It was a stirring education, but the warm morning sun drew me to the Mary Decker Native Plant Garden, just outside the museum. I strolled among four-wing saltbush, desert figwort, red columbine, Antelope bitterbrush, lupine and water birch. Crusty lizards darted through the underbrush.

1551 N. Grant St., Independence, three blocks west of U.S. 395; (760) 878-0364, www.countyofinyo.org/ecmuseum/index.html.

8. MT. WHITNEY STATE FISH HATCHERY

A school of brawny rainbow trout hovered in the shallow water, so

close I could almost reach out and grab one. If only fish were so accommodating when I'm lakeside with my rod and reel.

Instead, I was at the Mt. Whitney hatchery, the historic facility that produces 160,000 pounds of trout annually for lakes and streams from Bishop to Lone Pine. The egg fertilization takes place in the main building, a 1916 granite stone structure that resembles a Swiss chalet. Outside, in long concrete troughs, called raceways, the trout bulk up to a catchable size – at least 12 inches long. I bought a handful of pellets from a coin-operated dispenser and tossed some in. The water swirled and splashed as a fish melee broke out.

About two miles north of Independence, turn west from U.S. 395 to Fish Hatchery Road and follow the signs; (760) 878-2272.

9. KEOUGH'S HOT SPRINGS

South of Bishop, Keough Hot Springs Road seems to lead into a desolate patch of desert at the foot of the Sierra Nevada. But hidden in a cluster of pine and birch trees is an oasis for road-weary travelers. Billed as the largest natural hot springs pool in the Eastern Sierra, Keough's Hot Springs saw its heyday in the 1920s and 1930s – and it looks it. The structure is weathered, worn and painted Mylanta green. When I got there, kids were splashing in the 90-degree swimming pool under a giant cold-water spray. "Keep it down," I thought as I soaked in the adjacent 105-degree tub. Still, the tension of a three-hour car ride vanished like steam off the water.

Seven miles south of Bishop, turn west on Keough Hot Springs Road; (760) 872-4670, www.keoughs-hotsprings.com.

10. ERICK SCHAT'S BAKERY

I made my way through a forest of rolling racks stacked with garlic cheese bread, cinnamon bread, dark volkoren bread, mule bread, beer bread, sourdough, French rolls and pound cake. Deer antlers and brightly painted wooden shoes hung from the walls and ceiling. The smell of yeast, flour, nuts and sugar filled the air. Lots of sugar.

I got a sugar high just walking around the racks. This Dutch-themed bakery has become a tourist magnet. I resisted the draw until my blood-sugar level dipped to critical levels. I walked out with \$15 worth of baked goods, including the bakery's famous Shepherd Bread.

763 N. Main St., Bishop; (760) 873-7156.

11. JACK'S RESTAURANT

Before checking out a few fishing spots, I stopped by Jack's Restaurant

in Bishop for breakfast, a 60-year-old fishing tradition. If this place doesn't get you in the mood to fish, nothing will.

Mounted trophy fish decorate the walls, and wagon-wheel chandeliers hang from the ceiling. After a Denver omelet and coffee, I mentioned I was looking for a few places to drop a hook. Next thing I knew, two apron-wearing waitresses were rattling off half a dozen of their favorite spots. One of them – a middle-age woman with a tight hair bun – confided that she practiced fly casting into a tire on her front lawn. The town pharmacist walked in and offered his favorite spots. I wondered: How much do you tip for fishing advice?

437N. Main St., Bishop; (760) 872-7971.

12. SABRINA AND SOUTH LAKES

Snow had closed the road from Bishop into Bishop Creek Canyon. I had hoped to scout Sabrina and South lakes, two mountain pools cradled between 10,000- to 11,000-foot snowcapped mountains. Both have a reputation for great high-altitude fishing, accessible by car once the snow melts. I drove back to Bishop, where I heard more about these spots. A park ranger in Bishop raved about the drive to South Lake.

AS JAMESTOWN TURNS 40 THIS YEAR, POCAHONTAS IS ALL BUT IGNORED

Rachel Secan came to Jamestown wearing her Pocahontas costume and pink snow boots. She was hoping to see something about her favorite Indian princess.

Why the fascination with Pocahontas? "She sings good," said the 4-year-old redhead from Raleigh, N.C., who owns a well-worn DVD of the Disney movie.

Although I didn't dress in fringed, faux deerskin, I came to Jamestown expecting what Rachel expected: Pocahontas. She is, after all, the only reason many Americans have even a vague notion of the first permanent English settlement in North America.

But as Jamestown commemorates its 400th anniversary this year, the former colony is all but ignorinrig the singing Indian maiden and her rescue of colonist John Smith. It's all part of an effort to be historically accurate and to acknowledge that Jamestown's history included slavery and the taking of Indian lives and land.

Jamestown is the older, grittier and more complicated sibling of Plymouth, Mass. Every American fifth-grader knows the story of the Pilgrims and their landing at Plymouth Rock. But that happened 13 years after the English colonized Jamestown, and still they got all the credit for founding America.

All Jamestown got was a Disney movie about, an Indian princess and a dubious story. Historians think Smith's claim that Pocahontas put his "head in her arms and laid her own upon his to save him from death" is more fiction than fact, something to bump up his book sales.

Basically, the Massachusetts colony won the battle of historic heritage with a better sound bite: The Pilgrims came to escape religious persecution; the Jamestown colonists came to make a buck.

I came out of loyalty to my new state. After moving to the Shenandoah Valley last year, I wanted to see where America was really born.

The first Jamestown settlers came to the New World in search of gold and a quick route to the Indies. They've been discounted as rich softies, too lazy and effete to work the land. But new archeological evidence indicates that the colonists may have been just as industrious as the saintly Pilgrims. Unfortunately, the colonists arrived during the most severe drought in the area's history. Nothing they planted grew.

Things got so bad that the colonists ate their horses and then, eventually, one another.

Finally, the rains came, and colonist John Rolfe established tobacco as a viable cash crop. Rolfe fell in love with Pocahontas and married her in 1614, after she converted to Christianity and changed her name to Rebecca. Two years later, they took their young son, Thomas, with them and sailed to England, where she was feted by the rich and royalty.

So, Pocahontas is kind of a star in the Jamestown story after all. But that doesn't mean you'll find much about her at what's officially known as America's Historic Triangle: Jamestown, Williamsburg and York-town, all looped together by the 23-mile Colonial Parkway.

As an attraction, Jamestown has complications to match its history. For starters, there are two places to visit. First, there's Historic Jamestowne (spelled with an "e"), jointly run by the National Park Service and the Assn, for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. This is on the 1,500-acre island where the colonists actually lived.

Historic Jamestowne is a working archeological site that has unearthed more than one million pieces of history. One thousand of those artifacts are displayed at its new archeological museum, the Archaearium (a made-up word destined for spelling bees). Don't miss the skeleton of J.R.102c (his archeological reference name); you can actually see the bullet lodged in his knee and, just to prove history can be fun, the exhibit is titled, "Who Shot J.R.?"

Other than the Archaearium, there's little to see. Just some grass-covered mounds and exposed brick foundations, which are not originals but reproductions. After the building sites were excavated by archeologists, the foundations were covered up to protect them from deterioration. The only 17th century structure standing is the tower of a small brick church, built in 1686.

If you like your history more animated, there's Jamestown Settlement, which sits at the entrance to the island. Not only have the Virginians – the site is run by the state – made Jamestown history both educational and fun, but they've also done it with taste and style.

Like at Historic Jamestowne, there's a movie and an exhibit hall. But the best thing here is the reenactment villages, where life is played out as it was 400 years ago by about 30 enthusiastic "historical interpreters." The Settlement features replicas of the colony's palisaded fort, its three original ships, the Susan Constant, the Discovery and the Godspeed, and a Powhatan Indian village.

If you don't have time for both attractions, the Settlement is the place for kids. When we were there, a demonstration of muzzle-loading rifle power held three dozen kids in thrall, including Rachel in her Pocahontas dress and pink snow boots.

"The musket made a big impression," Rachel's mother, Debbie, 36, later wrote in an e-mail. "She told her preschool teacher that she saw a 'biscuit' that made a lot of noise."

LURING VEGAS-BOUND VISITORS OFF THE ROAD

This state-line gambling oasis has no post office or schools, just casinos

At dusk, driving north on Interstate 15 near the California-Nevada border, Loren Gill descends a graceful mountain straightaway and sees before him the twinkling lights of the Promised Land.

But this isn't Las Vegas – that's still 40 miles away. Instead, Gill spies the stopover at Primm, Nev. With three casinos and sundry services, it's a roadside curiosity turned welcome mat to Nevada's casino culture.

As the district manager of Affinity Gaming, which runs the three gambling establishments, it's Gill's job to make sure that a good number of the 40,000 cars, pickups, RVs and semis that pass here each day ignore the siren call of the strip, if just for a moment. His vision is to see thousands of gamblers hit the brakes, wander inside and lay their money down.

Gill, 44, is the unofficial mayor of a place with no school, post office or municipal government. Primm's calling cards are wagering emporiums with names like Primm Valley, Buffalo Bill's and Whiskey Pete's, along with a top-flight golf course, outlet mall and roller coaster.

Still, Primm sits in the middle of nowhere. Assigned here two years ago, Gill was depressed over his fate until he looked out from one of the hotel rooms and saw headlights and tail-lights stretching for miles in both directions.

That's when the gambler in him surfaced. That's when Gill saw opportunity.

"I saw all those car lights and realized that my job was to devise more ways to get people off that interstate," Joe said. "I try to get 'em both ways – to stop in on their way to the Strip or serve as the last stop in Nevada to get your gambling fix and place that football bet."

Primm is part of a plan by various Nevada entrepreneurs, starting in the 1970s, to pickoff incoming gamblers before they reach the lights of Las Vegas. They're border-dwellers like Jackpot, Laughlin and Stateline, each wanting its share of the state's gambling action.

Many quote Gertrude Stein's famous observation about Oakland, that there's "no there there," when talking about Primm, said Eugene Moehring, a historian at the University of Nevada - Las Vegas.

"Primm is a contrived place," he said. "I don't see it as a real place."

A century ago, this border spot was the sole domain of an old moonshiner named Pete MacIntyre, known as Whiskey Pete, who made his illicit sales out of a gas station. When he died in 1934, Pete was buried facing the highway, a desert character memorialized in his obituary as a "rough, tough, gun-toting galoot."

For years the place was known as Stateline. Then casino developer Gary Primm launched a major project that included 2,000 hotel rooms and 4,000 slot machines. The local was renamed after him.

Eventually, casino operators built a roller coaster called the Desperado, once the world's tallest, and a monorail to whisk gamblers between casinos.

Primm became a stopover for an off-road race circuit and once hosted the World's Strongest Man competition. A convenience store here has in the past averaged \$200,000 a week in lottery sales, 60 times the average California retailer.

To lure workers, the casinos also built on-site housing for 650 casino employees, replacing trailers that once stood there. Regular bus service is supplied to Las Vegas for workers. "This place is in the middle of nowhere, but it's cool," said Ricky Garcia, 32, a father of three whose wife is a casino worker. "It's a good place to escape the drama of the city."

Gill has followed that tradition to attract a "very middle American" customer. Primm now lures Southern California's black and Latino market from the state's Indian gaming casinos. Concerts at the 6,000-seat arena feature ethnic performers, and many gambling tables have bilingual dealers. Primm has upgraded rooms, added fast-food restaurants and plans to add a major truck stop.

But Primm's past also includes a slaying that made national news. In 1997, Long Beach teenager Jeremy Strohmeyer strangled 7-year-old Sherrice Iverson in a bathroom stall near a casino arcade.

The killing inspired what is known as the Sherrice Iverson law requiring Nevadans to report reasonable suspicions of child abuse. The law stemmed from the inaction of a cohort of Strohmeyer's — 17-year-old David Cash — who stood by and did nothing to stop the crime.

Clark County also now requires all arcade workers to undergo eight hours of training in how to spot potential child abuse.

One security expert says Strohmeyer's crime still marks Primm.

"Most people in my business know Primm in terms of that incident," said Alan W. Zajic, a Nevada casino security consultant. "But Primm has put that crime in its past. If customers don't know or remember it occurred, they'll keep on coming."

On a gray weekday morning, the only thing Primm gambler Steven Wright knew was that he was losing.

"I've stopped here on my way to Vegas and lost all my money," said the 30-year-old San Fernando Valley construction worker, sporting a spare cigarette behind his left ear. "I sure hope that doesn't happen again."

He sighed, then hit the button on the slot machine and watched the figures spin.

LONDON'S NEW BUY WAYS

A hunk of butter, a little garlic and a handful of mushrooms - owners David Robinson and Andrew Gellatly toss fresh chanterelles, portobelos and ceps in a saute pan, sprinkle a lit of pecorino cheese and parsley on top and throw it all between two slices of fresh-baked bread.

Eager lunchtime crowds line up for their sandwiches at the London markets where the two set up their stall, fheir odd but delectable creation is typical of the diverse offerings at the lutdoor markets, which have become magnets for office workers and shoppers looking for a taste of something diferent.

London has always been a hub for commerce, its street markets central to city dwellers' lives. But something is hanging lately in these long established shopping spots, a shift that reflects the capital's new dynamism and diversity. The city is booming, brimming with a lew confidence as real estate prices spiral upward, financiers seek to snatch New York's mantle as the premier global rading hub and London becomes the avored destination of increasingly motile young Europeans. Its street markets are some of the best places to see his rapid evolution up close.

Markets that grew up along the "drovers' paths" where herders once led livestock to slaughter are now filled with fabulous foods, stylish clothes and ingredients that demonstrate the international flavor of a city where more than a quarter of the inhabitants were bom overseas.

As London grows wealthier, its markets provide evidence of residents' increasingly tony tastes. With immigrants streaming into the city, the markets have become places to snack on fried plantains from the Caribbean and watch women in vividly colored African robes shop for beans and dried fish from home. And they're among the best spots to sample the great foods that Britons have recently begun discovering after centuries of culinary mediocrity. Goodbye boiled vegetables, hello gastro-pubs and the organic revolution. Even bangers and mash have gone upscale.

London "has got 10 million people, it's cosmopolitan, people are looking for something new," said Rob Athill, who hopes the stall he and his wife have opened at Exmouth Market in the hip Clerkenwell neighborhood will kick-start their new Vietnamese coffee business. "This is the place to get noticed." Also driving the markets' growth are Britons' growing dissatisfaction with mass-produced food in supermarkets.

A nation once happy to subsist on pub grub and crisps (potato chips) is learning to love fresh food that's produced nearby and eaten in season. The outdoor markets are full of small businesses such as Two Fishwives, which sells gourmet fishcakes and pies, and a cider enterprise run by owner Barry Topp, who presses his own hard cider.

Portobello Road's antiques fair and the crafts and fashions of Camden Town have long been stops on the London tourist trail. But the real treasures are lesser known, the shopping spots where at home cooks fill canvas bags with fresh vegetables and bread, and locals chat with their neighbors and sip pints of beer.

These markets are the places where Londoners bring their kids to hang out on a sunny Saturday, stop for lunch and smooze with whomever happens to stroll by. They're perfect spots for visitors to catch a glimpse of everyday community life in a fast-changing city that's still holding tight to its history. And be sure to stay for a bite while you're there.

Borough Market is the scrumptious granddaddy of London's food destinations, first established when the Romans occupied the city and settled in its current location — just south of the Thames River, near London Bridge — for 250 years. It's a favorite stop for foodies hunting down that perfect French salami or Scottish sausage, and it's often packed on Saturdays with Londoners getting ready for weekend dinner parties.

Some complain prices are inflated, but the market's range and quality are incomparable, and an hour spent browsing can easily make lunch unnecessary: many stalls offer samples to passersby, who gorge happily on cheeses, sweets and much more. More than 125 vendors in the enormous, covered complex offer a dizzying number of choices: buffalo Parmesan, lamb from Scotland's remote Orkney Islands, traditional English pork pies, organic fruit smoothies, 1,700 kinds of beer in one shop alone.

"It's my economic salvation," said Topp, the cider maker. Shoppers, he said, value the market's fresh goods. "There are so many stalls that are cooking their own products, you can taste them — there's somebody on hand who's quite happy to talk to you."

Broadway Market in east London's Hackney district sprang back to life in May 2004 after decades of dormancy. Part of the path along which herders once drove sheep toward the slaughterhouses of central London, it has a long history as a trading hub but sank into disuse in the 1980s as deprivation gripped the

surrounding neighborhood. Now Hackney is a thriving, diverse – if still gritty – area where artists, writers and young professionals rub elbows with Caribbean, Turkish and Vietnamese immigrants.

Residents and business folks banded together to restart the market, and every Saturday the street (also called Broadway Market) is crowded with shoppers and snackers. Tucked between London Fields park and Regent's Canal, it's a showcase for Hackney's artsy gentrification, which has caused some local tensions.

Nearby, Robert Cooke still serves meat pies, mashed potatoes and jellied eels – an East End working-class specialty – at F. Cooke, the restaurant his great-grandfather opened in 1862. Outside the Nutritious Food Gallery, a Caribbean fish shop, a vendor sells sweet fried plantains and rice with peas. Shopper Franny Moyle says she loves run Columbia Road Flower Market and Spitalfields Market make a fun Sunday combination. Start at the outdoor flower market. The offerings vary by season: primroses, lilies, jasmine and amaryllis were on display one spring day, along with dozens of varieties of herbs and potted plants. Vendors with Cockney accents shout over one another: "Eight large, hardy violas for a five," yelled one. Cafes, bakeries and shops line Columbia Road and the market's extension on Ezra Street. Walk down to Bethnal Green Road, whose sellers and Indian sweet shops to its place as a hub for London's South Asian communities. Brick Lane's Sunday market will appeal only to hardened bargain seekers, but cut through for a stop at one of London's most popular bagel makers, a reminder that the neighborhood has been home to generations of immigrants.

Spitalfields Market, a cavernous indoor space packed with stalls and restaurants, is far from undiscovered. But Londoners still outnumber the tourists, and if you don't mind crowds, it's a fun place to browse. CDs, used and discounted books, funky jackets and jewelry, fresh tofu and leather handbags are among the offerings.

Exmouth Market is near the heart of the up-and-coming Clerkenwell neighborhood. Only hints remain of Clerkenwell's history as home to London's Italian community; now stylish media types predominate.

A few food stalls expanded into a proper Friday and Saturday street market late last year. Among the offerings: Joll of Pot's tent dishes out spicy Ghanaian stews with rice, while Tuyen Hong's cafe serves strong Vietnamese coffee at low Asian-style tables with stools. Nearby, a whole hog roasts on a

spit. Many of the street's restaurants and shops offer food at outdoor stalls. Middle Eastern-Mediterranean Moro sells paella, and Spanish deli Brindisa doles out chorizo sandwiches.

Brixton Market, in the city's south, is a shopping hub for London's large African and Caribbean population. It spills onto the side streets surrounding Electric Avenue, the main drag, and fills several indoor pavilions. Caribbean music playing on storefront speakers provides a festive soundtrack, and the brightly colored African robes on display are a visual treat. Specialized grocery shops sell African grains and spices and a dozen kinds of dried fish, along with cassava and yams.

Restaurants and food carts serve up Trinidadian roti and Ghanaian specialties, and CDs and DVDs from Africa and the islands are plentiful.

"Anything that you can get in Africa, you can get in the market," said Mafasser Hussain, owner of Brixton Fabrics. "Food, clothes, anything ... that's why people come here."

Also worth a visit: Riverside Walk secondhand book market, daily along the Thames' south bank; Marylebone Farmers Market, one of London's most popular off Marylebone High Street; and Leadenhall Market, shops and restaurants in an ornate Victorian building, weekdays only in the financial district.

UNIT VII

ART

NEW PACT FOR PHIL MUSICIANS

The contract with the L.A. orchestra means a new season can begin as planned.

BY MIKE BOEHM

Dodging the labor strife that has descended on other recent negotiations over orchestral musicians' pay, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the union representing its musicians announced Monday that they've reached a new four-year contract that lifts wages by just less than 1% a year.

At the end of four years, the minimum yearly wage for the Phil's more than 100 musicians will be \$154,336, up 3.8% from the \$148,700 minimum in the contract that expired Sunday. The minimum wage scale had risen 17% over the previous four-year contract. Certain orchestra members earn more than double the contractual minimum.

The agreement, which runs through mid September 2017, means the 2013-14 season can begin unperturbed with a planned gala concert Sept. 30 featuring Yo-Yo Ma and more concerts marking the 10th anniversary of Walt Disney Concert Hall (opened Oct. 23, 2003).

In a joint news release, management and the union said they were pleased with the outcome. "Our members enthusiastically ratified the contract," said Vincent Trombetta, president of Professional Musicians, Local 47, the Los Angeles local of the American Federation of Musicians that represents the Phil's musicians. "The union is encouraged that the parties were able to join together and overcome the obstacles present in today's difficult bargaining and economic environment."

The smooth transition to the new contract contrasts with work stoppages over wages and working conditions that have characterized a number of other negotiations between top U.S. orchestras and their players. In March, San Francisco Symphony musicians went on strike for 18 days, leading to cancellation of an East Coast tour and of concerts in their home concert hall. Management initially proposed a 2% pay increase over three years; it sweetened that to 4.5% over 26 months to end the strike, resulting in a minimum salary of about \$148,000 by mid-2015.

Chicago Symphony musicians went on strike for two days last September before signing a new agreement. "The collegial spirit in which

issues were addressed and a new contract reached are emblematic of the collective commitment of the musicians, Gustavo Dudamel the Phil's music director and the board and staff of the L.A. Phil to maintain the very finest musical organization," Deborah Borda, the orchestra's president, said in the announcement.

The announcement said the contract also includes a housing allowance for musicians; "new contributions" to their retirement plan, which resembles a 401 (k); and "restructured healthcare plan offerings" aimed at "managing expenses." Where many orchestras have struggled since the 2008-09 recession, the Phil has registered a cumulative budget surplus of \$28.8 million in the three postrecession fiscal years for which its public tax returns are available. It has declined to provide figures for the fiscal year that will end Sept. 30.

A CLEANING MAKES DIFFERENCE

When does a Jackson Pollock painting look more like a Jackson Pollock painting?

Simple: When it's clean.

That's the not altogether surprising thought that came to mind when I dropped by the J. Paul Getty Museum's conservation lab the other day to check out progress on Pollock's monumental 1943 "Mural." Star of the collection at the University of Iowa Museum of Art, the epic painting had arrived in Los Angeles a year ago for extensive treatment.

Conservators have recently finished removing the coat of varnish apparently applied to the surface sometime in the 1970s – no small task for 160 square feet of canvas (it's roughly 8 feet tall and 20 feet wide).

It's to be expected that a newly cleaned painting will look somewhat different from the way it had, but I was frankly unprepared for just how different – how fresh and kinetic – "Mural" looks now.

Color contrasts are emphatic. Patches of white canvas are bright rather than dim. While wholly abstract, several flickering suggestions of animal forms are vivid. Layers of visual space have opened up, created by what the artist called his "stampede" of painterly shapes and rhythms.

The gestural dynamism known to have had such an impact almost 70 years ago, when the commissioned painting was first unveiled in collector Peggy Guggenheim's Manhattan apartment, has returned in force. My jaw dropped.

The veil of varnish had tamped everything down. Perhaps its most detrimental effect was the uniform sheen of reflected light across the surface that it caused. In hindsight, “Mural” looked less like a painting than like a giant photomural of a painting.

Not anymore. “Mural” is back.

The next job for conservators will be to design a big, sturdy new stretcher for it. That will first require deciding whether to make it a precise rectangle or one that will take into account the picture’s slight downward bow. (The canvas appears to sag slightly in the center, pulling up the bottom edges at the right and left and leaving sections of unpainted canvas.) Once the chosen design is built, the entire canvas will be removed from the current stretcher and affixed to its new support.

The aim is to have everything finished by the spring. Then “Mural” will be put on temporary display at the Brentwood museum before returning home to lucky Iowa. If you’ve seen the painting before, be prepared to be surprised.

ACTORS DISPLAY AGILITY

Shakespeare’s Richard II is often referred to as the poet king and not uncommonly played as something of an effete cartoon dreamed up by Oscar Wilde. (Ralph Fiennes brought a Liberace flair to the role in the Almeida Theatre Company’s production that came to the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2000.) A master of figurative language, he treats words as if they were precious curios, symbols to be admired rather than action plans to be put into effect.

To call his management style capricious would be an understatement: England is at the mercy of his whims, which are tolerated by dukes and earls until their property is threatened. A keen observer of the sociology of power, Shakespeare understood that aristocrats would put up with all manner of political eccentricity – just don’t mess with their real estate.

Dressed in body-hugging all black, John Sloan plays Richard with youthful selfabsorption in Kubzansky’s adaptation. Locked in a squalid dungeon, he behaves as though he was a spoiled Ivy Leaguer sentenced to the loony bin for acting a little nutty. He’s haunted by misdeeds and rattled by his miscalculations, but his expression nonetheless screams, “How can this be happening to me?”

As the play travels back in time, we discover just how this spoiled

darling got into such hot water. Prancing around with a ruby- and emerald-encrusted gold crown and waving a priceless scepter as though it were the hot new accessory of the season, he can't understand why he's being called away from his playfellows to settle disputes between angry nobles, played by Jim Ortlieb and, the real discovery of this production, the stupendously agile Paige Lindsey White.

White is mesmerizing as the banished son of John of Gaunt, Henry Bolingbroke, who returns with troops after his father's estate is ransacked to pay for the king's elective war against the Irish rebels. But she's just as adept in the role of Queen Isabel and in fact could probably have performed "R II" as a solo show, though that would have prevented us from admiring Sloan's flamboyant Richard and Ortlieb's heartbroken John of Gaunt.

Given the number of characters in the play, the logistics of Kubzansky's production might seem dizzying, but the staging sorts out the action with remarkable fluidity. Names are announced unobtrusively and the acting is so nimble, with hardly an extraneous gesture, that it's easy to accept the way in which Ortlieb and White keep transforming from one figure to the next.

"R II" impresses most as a feat of ingenious stagecraft. The scenic design by Kaitlyn Pietras is stunningly spare, enlivened by a screen backdrop upon which lines from this most poetic of history plays are projected. Jenny Foldenauer's costumes and props help to flesh out a world that is a purely theatrical construction, neither medieval nor modern day but some dreamlike amalgam.

If the second half of the adaptation isn't quite as riveting as the first, it's probably because we have already experienced Richard in captivity and the deposition consequently doesn't have the same suspenseful build. All credit to Sloan, however, for rising in emotional majesty at the play's conclusion.

The production is remarkably concentrated, but some of the textual pruning diminishes the chorus of democratic voices that is perhaps the key to Shakespeare's political vision. The commoners are given short shrift.

There is no need whatsoever for a Shakespeare production to make a case for a play's continued relevance, but "Richard II" engages concerns that continue to bedevil us today. "R II" resists making modern parallels and focuses instead on the theatrically vibrant tale of a ruler who is never more kingly than when giving up his crown. On this score, it succeeds brilliantly.

AT WWII MUSEUM VETS TAKE CENTER STAGE

Officially, the occasion was the dedication of a new \$35-million pavilion at the National World War II Museum here. Tom Brokaw spoke, as did two U.S. senators and various dignitaries. Visitors studied the vintage aircraft, including a B-29 and P-51 Mustang hanging from the ceiling of the imposing U.S. Freedom Pavilion: The Boeing Center.

But the day was really about the old men.

They're no longer quick, and many shuffled along with canes and walkers. Some rode in wheelchairs. For most, their hair, what's left of it, has turned white. And the hundreds attending the dedication couldn't get enough of them.

"Thank you for your service" was heard again and again, followed by, "May I have your autograph?" and, "May I take your picture?"

The veterans, typically, were modest.

"Somebody threw a war and I showed up. Everybody showed up," said William Blakel, 92, of Wichita, Kan.

The museum was the brainchild of author and historian Stephen Ambrose. It was originally conceived as a museum about D-day and opened on June 6, 2000, the 56th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy. In time it extended its mission to tell the story of the U.S. in World War II, both home and abroad.

As U.S. Sen. Mary L. Landrieu (D-La.) put it, Ambrose and other historians and planners believed books alone could not capture the war experience. The museum aims to "tell a story that refuses to stay on the pages," she said.

On Saturday many stories were of family, not heroics or battle.

Jack Emerson, 89, of Metairie, La., volunteered right out of high school and went on to fly bombers over Italy. He was the eldest of three children, and the day he left for basic training in Texas "everybody was in tears." He was told to write home every day.

And he did — for a while.

After earning his wings he was a second lieutenant, and as seen in an old photo, handsome, too. He "had a good time" as young men will do, he said. For days he didn't write.

Then he got a telegram, serious business because only important people got telegrams. "Jack call home," his sister wrote. "Momma's

worried about you.”

Blakel, who served in the Army Air Corps, recalled racing home to Ransom, 111., in 1945 for Thanksgiving. He made it with three days to spare — and met his daughter for the first time. She was 18 months old.

At the museum he smiled and looked at the daughter, Sharon Temanson, who joined him for the dedication. With her father off at war she had slept in her mother’s bed, until this strange man showed up before Thanksgiving.

“You weren’t too happy with me,” Blakel recalled. Saturday’s ceremony, though steeped in the past, also looked to the future. “Today is as much about the next generation as the greatest generation,” said Louisiana Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne.

Also present were high school and middle school students who wrote winning essays for a contest held in conjunction with National History Day. Students from all 50 states and the District of Columbia marched into the ceremony accompanied by a World War II veteran.

Current members of the military were sprinkled throughout the crowd, often towering over the old men.

When “The Star-Span-gled Banner” began, the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, old and young, raised their right arms in salute. Some stooped, some stood ramrod straight. Some have memories of Saipan and Anzio, others of Baghdad and Kabul.

And all together, they held the salute.

CHEVROLET HAS BEEN A BETTER RECORD COMPANY THAN COLUMBIA RECORDS EVER WAS TO ME

The song, which was included on Mellencamp’s May 2003 album of reworked blues and folk standards, *Trouble No More*, made news even before it was released. In the fall Mellencamp and his wife, the supermodel and photographer Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp, landed in the headlines again when they posted an open letter on his Web site, mellencamp.com, titled, in part, “It’s Time to Take Back Our Country.” The Mellencamps called for an end to what they described as the “political ‘hijacking’ of Iraq” and the chilling effect on free speech that had crept into the national discourse. Though they were spared the kind of public thrashing that the Dixie Chicks got that March when lead singer Natalie Maines told a London concert audience that she was “ashamed the president of the United States” is from

Texas, the Mellencamp family's politics did not go unnoticed on their home turf. Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp recalls the time that she, her husband, and their sons, Hud, 12, and Speck, 11, were driving in town when a local radio station played "To Washington" and invited listeners to comment, prompting one man to call up and say, "I don't know who I hate worse, John Mellencamp or Saddam Hussein." Mostly, the criticism was implied in the cold stares and whispers of some of the locals whom the Mellencamps encountered on a regular basis.

A few times, the rocker's clan found themselves on the wrong end of some drive-by mudslinging. Because their 60-acre compound, with its stucco mansion, sits on the serene Lake Monroe, Irwin-Mellencamp says a number of boaters floated near their banks and shouted obscenity-laced tirades at the house. Irwin-Mellencamp won't forget the time that a boat carrying a profanity-spewing topless woman pulled close to the house while she and her family were having dinner. Irwin-Mellencamp tried to confront the group, but they eluded her. She did the same when someone slipped a nasty anonymous note into her car while her sons were working off excess energy at the local rock-climbing center. Irwin-Mellencamp says she went back into the facility and urged whoever had planted the note to come down off the wall and debate the matter face-to-face. No one descended.

Mellencamp says his neighbors have long known that he is "a liberal," but admits he was shocked by some of the "emotional" reactions that he encountered locally after word spread about "To Washington": "I thought, Wait a minute – you guys have known me for 30 years. You don't know who George Bush is. This guy just showed up. You're going to take his word over mine?"

Mellencamp considered a form of silence after Trouble No More. He had tired of the music-career grind, and, free and clear of any record-label obligations after leaving first Mercury and then Columbia, he says, "I had pretty much decided I didn't want to make any more records." He considered turning full-time to painting, a passion of his, but then, he says, he had a conversation with the old-school record executive Doug Morris, chairman of Universal Music Group, which owns the Republic label. The artist says Morris asked him, "Why don't you go make a great record?"

Mellencamp took the bait, on his own terms. He says Freedom's Road is his only obligation to Universal, and he is hell-bent on having it heard. Well aware that commercial radio doesn't play the decision to license the album's

first single, the rousing “Our Country,” for a Chevy-truck ad campaign. (He had established a relationship with the automaker in 2005 when Chevy briefly licensed a fragment of his song “Now More than Ever” for another campaign.) In a world where the latest Rolling Stones tour seems to have more sponsors than some NASCAR drivers, Mellencamp’s decision to lend his voice and image to a series of Chevy ads hardly seems cataclysmic – until you consider that in previous decades he was one of the most strenuously anti-commercial rock artists out there. In 1991, he’d even chided fellow midwesterner Bob Seger in print for licensing his song “Like a Rock” for – that’s right – a Chevy-truck campaign. “I guess he needed the money,” Mellencamp told the Los Angeles Times.

When I mention this to Mellencamp, he doesn’t flinch. “It was a whole different scenario back then,” he tells me. “Of course, I was 15 years younger than I am now. But there were many avenues at the time for people to get their music on the radio, and MTV was big. There were a lot of ways to get your music played then, as opposed to now.”

That defense hasn’t stopped the press from taking shots at Mellencamp and Chevy. Last October, The New York Times accused Mellencamp of having “elastic” political values. “He and his spouse once wrote a jeremiad against the Bush administration that said, in part: ‘It is time to take back our country. Take it back from political agendas, corporate greed and overall manipulation,’ the paper noted. “That was in 2003. Now he’s sitting on the fender of a Chevy truck, strumming a guitar and singing, ‘Well, I can stand beside ideals I think are right, and I can stand beside the idea to stand and fight.’ He can also stand beside a nice shiny truck, if the fee is right.”

Mellencamp looks at it another way. When Chevy handed him the creative freedom that he’s often fought for at his labels, he took it. “Pretty much, Chevrolet has been a better record company than Columbia Records ever was to me,” he says.

On my last day with Mellencamp, I see a man determined to make a great record. I meet him in the control room at Belmont Mall. For the last day and a half, he, members of his band, and veteran sound engineer Don Smith (the Rolling Stones) have been huddled around a mixing board obsessing over the sound of “My Aeroplane,” one of the last tracks to be completed for the album. It’s got a guitar sound that can raise gooseflesh, and hopeful lyrics in which Mellencamp sings of escaping the bonds of the earth so that he can

write the "perfect" song. "It'd be a song for the people / It'd be a song that everybody could sing along." The men listen to the track dozens of times while Mellencamp, in jeans, sits in his inviolable space on the left side of the mixing room's couch, his legs up on an ottoman, looking like James Dean's Jett Rink in *Giant*. After suggesting a number of tweaks, Mellencamp finally yells, "Print it," and a CD copy of "My Aeroplane" is handed to him.

Next comes a crucial test for the song. Mellencamp and Mike Wanchic, a Kentucky boy who has been his guitarist for close to 30 years, exit to Belmont Mall's parking lot, past the space reserved for Elvis Presley, and head for a cream-colored Audi convertible – Elaine Irwin-Mellencamp's car – which Mellencamp has driven to his studio for a purpose. The two men squeeze their middle-aged frames into the sporty car, insert the CD, crank up the volume, and once more "My Aeroplane" fills the air. After all the sweat and rhetoric, that's what it boils down to: good friends, good music, and a pretty woman's car. The two men sit there bopping their heads and tapping their knees, a little more creakily than they did 25 years ago, but looking like all they ever wanted they got from rock 'n' roll.

VEGAS: COMING SOON TO AN AIRPORT NEAR YOU

Aisle, window or Las Vegas? Now visitors to the Bob Hope Airport in Burbank, Calif., can make Vegas hotel reservations, purchase show tickets and nightclub passes, reserve a round of golf or book a tour as easily as they choose their seat on a plane.

Located at Gate A4, Terminal A, the fully staffed VEGAS.com concierge desk allows airline passengers to purchase a variety of Vegas products just steps away from their departure gate. "We can't imagine a better pre-flight perk for outbound passengers to Vegas," said Howard Lefkowitz, president of VEGAS.com. "Giving customers immediate access to shows and restaurants and other activities - in the down-time just before they arrive in our city - is a convenient service that we are proud to be the first to offer."

The booth is open daily from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. to service the thousands of airline passengers departing on the more than 15 daily flights for Vegas. Agents at the concierge desk said the booth is a hit with passengers looking to make last-minute reservations.

"Really, you can't lose with this job," said VEGAS.com Burbank concierge Michele Lumley. "People are going to Vegas to have fun and party

and that's what we help them to do."

Besides last-minute shoppers, Lumley said a number of people use their pre-flight downtime to plan future Las Vegas trips. Agents at the VEGAS.com desk have helped plan anniversary celebrations, company retreats and more.

MASTERPIECE THEATRE

Paintings by Johannes Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Claude Monet, Edouard Manet, Andy Warhol and more have all graced the walls of Wynn Las Vegas.

So it comes as no surprise that "Le Reve," the show at Wynn Las Vegas, is also a masterpiece.

French for "the dream," "Le Reve" shares its name with a Pablo Picasso painting owned by Wynn. Where the 1932 painting explores a single intimate moment - Picasso's mistress Marie-Therese Walter caught in sensual dishabille asleep in a chair - the show explores all the possibilities this single image suggests. The result is a stunning ode to the human spirit that equals the masterwork that supplied it with a name.

"Le Reve" is a journey of the soul as told through a dream. It explores concepts of damnation, redemption, lust, love, loss and laughter all the while presenting amazing acrobatics, aquatics and even flight.

"Le Reve means the dream, and my aim is to create an entirely new universe, to transport the spectators into a unique world where the theater, performance and audience become one and the same reality. To take you on a magical, sacred journey that touches your emotions in a way that is different to anything I have done before," said show creator Franco Dragone.

From the moment you enter the Le Reve Theater that journey begins. Designed in the round, its circular banks of seats evoke memories of ancient amphitheaters where theater and spectacle were one. The design also serves a practical purpose, ensuring that no seat is more than 12 rows from the liquid stage.

Overhead, a massive domed ceiling houses a bank of digital screens that offer fantastical views of the heavens, while surrounding the audience are three clock towers, like the points on some strange compass.

A recent \$8 million renovation serves to reinforce the venue's unique atmosphere. Wynn Las Vegas has made the extraordinary decision to reduce

the venue's number of seats from 2,087 to 1,606. This allows the hotel to offer some of the widest and most luxurious theater seats in Vegas.

It also facilitated the creation of the Strip's first ever bottle-service VIP theater seats. Dubbed the Champagne Circle, these seats are only available as part of a special VIP Indulgence package. Guests seated in them enjoy complimentary Perrier-Jouet champagne, chocolate-covered strawberries, plush lounge seating and the ultimate insider's look at "Le Reve" - a video screen that shows behind-the-scenes, underwater and overhead shots before and during the show.

The remodel also reimagined the colors and decor of the theater. Gone are the cold blue walls and seats, replaced with deep reds and bronzes - a color palette inspired by the Picasso painting. All the changes serve to better unite the show and the theater, erasing the line between stage and audience to the point where you become a part of the dream that is "Le Reve."

This integration is further reinforced with Le Reve's pre-show. About 15 minutes prior to show time, characters begin to rise from Le Reve's pool like primordial beings - lizards, horned devils and angelic women. Four white-suited angel-clowns make their way through the audience. These comedic figures reappear throughout the show acting as both guide and comic relief like a demented melding of archangels and lounge act.

Then, with a burst of fire rolling across the lake, "Le Reve" begins with a torrent of images seemingly torn from the collective human subconscious. Here a broken and blasted tree rises from the lake. Figures cling to its branches only to dive into the pool, surface and climb the tree again - the struggle of life captured in a few fleeting moments. Others fly, reaching for the heavens only to be cast back down into the watery abyss - Michelangelo's Last Judgment hauntingly brought to life.

Men and women meet in a dance of lust and love where the simple sight of legs clad in red heels can transform a swimmer into seductress. Rain falls in a downpour, snow softly descends and even the celestial heavens come alive.

Through it all, characters appear and disappear, emerging from the lake as though born there, diving down from the heavens like avenging angels, crawling out from the audience as though drawn forth from those seated in the theater. A single woman, an homage to Picasso's dreamer, appears throughout the show, the center of the maelstrom, she anchors the chaos allowing us to travel with her on this strange journey.

"Le Reve" delivers all the spectacle expected of a Las Vegas show with death-defying acrobatics, amazing special effects and a unique stage that appears to transform into any form imaginable. But what elevates this show to an artistic masterwork is its ability to touch the human spirit.

Demonic and divine, "Le Reve" finds both in the human soul, leaving you to wonder have you woken from the dream or are you still there?

UNIT VIII

HISTORY

EGYPT TARGETS ISLAMISTS IN TOWN RAID

CAIRO – In what could presage a broader strike against Islamists who have been attacking Coptic Christians in the Nile Valley, Egyptian security forces on Monday swept into a community where supporters of deposed Islamist President Mohamed Morsi had in effect seized control.

The Christian minority in the central town of Dalga, about 175 miles south of Cairo, reported a harsh campaign of intimidation in recent weeks by militants who burned churches and shook down individuals, demanding protection-money in the form of an archaic “tax” on non-Muslims. About one-sixth of the town’s 120,000 residents are Christians.

But Egyptian authorities played down the army and police offensive in Dalga and appeared reluctant to portray it as having been launched in support of beleaguered Copts. An Interior Ministry official described the operation as targeting “wanted criminals,” and reported the arrests of 56 people and the seizure of several weapons caches.

By contrast, an army campaign against Islamist groups operating in the rugged Sinai Peninsula has been trumpeted by Egyptian officials. At a news conference in Cairo on Sunday featuring slickly produced videos of soldiers and tanks, the chief army spokesman, Col. Ahmed Ali, vowed that the Sinai campaign would continue until Islamist “terrorists” in the vast desert region were brought to heel.

Christians in Egypt have long complained that the government is indifferent to the persecution they suffer. In Minya, where Dalga is located and Christians make up a greater share of the population than they do nationwide, government offensives may be driven less by a desire to defend religious minorities than by a keen awareness that the area is a stronghold of Gamaa Islamiya, an ally of Morsi’s Muslim Brotherhood movement.

Islamists have challenged government control in several other communities in Minya, local officials have reported.

After the dawn offensive in Dalga, residents told the Associated Press that they were ordered to stay indoors and the town’s entrances were sealed off while security forces conducted house-to-house searches for Islamist

militants. Army helicopters hovered overhead.

Christians became the targets of violent attacks after Morsi, the country's first democratically elected president, was ousted in an army-backed coup July 3. Six weeks later, hundreds of the deposed president's followers were killed by security forces who broke up sprawling pro-Morsi protest camps in the capital and elsewhere. After that, the situation in Dalga deteriorated drastically, with Islamists holding sway and demanding Morsi's reinstatement.

Egypt has been roiled by turmoil since the massive popular uprising that drove autocrat Hosni Mubarak from power in 2011. Islamists surged to the political forefront after that, but Morsi's yearlong rule was deeply unpopular across the political spectrum, and many Egyptians applauded when security forces pushed him from power and staged a wide-ranging roundup of Muslim Brotherhood leaders.

In recent weeks, the political scope of the crackdown has moved beyond the Brotherhood and other Islamist groups to include moderate-minded activists, along with academics and journalists.

The interim government last week extended a nationwide state of emergency that gives the authorities broad powers to suppress dissent, and a curfew imposed more than a month ago remains in force, though its hours have been shortened.

CREWS LIFT COSTA CONCORDIA UPRIGHT

GIGLIO, Italy - Twenty months after it capsized off the Italian coast in a disaster that killed 32 people, the Costa Concordia cruise ship emerged from the Mediterranean on Monday thanks to a painstaking \$800-million salvage effort.

Fifty-six giant pulleys slowly heaved the half-submerged vessel back to an upright position in a 19-hour operation that went into the early hours of Tuesday, revealing a section of hull darkened by rust and algae during months underwater.

"The rotation has finished its course, we are at zero degrees, the ship is resting on the platforms," said Italy's civil protection chief, Franco Gabrielli, at a 4 a.m. news conference on Giglio island, where he was applauded and cheered by residents.

"It could not have gone better than this," said Franco Porcellacchia, an engineer working on the salvage for ship owner Costa Cruises. "It was a perfect operation."

The 950-foot-long, 114,000-ton vessel had laid impaled on two underwater granite outcrops since January 2012, when it ran aground after Capt. Francesco Schettino attempted a “sail past” maneuver close to Giglio. Schettino is standing trial on charges of manslaughter and abandoning his ship.

About 4,200 passengers and crew were forced to scramble into lifeboats or plunge into shallow water after the ship ran aground. Thirty-two people drowned, some of them sucked under by whirlpools created as the ship tilted.

The Costa Concordia is believed to be the biggest ship to be hoisted back upright after capsizing. The technique, known as parbuckling, has been used in the past, notably on warships, including the battleship Oklahoma, which was righted by the U.S. military in 1943 after it was bombed during the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

During months of careful preparation by U.S. company Titan Salvage and its Italian partner, Micoperi, more than 1,000 bags of cement were laid underwater and six underwater platforms were built for the cruise ship to be righted onto.

“It was like being in ancient Egypt, watching the construction of the pyramids,” said Giglio Mayor Sergio Ortelli.

By noon Monday, after three hours of hauling during which the pulleys exerted 6,000 tons of pressure, the ship was wrenched free from the two granite outcrops, which had penetrated 18 feet into the hull.

Needing to rotate 65 degrees, the ship slowly turned throughout the afternoon until massive metal boxes – some the height of 11-story buildings – that were welded to the exposed side of the ship touched the water.

By midnight, salvage workers based in a control center on a barge off the bow of the ship switched off the pulleys and opened valves in the boxes to allow water in at 1,000 cubic feet a minute, adding the necessary ballast to bring the ship down onto the platforms.

As it rose out of the water, two large indentations could be seen on the side of the ship where it had been pinned to the rocky outcrops.

Marine biologist Giandomenico Ardizzone, who has been monitoring the seabed for the ship’s operator, Costa Crociere, noted that the vessel was being moved from rocks sloping upward to the shore to platforms about 100 feet down.

“Everyone expects the ship to rise up, but it will appear the opposite,” he said before the end of the operation. “Once it is settled, the water will rise

up to Deck 7 [of the ship], which is almost at the bridge.”

When the ship is deemed stable, metal boxes will be added to the formerly submerged side of the ship. Then, water will be pumped out of the boxes on both sides, floating the vessel so it can be towed in spring to a port, probably on the Italian mainland, to be taken apart.

Fears that a slick of paint, residual fuel, small quantities of heavy metal and rotting food – including more than 3 tons of melon, more than 130 gallons of olive oil and 8 tons of beef – would emerge from the ship proved unfounded, officials said.

Looking ahead, Micoperi project manager Sergio Girotto said salvage workers would now get onboard to clean up and remove safes to restore valuables to passengers.

“I would like to strip all the cabins down to the metal to take a few thousand tons of weight off the ship, which will make it sit higher in the water and could affect the choice of port we take it to,” he said.

Ortelli, the mayor, said he was in favor of keeping the platforms, which cover an area larger than a football field, for use as an artificial reef to attract divers after the Costa Concordia departs.

Ardizzone said that during his months of diving around the ship and the platforms, he had noticed shoals of fish eyeing the structure, possibly as a future home.

AMENDING CONGRESSIONAL PAY

GREGORY Watson’s college essay received a C – and changed America.

The next time someone goes on about how one citizen can’t make a difference in this country or how the political system cannot be changed, tell them the story of Watson and the 27th Amendment. On Constitution Day, Sept. 17, the power of the individual citizen in America is not dead.

In 1982, a University of Texas political science professor assigned an essay about the governmental process. Watson, then a student, came across a long forgotten constitutional amendment proposed in 1789 and chose that topic for his paper.

Rep. (and future president) James Madison had proposed that any pay increase Congress voted for itself would not take effect until after the next election. That way, current representatives could not vote themselves a self-serving immediate pay raise, and would have to risk that any vote for a raise

could benefit successors who might be ideological or political rivals.

Watson, now a policy analyst for GOP Texas state Rep. Bill Callegari, thinks the founders were right to be concerned, giving a modern era example.

“Congress in December 1981 had given itself a unique tax break applicable only to members of Congress and tried to hide it in a bill to address the needs of persons in the coal mining industry who became afflicted with black lung disease,” Watson told me in an interview. “In my mind, that was nothing more than a backdoor pay raise for members of Congress.”

Though Congress passed Madison’s amendment, it failed to achieve the required ratification from three-quarters of state legislatures to become law. Watson felt that recent events merited reconsideration of the amendment, yet his essay earned a C.

“Both the [teaching assistant] and the professor took the position that the issue was trivial, so trivial in fact that to them it was a nonissue,” Watson recalled. “Both also took the position that what was then a 192-year-old proposed constitutional amendment was no longer pending before the state legislatures.”

Watson’s solution: make it a live issue before state legislatures.

Over the next decade, Watson embarked on a one-man mission to revive moribund state ratifications, raising awareness coast to coast and stoking anti-Congress public sentiment. Starting in Maine in April 1983 and ending in Michigan in May 1992, Watson slowly resuscitated the proposal almost single-handedly.

“I was the one who did all of the letter writing, faxing and telephone calling to the state law-makers,” Watson said. “In many cases, I even went so far as to supply the state legislators with a draft model resolution to use in their state in order to accomplish ratification.”

The 27th Amendment, proposed in September 1789, was ratified by the last state needed in May 1992. No other constitutional amendments have passed since.

With modern political polarization at unprecedented levels, could a constitutional amendment ever occur again?

“Yes,” Watson said, “because if a proposal is very, very, very common sense ... state lawmakers in both parties in the state capitals will realize that the American people – and the voters in then particular state – would want them to support it.

“The problem,” he acknowledged, “is getting it out of Congress and over to the states.”

Watson believes a more likely scenario is the one set forth in a provision in Article V of the Constitution, under which three-quarters of states ratify first, triggering Congress to follow. No amendment has ever passed this way, but with Congress solidly gridlocked, there’s a first time for everything. “Congress refuses to send to the states for ratification even the most common-sense proposals for amending the U.S. Constitution,” Watson said.

Watson sees contemporary amendment proposals worth considering, citing a proposal introduced in August by Reps. Ron DeSantis (R-Fla.) and Matt Salmon (R-Ariz.). It would “stop Congress from arrogantly exempting itself from the laws that it deems fit to impose upon the rest of the American people,” Watson explained.

Watson’s story exemplifies the power of one ordinary individual to effect change at the highest government levels – perhaps a uniquely American ideal. The 27th Amendment curtailed congressional pay raises; since its 1992 passage, congressional pay has increased 34.4% (and has remained unchanged since 2009) relative to 67.1% inflation. By contrast, congressional pay had skyrocketed 44.7% in the five years before passage of the amendment.

In an era in which many Americans feel their voices go unheeded at the highest levels of public policy decision-making, Watson is the opposite of disillusioned. “Back then, I was dependent on communicating via U.S. Postal Service – and at considerable monetary expense, to say nothing about how laborious and time-consuming the process was,” Watson said. “Today, by contrast... an entire state’s lawmakers could be communicated with through email at the mere click of a mouse.”

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FOR NOTES

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