

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Going potty is a basic right

Editor:

The Daily Press article on the lack of restrooms available to Third Street Promenade visitors is long overdue but very welcome ("A going problem on promenade," page 1, Oct. 4-5). I have worked on the promenade for over 13 years and have seen basic public amenities, including restrooms, intentionally decreased by the joint efforts and policies of the City Council, the economic development department, and the Bayside District Corp. Unfortunately, our leaders have put profit far ahead of providing their guests with such a basic, primal necessity such as having a restroom to use.

A glaring example of this can be seen in what happened to the public restrooms that were in Parking Structure 5 located at Fourth Street and Broadway. The men's restroom was damaged by fire a couple years ago and the restrooms and lobby were boarded up. Unfortunately, instead of reopening the restrooms to the public, they were walled off and not reopened. Instead, the space was given to Provenzano Resources (the new, exclusive franchisee, which owns all the vending carts on the promenade).

There are thousands of people each day who drive from all over and park in Structure 5. The structure holds around 600 cars. There is no restroom close by for anyone to use. Young children, older adults, pregnant women, and people with certain medical conditions are most negatively affected by this. Over the past couple of years, I have seen several young children and older adults in and around Structure 5 who wet their pants because they could not get to a restroom in time.

The manager of Yankee Doodles was so right when he said that restrooms seem like a mandatory thing to have available, and that it is the city's responsibility to provide them. On the other hand, Rob Rader could not be more wrong when he said that the lack of restrooms could eventually hurt the promenade. The lack of restrooms is not the problem; it is a symptom of the problem. The problem is that the people who are in charge of providing restrooms are not doing it. Instead, their pursuit of profit has trumped their responsibility to do what is decent and right for those who trust them to do what is decent and right.

D. Bristol
Los Angeles

Governor's budget blows

Editor:

My husband and I have been residents of Santa Monica for 25 years. Needless to say, we are senior citizens. The other day I went down to our mailboxes to get our mail and when my husband asked me if we had any good mail, like a check or something, I said, "I think we received our renter's assistance check." When I opened the envelope, I found the following: a letter from the state of California telling us that "funds for the Homeowner and Renter Assistance Program were removed from the 2008/2009 state budget."

We were shocked. We only expected to receive \$30 and got nothing. My \$30 will buy two seniors on Social Security milk and bread and a couple of other things. I seriously doubt if my \$30 will bolster Schwarzenegger's budget. I am sure others will feel this is terrible and totally unfair.

He lost our vote!

Masrshall and Florence Gershon
Santa Monica

TELL SANTA MONICA WHAT YOU THINK!
WRITE A LETTER
TO THE EDITOR
EMAIL TO: EDITOR@SMDP.COM
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Going Postal

Steve "the Mailman" Breen

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

We are not in Kansas anymore

ARE YOU A FLYING MONKEY, A TALKING tree or a mental midget Munchkin? Take this test and see.

1. Name the parts of speech and define those that have no modifications.
2. Find the interest of \$512.60 for 8 months and 18 days at 7 percent.
3. What is the cost of 40 boards, 12 inches wide by 16 feet long at \$1.20 per square meter?
4. What are the following and give examples of each: Trigraph, sub-vocals, diphthong, cognate letters and linguals?
5. Describe the movements of the earth and give its inclination.
6. Name all the republics of Europe and give the capitals of each.

Welcome to sample questions of an eighth grade exit exam from Salina, Kansas in 1895. Most kids today can't identify the continent of Europe on a map let alone answer question six. Remember, too, that in the math portion the only "calculator" utilized was a pencil, paper and gray matter.

During the past 30 years in the Emerald City of California Education, bloviating bureaucrats masquerading as "educators," have tangoed with your kids down the Yellow Brick Road of intellectual pursuits into the soporific poppy field of dullarddom.

California ranks 47th in academic achievement (Kansas is 15th) while having the second largest educational budget, the second highest paid teachers yet is a parsimonious 29th in per student spending.

The Los Angeles Unified School District has a 1 in 3 dropout rate. And while a self-congratulatory Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District claims to be in the upper quintile of academic achievement in a state with a 1 in 4 dropout rate, this only makes SMMUSD a top-level bottom feeder.

The California SAT average for math and critical reading is 1017. Dubya had an SAT score of 1206. How'd your kid do?

Nachum "the Surf Rabbi" Shifren wants to reform this noxious narrative promulgated by the Lullaby League within the LAUSD. Rabbi Shifren is running for LAUSD school board against incumbent Marlene "the Wiz" Canter.

As a three-decade veteran teacher, an orthodox rabbi and ardent surfer, Rabbi Shifren is vociferously revolted by the lack of simple academic direction for students in the LAUSD.

Ms. Canter and her mangy minions manacle teachers to "class management" handbooks on "Assertive Discipline" that relies heavily on retreat Pavlovian "reward/punishment" behavior modification instead of fundamental academics.

Under "Assertive Discipline," your kid isn't being taught intellectual self-realization so much as how to sit up and beg like Toto.

Would it be an inconvenient truth that Marlene Canter is also the co-founder and CEO of Canter and Associates, now Laureate Education, Inc., that invented "Assertive

Discipline" and is ringing the cash register bell for the salivating canines holding the educational purse strings?

It must be nice to have a side business that financially dovetails into one's day job at taxpayers' expense. Pay no attention to that gal behind the curtain!

Marlene Canter touts her greatest achievement as banning the sale of junk foods and soft drinks on LAUSD campuses. Considering past, recent and regular occurrences of shootings/stabbings/beatings on LAUSD schoolyards, I wonder if Ms. Canter has yet surmised that bullets can kill faster than a bag of Doritos.

While teaching at Dorsey High in South Central, Rabbi Shifren was burned out of his classroom by arsonists because he had the temerity to insist that his students actually do their schoolwork! Lollipop Guild "community organizers" regularly pitched race cards at Rabbi Shifren faster than Hoyle could make them. "He's a racist! He only sends black kids to the principal for discipline," they priggishly squealed.

He only had black kids in his class. DOH! Let me get this straight. Politically correct "community organizers" condescend to label a Jew as a "racist" despite the fact that the speaker who preceded Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech was Rabbi Joachim Prinz?

German-born Rabbi Prinz tended to the Berlin Jewry during Hitler's regime.

Maybe Dorsey community organizers didn't get the memo that folks like Rabbi Prinz, Rabbi Shifren and their tribe have had a front row seat to historical pogroms since Ramses II. The story is in a book called a "Bible."

And what would MLK say?

Folks, Rabbi Shifren's message is simple: Simplicity.

Now click your heels three times ...

1. Scrape away all the barnacles of school administration excess. A lessened miscreant administration translates into more money for the kids where it patently belongs.

2. Go back to the fundamentals. Review those eighth grade sample questions above. How'd you do? Washington left school at 16. Lincoln and Frederick Douglass were predominantly self-educated. In 1872, Douglass was the first black man to be nominated as vice president of the U.S. They all appeared to do pretty well without self-aggrandizing, cash-corpulent academic apparatchiks monitoring the scene.

3. Parents: give teachers the power to teach without interference from self-appointed "community organizers."

Your kid might then get to be president someday like Dubya.

STEVE BREEN is looking for a conservative pair of size 12 ruby slippers for Halloween and is still "the best looking mailman at the U.S. Post Office." He can be reached at dulcamarax@yahoo.com

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A newspaper with issues

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The Santa Monica Daily Press is published six days a week, Monday through Saturday.

19,000 daily circulation, 46,450 daily readership. Circulation is audited and verified by Circulation Verification Council, 2006. Serving the City of Santa Monica, and the communities of Venice Beach, Brentwood, West L.A. Members of CNPA, AFCC, CVC, Associated Press, IFPA, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce.

Published by Newlon Rouge, LLC

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