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# Los Angeles Times

Saturday August 06, 2005

## 'Tara' Residents Prepare for Eviction

**\* West Hollywood house has been focus of a battle between preservationists and the city, which plans a senior condo complex.**

*Home Edition, California, Page B-3*

*Metro Desk*

*14 inches; 493 words*

**By Ammara Durrani, Times Staff Writer**

Residents who for two years have fought efforts to convert the "Tara" house in West Hollywood into a senior condo complex prepared Friday for a midnight eviction.

The Laurel Avenue property has been the subject of a preservation battle between residents and the city, which owns the structure. The debate has come to symbolize what critics have called West Hollywood's poor record of preserving its historic buildings.

The house belonged to Elsie Weisman, who gave it to the city upon her death in 2000 at the age of 101. The city wants to convert the property into a 35-unit senior living complex.

Allegra Allison, who has lived in the house for 28 years as Weisman's tenant, said she and other members of the West Hollywood Neighborhood Alliance are trying to persuade the city to instead make the house a cultural center.

"She [Weisman] didn't give it to the city to give it away," said Allison as she packed her belongings alongside her boyfriend, Kent Woker, who has lived in the house for 10 1/2 years.

Critics of the redevelopment say the plans do not reflect the wishes of Weisman, who wanted the house preserved when she left it to the city.

"She was so proud of it and she was clearly under the impression that the city would preserve it," said Steve Martin, a West Hollywood City Council member from 1994 to 2003.

"I don't think she ever thought there would be no change," he said. "But [the housing plan] is pretty much a mockery of what she thought it would be like."

City officials could not be reached for comment Friday. In the past, they have said they hoped the project would keep the Tara house's Colonial-style look.

The plans call for additions to the structure, but the city said they would be made in a sensitive way.

City leaders have argued that West Hollywood desperately needs more housing for senior citizens.

Paul Zimmerman, executive director of the nonprofit West Hollywood Community Housing Corp., one of the city's partners in the project, said Tara tenants were supposed to vacate the house within six months of Weisman's death.

But years passed and the city did not decide to pursue the property until 2002, when Zimmerman's organization was approached to come up with financing and plans for senior living.

Obtaining a grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, the developers have proposed a \$4.2-million expansion.

The City Council has not voted on the final project, so opponents still hope to block it. They acknowledge they face an uphill fight.

Zimmerman said the plans submitted to the city would not change the look of Tara from the street.

"The City Council would have to decide what's the use that would give the most public benefit," he said.

Critics are hoping the city will keep Tara as it is.

"We want the whole thing to become a park," said Allison. "People love it."

**Descriptors:** WEST HOLLYWOOD (CA); HOUSES; HISTORIC SITES; DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT; CONSERVATION

# Los Angeles Times

Wednesday August 03, 2005

## **5 San Jose Officers on Leave After Man Dies in Tussle**

**\* Police shot the suspect with a Taser stun gun, pepper-sprayed him and hit him with a baton.**

*Home Edition, California, Page B-3*

*Metro Desk*

*8 inches; 298 words*

**By Ammara Durrani, Times Staff Writer**

Five San Jose police officers have been placed on leave while the Police Department investigates the death of a man who was shot with a Taser stun gun, pepper-sprayed and struck with a baton during a struggle with police.

Police said the incident began Monday morning when the man kicked in the door of a condominium. The resident did not know the man and chased him to a convenience store, where the two men, whose identities were being withheld, fought.

By all accounts, it was a prolonged and violent struggle both inside and outside the store, police said.

Officers arrived at the store at 4:08 a.m. and separated the men. While officers were investigating the incident, the man ran away, police said.

Two officers chased him and were joined by three others as they tried to stop him from climbing a fence back into the condominium complex, Sgt. Nick Muyo said Tuesday.

During the struggle, officers shot him with the Taser, used pepper spray and hit him with the baton.

As officers tried to snare him in a wrap-like nylon device used to immobilize suspects, the man became unconscious, police said.

Officers performed CPR and called for paramedics. He was rushed by ambulance to a San Jose hospital, where he later died, police said.

Muyo said an autopsy would be conducted to determine the cause of death.

Placing the officers on weeklong leave is standard procedure when someone dies in custody, Muyo said.

"They were involved in a violent struggle and fight," said Muyo, adding that in such instances the department helps its officers with counseling and time off to regroup. "These officers need time to recover, and we want to make sure they return to duty physically and mentally ready to serve the people of San Jose."

**Descriptors:** SAN JOSE POLICE DEPARTMENT; TASER GUNS; DEATH; POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

# Los Angeles Times

Sunday July 31, 2005

## View of High Court From the Street

**\* An informal poll finds people aware of the significance of Justice O'Connor's departure but less clear on the fine details of replacing her.**

*Home Edition, Main News, Page A-28*

*National Desk*

*39 inches; 1320 words*

**By Mark Z. Barabak, Times Staff Writer**

RENO -- He is relatively young, people know that much. And conservative, definitely. A good family man, apparently, and fairly new to the bench.

Beyond that, John G. Roberts Jr. is mostly just a name in the news for many Americans, aware that President Bush has nominated him to fill a rare opening on the U.S. Supreme Court but not much more.

They know he was selected to replace a woman -- the first ever on the high court -- and though some would have liked to have seen another woman fill the seat of retiring jurist Sandra Day O'Connor, most felt gender or ethnicity was less important than judicial competence and fair-mindedness.

In dozens of random interviews last week in several states, Americans shared their thoughts about Roberts, Bush, the Supreme Court and its effect on the country.

The fuss in Washington over Roberts' Senate confirmation hearings, over documents and unanswered questions, is a far-off rumble for most people, like a summer squall gathering beyond the horizon. Televised hearings on his nomination begin Sept. 6, after the Senate returns from its summer recess.

But even if many of the details are sketchy, most people agreed that the high court was an institution that touched everyone in America, in ways significant and small, meaning a lifetime appointment -- particularly for a 50-year-old jurist like Roberts -- could make a great deal of difference for a great many years.

"If you look at what shapes the country politically, a lot of the time it matters who's on the court," said Michelle Schwarze, a 20-year-old Democrat, as she paused to consider Roberts' nomination from behind a fashion boutique counter in Reno, one of the hardest fought-over cities in the 2004 presidential campaign.

The sampling of opinion does not represent a scientific survey. But taken together, the interviews offered a broad sense of the political backdrop for the first debate on a Supreme Court nominee in a decade.

There was a general consensus, regardless of political persuasion, that Roberts' confirmation was all but inevitable, barring some startling revelation.

"I don't think that should or shouldn't is even an issue here," said Jane Plummer, a 32-year-old teacher and no fan of Bush, as she waited for a friend at a park in downtown Seattle.

"Unless there is something in his background that someone finds, you know, not paying his nanny properly or something, of course they will confirm him. That's where controlling the Senate matters for the Republicans."

There seemed to be little appetite, even among Democrats, for the partisan warfare that sunk the nomination of federal judge Robert Bork in 1987, or the political acrimony that turned the 1991 Clarence Thomas hearings into a national psychodrama.

"We don't need another big fight in Congress right now," said Pat Waltman, 62, pausing as he browsed the magazine section at a Borders bookstore in Houston.

"They need to be working on Iraq and Social Security," said Waltman, who voted last year for Sen. John F. Kerry for president. "I'd rather see their energies go there and not in a long, drawn-out battle over a Supreme Court nominee."

That said, most want to know more about Roberts and his views on issues -- abortion was the one that most frequently cropped up -- before the Senate decides whether to confirm him as one of the high court's nine justices.

Roberts sits on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, which is widely regarded as the second most powerful in the country. But his two-year stint has left a meager paper trail, raising questions about his views on such contentious issues as abortion, affirmative action and the environment.

"I don't think we should rush into it," said Rod Little, 63, a retired union machinist from Reno, who suggested the Supreme Court, with its abundance of elderly jurists, could use some shaking up. "I think we should learn a little more about him and his ideas. It sounds like to me they're trying to push the shoe before they know the foot fits it."

Republicans, not surprisingly, were pleased with Bush's pick. "The main thing is that [Roberts] is conservative," said Tony Esteban, a 77-year-old retiree people-watching at the Glendale Galleria. "For me that's important because I'm a conservative."

Dan Barnett, the 54-year-old owner of a small gaming company in Reno, suggested the Supreme Court had "gotten out of hand" in recent years with decisions such as June's 5-4 eminent domain ruling, which gave cities broad power to bulldoze homes and small stores to make way for business development. "That's just ludicrous," he said.

Judith Villalobos lamented the recent court decision limiting the display of the Ten Commandments in public buildings.



"Right now we're in a very bad crisis in the United States," said Villalobos, 68, as she stopped in front of the Art Deco postal building in downtown Reno. "There's a lot of issues that people are bringing up that they shouldn't be wasting time on. Like the church, when they removed the Ten Commandments. That's silly. I think we need to be closer to God with all the things that are happening in the world."

For several Democrats in Reno and elsewhere, the nomination of Roberts -- though not exactly welcome -- was not as bad as they feared.

Mary Ratliff, a 67-year-old Houston-area nurse, said Roberts "doesn't look like anybody the Democrats need to go to the wall to block. Whatever his personal beliefs are, it seems he will be able to apply the law and Constitution first. At least, that's how it looks now."

Charlotte Voitoff, who pulled up to the Reno post office in a red Subaru wagon affixed with a Kerry-Edwards sticker, said she was "somewhat concerned" about Roberts' stance on abortion, which Voitoff said she believed should stay legal.

Although familiar with his opposition to abortion as a lawyer in the first Bush administration, "those were not statements from the bench," she said. "Those were wearing a different hat. So I'm sort of reserving my opinion. But my first reaction is that he was more moderate than I expected."

The 59-year-old retired high school English teacher said she would have liked to have seen a woman appointed to replace O'Connor, one of two female justices on the Supreme Court. But like most, Voitoff said, "It's important to have a person who's qualified rather than one simply based on gender or political philosophy."

Jim Brown, a 63-year-old contractor and political independent -- "I don't sing, I don't play football" -- was even more adamant. "I don't think that has anything to do with it," he said of the nominee's gender. "You pick someone because of their intellect and their morals and scruples. Not their gender. Because then you can say, 'Let's have a gay justice. And let's have this or let's have that.' "

Part of the uncertainty surrounding his nomination stemmed from the fact that it could take years to know Roberts' true measure.

Several of those interviewed seemed to understand something that presidents have learned over time, often to their great frustration. As Piero Zorio put it, "You never know what these guys or gals are going to do once they're on the court."

Zorio, 72, who backed Kerry over Bush last year, was beating the 95-degree heat on a bench inside Reno's Parklane Mall. Outside, a few parked cars huddled beneath a handful of shade trees like cattle seeking refuge on the range.

Zorio, a former middle- and high-school history teacher, cited Earl Warren, Harry Blackmun and O'Connor as justices who confounded Republican presidents by proving more moderate -- sometimes greatly so -- than their political patrons had expected.

"They may be conservative or liberal," Zorio said of Supreme Court nominees, "but they may surprise everybody."

Times staff writer Ammara Durrani in Glendale and researchers Lynn Marshall in Seattle and Lianne Hart in Houston contributed to this report.

**Descriptors:** SUPREME COURT (U.S.); POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS; JUDGES; PUBLIC OPINION; ROBERTS, JOHN G JR

# Los Angeles Times

Monday July 25, 2005

## **A New Source of Hope at King/Drew**

**\* The opening of a health center for women marks a renewed effort to offer better patient care.**

*Home Edition, California, Page B-1*

*Metro Desk*

*33 inches; 1087 words*

**By Ammara Durrani and Wendy Thermos, Times Staff Writers**

It's not easy to find the clinic, tucked away in a separate building off the main lobby of Martin Luther King Jr./Drew Medical Center, through winding corridors and up the elevator one floor.

There lies the troubled hospital's newest addition and perhaps its brightest hope: a long-awaited health center for women.

"We are the envy of our colleagues for the set-up we have," said Kim Thomas, nurse manager of the recently opened Women's Health Center of Excellence at King/Drew.

It is housed one floor above the hospital's former trauma center, which was closed in March so King/Drew could devote more attention to correcting serious lapses in management and patient care.

Thomas manages a team of 20 nurses that tends to female patients from some of the poorest neighborhoods of South-Central Los Angeles, many with nowhere else to go for services.

At a hospital that has pared back services and lost hundreds of employees through terminations or resignations, this center, which opened June 20, marks a renewed effort to provide better patient care.

"This center has been in planning for many years," said Dr. Rosetta Hassan, director of women's health, department of obstetrics and gynecology. "The opening is coinciding when the hospital is at a point of redefinition. The center is a good opportunity to put the foot in the right direction and show that we can be leaders on women's health in the country."

On any given day, the center serves roughly 70 patients. Hassan wants to see that grow to about 120.

The center's mission statement: "Caring for every need of every woman to provide health care to."

But an assessment of the community's needs paints a daunting picture. Its rate of genetic abnormality is 7% higher than in the rest of the state. About 25% of the patients who visit the hospital's HIV clinic are women. The incidence of low birth weight, at more than 25%, is three times higher than the state's, attributed mainly to widespread substance abuse, doctors said.

"There are very special needs in this area," Hassan said. "You're dealing with patients who are very poor, with dysfunctional lives."

Operating 45 clinics, the center offers many obstetrical and gynecological services at one location, including pap smears, mammograms, mental health services, breast and cervical cancer treatment, sexually transmitted disease and HIV services, birth control and well-baby exams, substance abuse and domestic violence programs.

Wendy Givens, a social worker at the center who has worked at King/Drew for 14 years, said the most serious problem is an increase in adolescent pregnancies, especially among 12-year-olds. "They have no support system," she said.

To help fill that void, the center offers free classes in English and Spanish on childbirth education, parenting, breastfeeding and adolescent support. A patients' resource facility is equipped with computers and audio-visual tools to encourage health education. And there are plans for a new pharmacy.

Dr. Teiichiro Fukushima, the center's supervising administrator, said women's health services at the hospital were fragmented before the clinic opened. Patients had to go from one department to another to get care, quarters often were cramped and services were not dedicated solely to women.

"Our clinic space was completely overrun by the volume," said Fukushima, who has been at King/Drew since the late 1970s. "Women would rather have their own health facilities. This is a place they can come to any time they want, and they can feel good about it."

Patient Georgette Burns, 28, eight months pregnant, said she had previously used the hospital's obstetrics and gynecology clinic. She switched to the new center and said there has been a noticeable improvement in care and attention. "It's been excellent," she said. "It has become much nicer."

Built for \$1.7 million in Los Angeles County funds, the center was proposed in 1999 and scheduled to open in 2002. Most of the construction money came from the same pool of bond funds used to build the hospital in 1974, according to county Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, who first proposed establishing the facility.

But the project was delayed several years, in part because of design changes and some objections from departments that wanted to use the space, Burke said. Then the hospital was hit last year with revelations of mismanagement.

"I asked every week, 'When is it going to open?' " Burke said. "With all the other problems the hospital had, I wasn't sure they would go forward with it."

Even now that the center is open, Hassan acknowledges that things are not "100% there." A chief concern is a staffing shortage, which has caused the scaling back of some community outreach efforts. Current operating costs were carved out of the Department of Health Services' existing budget, Fukushima said.

Despite the hospital's problems, the center's opening last month has restored confidence in its team and in the belief that women in the community will use the facility.

"I know a new patient would hesitate, possibly," Fukushima said. But "these are high-risk patients.... They trust us, and they keep returning to us."

Tony Gray, King/Drew's chief financial officer, said the center was not expected to generate additional revenue for the hospital because operating costs and patient volume were expected to remain roughly the same.

"Since this was a relocation of existing services, the annual operating costs are already funded," Gray said.

Spread over 30,000 square feet and designed to convey "openness, tranquillity and a warm welcome," the center is decked out in pinks and purples, decorated with vases of flowers and pictures of patients' babies pasted on a board outlined with pink painted hearts on a wall adjoining the consultation rooms.

Maria Munoz, 30, who is being treated for breast cancer at the center, said it has made the clinic system more efficient. "Everything is more organized here, with faster service," she said.

Munoz said she was especially grateful for the center's help in getting her financial assistance.

"I found a lot of support," she said. "When I was diagnosed with cancer, they helped me fill out my documents and enrolled me in a program of financial assistance."

Givens said the community's history of violence and chronic poverty must be taken into account when dealing with patients.

For this reason, she said, the center's cheerful environment is designed to provide comfort as well as a sense of pride.

"If they go to a dark place, they will say, 'This is how they see me' " she said. "But when they see [the center], they know 'This is what I'm worth.' "

**Descriptors:** MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DREW MEDICAL CENTER; MEDICAL CARE; WOMEN

# Los Angeles Times

Friday July 22, 2005

## Deputies Save Toddler Held Hostage in Carson

**\* Woman is also rescued; SWAT team uses tear gas to capture bank robbery suspect after a standoff.**

*Home Edition, California, Page B-6*

*Metro Desk*

*7 inches; 254 words*

**By Ammara Durrani, Times Staff Writer**

A toddler and a woman taken hostage in their Carson home by a suspected bank robber on the run from sheriff's deputies were rescued unharmed early Thursday, and the man was driven out of the house with tear gas, authorities said.

Kenny McGraw, 24, of Los Angeles was arrested and charged with robbery, false imprisonment and felony evading, Deputy Sheriff Scott Gage said.

Shortly after he robbed two locations in Carson "within a matter of minutes," the suspect was spotted driving a vehicle and was pursued by sheriff's deputies around 9 p.m. Wednesday, Gage said.

He crashed his car on a street corner and ran inside a residence occupied by two women and an 18-month-old child, Gage said.

The suspect, who deputies said was armed at the time of the robberies, sent out the toddler's mother, who told authorities that the suspect was inside the house, Gage said. Sheriff's deputies and a SWAT team accompanied by a K-9 team surrounded the house and began negotiations with McGraw, he said.

Meanwhile, deputies spotted the toddler through an open bedroom window, entered the room through it and took the child without the suspect's knowledge, he said. The second woman was rescued the same way shortly afterward, he said.

With negotiations failing, deputies threw tear gas into the house, and McGraw surrendered around 4.30 a.m. Thursday, Gage said.

He said the women and the child, whose identities were not released, were unharmed during the rescue. McGraw suffered from tear gas inhalation but was otherwise unharmed, Gage said.

**Descriptors:** CARSON (CA); POLICE SIEGES; HOSTAGES; ARRESTS; ROBBERIES

# Los Angeles Times

Tuesday July 19, 2005

## Heat's Not Just in the Head; It's on the Map

*Home Edition, California, Page B-1*

*Metro Desk*

*14 inches; 497 words*

**SEE CORRECTION APPENDED**

**--- START OF CORRECTION ---**

For The Record

Los Angeles Times Wednesday July 20, 2005

Home Edition Main News Part A Page 2 National Desk

0 inches; 25 words

Type of Material: Correction

Hot weather -- An article in Tuesday's California section about hot weather in the Southland misspelled Santa Monica visitor Julie Lambert's last name as Lambery.

**--- END OF CORRECTION ---**

**By Eric Malnic and Ammara Durrani, Times Staff Writers**

For Javier Torres, who was spraying powdery insulation into the sweltering, dust-choked confines of some attics in a new subdivision in Desert Hot Springs, about 10 miles north of Palm Springs, the beach was something he dreamed about visiting.

Coated with itchy insulation dust and soaked with sweat, Torres, 24, estimated the temperature where he was working Monday at 115 degrees. "I heard on the radio that it could go as high as 125," he said before the full heat of the day.

Torres said he used his imagination to avoid thinking about the heat.

"I pretend that I'm spraying snow," he said. "It's all in the mind."

Actually, it's in the geography.

At the pier in Santa Monica, it was mostly cloudy, with a high temperature of 67 degrees. In Palm Springs, it was mostly sunny, with a high of 117.

"That's a difference of 50 degrees," said Bill Patzert, a meteorologist with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La Canada Flintridge. "But that's not really that unusual for this time of year. It's all because of the ocean, and a dome of high pressure over Arizona."

Patzert said air circulating around the high pressure was pulling warm, moist air into Southern California's deserts and inland valleys, generating temperatures as high as 119 in Indio, 118 in Borrego, 116 in Hesperia and 107 in Hemet.

But surface water temperatures off the coast were mostly in the mid- to upper 60s, and air temperatures over the water were similarly cool.

Driven by onshore winds known as the Catalina Eddy, Patzert said, this cool marine air moved inland Monday until it bumped into the western edge of the high pressure, keeping coastal communities at or below normal temperatures for this time of year.

Coastal highs included 66 in Malibu, 69 in Torrance and Newport Beach and 71 in Redondo Beach.

In general, the farther inland, the higher the temperatures. The high in downtown Los Angeles was 81, three degrees below the normal high for the date. It was 82 in Santa Ana, 84 in Anaheim, 86 in San Gabriel, 88 in Pasadena, 90 in Burbank, 92 in Simi Valley and 94 in Ontario. The hot weather is expected to stick around inland through the week.

"The deserts and the inland valleys are being influenced by the high pressure," Patzert said. "The coastal communities are being influenced by the Catalina Eddy."

Nisha Ganatra, 31, who recently moved to Southern California from New York, said that as she drove toward the beach in Santa Monica, the temperature began to drop.

"It's like getting off a hot subway platform in New York and into a cool, air-conditioned subway car," Ganatra said as she eyed the leaden skies in Santa Monica.

"It's kinda nice," said Julie Lambery, 24, a San Diegan strolling the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica. "I get cranky when it gets too hot. I've always been a fan of overcast."

Times staff writer Louis Sahagun contributed to this story.

**Descriptors:** SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA; HOT WEATHER; WEATHER



# Los Angeles Times

Thursday July 14, 2005

## Gang Rape of Girl Shocks Pico Rivera

*Home Edition, Main News, Page A-1  
Metro Desk  
19 inches; 654 words*

**By Ammara Durrani and Eric Malnic, Times Staff Writers**

Six teenagers have been arrested on suspicion of gang-raping a 13-year-old girl in a park restroom in Pico Rivera while as many as 16 other boys and young men watched and cheered, sheriff's deputies said Wednesday.

Investigators said they were working to identify and arrest the onlookers.

Residents and city officials reacted to the crime with outrage, revulsion and fear.

"It's horrible. The whole community is up in arms," Ron Beilke, a councilman in the San Gabriel Valley city of 65,000, said Wednesday. "We're a close-knit community, and the whole town is affected.

"We definitely have a lot of healing to do."

Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies said the victim, an incoming freshman at Pico Rivera's El Rancho High School, was walking along a street about 11:30 a.m. on July 6 when she accepted a car ride from four male teenagers, at least one of whom she knew.

Sheriff's Sgt. Dan Scott said they drove to nearby William A. Smith Park, where the group was met by 12 to 16 other male teenagers. He said most if not all of them were thought to be gang members or affiliated with gangs.

"They started drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana, and they forced her to drink," Scott said. He said the girl was then dragged into a park restroom, where six of the teenagers raped her "while the others looked on and cheered."

After the attack, which lasted less than 20 minutes, the teenagers dispersed, officials said.

"It's mind-boggling," Beilke said. "It's as though none of them thought of the consequences of what had happened." In the days that followed, the girl identified her assailants, Beilke said.

"She's been in Pico Rivera since kindergarten, and she graduated in June from Burke Middle School," the councilman said. "Chances are, most of them went to school with her."

The victim, who has been recovering at home after being hospitalized overnight, "is doing as well as could be expected," Scott said.

He said detectives were confident the six teenagers arrested at their homes in Pico Rivera early Monday were "the main players" in the crime.

One, an adult age 18 or 19 whose identity has not been released, was booked at the Pico Rivera sheriff's station on suspicion of rape. His bail was set at \$100,000. The other suspects, ages 16 and 17, were taken to juvenile detention facilities, where they were being held without bail.

Scott said deputies hoped to arrest others who watched, but did not actively participate in, the attack. He said some of them might eventually be charged with being accessories to rape.

"I'm outraged that children -- and that's what they are, children -- would do things like this," Scott said.

Mayor David W. Armenta called the crime a tragedy, adding that some residents were so overwhelmed they were afraid to leave their homes.

Despite the attack at the park and the concerns that it engendered, dozens of people of all ages were visiting the grassy, tree-shaded facility Wednesday. A birthday party was underway, and children frolicked on playground equipment.

But Raul Bustoh, who takes his grandson to the park pool for swimming lessons, said the attack had cast a pall. "We have to keep alert and watch out for our kids," he said.

Pico Rivera was formed in 1958 by the merger of two formerly agricultural communities: Pico on the north, named for Pio Pico, the last Mexican governor of California, and Rivera on the south, named for its location between the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo rivers.

Over the years, the mostly blue-collar town has metamorphosed into a largely residential community, stretching almost five miles downriver from the Whittier Narrows Dam on the north to Telegraph Road, near the Santa Ana Freeway, on the south.

Beilke said that although Pico Rivera had experienced many of the problems common to developing urban areas, "thank God this kind of crime is very rare here."

**Descriptors:** PICO RIVERA (CA); RAPE; ARRESTS; YOUTH; CHILDREN

# Los Angeles Times

Wednesday July 13, 2005

## Disabled to Get Better Access to Parks

*Home Edition, California, Page B-6  
Metro Desk  
7 inches; 237 words*

**By Ammara Durrani, Times Staff Writer**

State parks officials and disability rights groups announced Tuesday an agreement aimed at improving access for disabled visitors at more than 270 parks and recreational areas across California.

The agreement, announced in Oakland, resolves two lawsuits charging that disabled people were unfairly denied access to state recreational facilities.

"We are thrilled," said Larry Paradis, executive director of the Oakland-based Disability Rights Advocates and lead counsel for the plaintiffs. "It's a real landmark in terms of opening the whole outdoors to people with disabilities."

Access will be improved to all of the parks' educational, interpretive and recreational programs, such as boating, camping and cycling.

"The plan is simple: make parks more accessible to more citizens," said Roy Stearns, deputy director for communications for the Department of Parks and Recreation. He added that over the last four years his department has spent about \$30 million to bring about such improvements, and that work continues in about 30 parks.

But he also said the department manages more than 3,000 miles of trails, some extremely rugged that may never be accessible to the disabled.

Paradis, who has used a wheelchair for the last 20 years, stressed that many recreational activities are "absolutely realistic" for disabled people.

"Last year, I went bike riding and kayaking in the San Francisco Bay area," he said.

The state maintains a website that lists parks already designed to accommodate the needs of some disabled visitors: <http://access.parks.ca.gov/>.

**Descriptors:** CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION;  
HANDICAPPED; PUBLIC ACCESS; SUITS

# Los Angeles Times

Sunday May 29, 2005

## Inner Mullah? 'Yo' Momma!' Covered Women Might Say GENDER STUDIES

*Home Edition, Opinion, Page M-6*

*Editorial Pages Desk*

*17 inches; 592 words*

*Type of Material: Opinion piece*

**By Ammara Durrani, Ammara Durrani is a Daniel Pearl-Alfred Friendly Press Fellow from Karachi, Pakistan, on assignment at the Los Angeles Times.**

Unlike many foreign journalists, Cara Anna has found insight into the complex and often contradictory nature of Pakistani society. I don't, however, agree with all her conclusions. As a Pakistani woman and journalist, I agree that the political mind-set of some people in my country needs to change. But it's not an "inner mullah" that dictates women's behavior in Pakistan. It's culture, actually. And trying to change the fundamentals of my nation's culture is a bad idea for several reasons.

For the majority of Pakistani women, the dress-code equation is simple: If you are covered, you conform, and conformity allows you more opportunity -- to push for social change or simply earn a livelihood.

Seventy-nine percent of female workers in Pakistan work in the fields, concealed by their clothing. No one pays attention. And the women running in that mini-marathon with "their hair loose, and their bosoms ... bouncing" were disdained by many Pakistanis -- not just the mullahs.

Indeed, God and Islam are secondary reasons for concealment. Most Pakistani women cover themselves because it is their culture. For most Pakistanis -- men and women -- "the ancient twin virtues of honor and concealment" are the cultural character and identity they prefer, even today.

This culture predates Islam's arrival in the Indian subcontinent. Over thousands of years, all parts of Pakistan have adopted it in various hues. Frontier women may like to cover themselves from head to feet in an all-encompassing chador (long, loose head scarf) but women in the southern coastal province of Sindh are content with the baggy shalwar qameez (tunic and loose pants) that covers their bodies no less fully.

Between themselves, women from Peshawar, Karachi and Lahore would argue with and criticize each other on the degrees of their respective concealments, but few would challenge the idea of hiding their flesh.

Anna would do well to understand that there is a difference between "the challenge of changing the mind of the average Pakistani" on politics and changing her mind on culture. To encourage these women to fight for their rights is one thing, and how to go about it is another. I agree that running on streets may not be the answer because it gives ammunition to the mullahs who are trying to monopolize that social asset most dear to all Pakistanis: culture.

I know the value of concealment and I respect it for its (believe it or not) practicality. It gives me an "honorable" opportunity to sit with mullah friends and debate the good and bad things about the war on terrorism, about local government and about women's rights in Pakistan. I even win some of those arguments, and forge a functional understanding with my religious friends that allows us to exchange views and information that we think can help the average Pakistani.

Whether my Western education agrees or not, I have to respect the fact that the majority of the people in that part of the world would like to keep this culture of physical concealment -- mullahs or no mullahs, rights or no rights.

Few know that the party of the mullahs has a vociferous women's wing that works methodically to spread the party ideology. Covered in traditional Islamic clothes, they do not hesitate to lead anti-American rallies on Pakistani streets.

They have few followers -- putting Islam before all else is not exactly popular politics in Pakistan. But because these women conform with their culture by covering themselves and walking, people listen to their message.

If they were running in heels, they'd be scorned.

# Los Angeles Times

Tuesday April 19, 2005

## **A long shelf life**

**\* Dawson's Bookshop in Larchmont Village marks its 100th anniversary.**

*Home Edition, Calendar, Page E-3*

*Calendar Desk*

*23 inches; 783 words*

**By Ammara Durrani, Times Staff Writer**

Michael Dawson, third-generation owner, curator and primary book buyer of Dawson's Bookshop in Larchmont Village, opened wide his shop's doors Sunday to about 200 well-wishers who had come to help celebrate the store's 100th anniversary.

First set up in downtown Los Angeles in 1905, Dawson's claims to be "the oldest continuously operating bookshop in the city." After three moves downtown, Dawson's family finally settled on Larchmont Boulevard in the Hollywood/Hancock Park area in 1968. It specializes in buying and selling rare and antique books on subjects such as California history, Western Americana, photography and fine arts. Dawson's also operates a small publishing press. Over the years, it has earned the recognition and respect of its customers, who consist mostly of private collectors, institutions, museums and other members of the trade.

Talking to The Times a day before the event, Dawson said the celebration gives his family and customers a chance to look back and see how far the business has come since his grandfather, Ernest Dawson, opened it. By year's end, he plans to publish a book of essays -- written by him, his uncle and his father -- on the shop's history.

Dawson, who took over the family business in 1995, said that the rise of the big bookstores and the Internet has created a new set of challenges for small stores like his, but he believes his and similar shops have the distinct advantage of having in-depth knowledge on particular subjects, which the big chains don't, keeping customers devoted. In fact, he said, rare book dealers have to become even more specialized as the knowledge base of antiquarian bookshops has become "more democratic as opposed to being proprietary in the past."

Setting up the Michael Dawson Gallery in 2000 was one such attempt on his part to attract younger collectors "who are more visual-oriented than text-oriented," he says.

On Sunday, enthusiasts -- most of whom had ties to the bookshop stretching back years -- filled the small two-story shop, viewing the gallery's photo exhibit of the Dawson family and the business from its earliest days to the present. Francis J. Weber of the San Fernando Mission first visited the store in 1959 and has remained a regular, publishing several of his own works through Dawson's. "It's the premier antiquarian bookshop on the West Coast," he said. "They have kept alive the whole notion of antiquarian book trade."

The bookshop is a "wonderful cultural hub of Los Angeles," said Victoria Steele, head of special collections at the UCLA library. Dawson's, she said, is a place with "a personality informed by aesthetic and cultural sense," and serves well someone in her position who needs to see new materials to be collected.

Also present on the occasion and later to address the audience was 92-year-old Glenn Dawson, Michael Dawson's uncle. In a lighthearted introductory speech, he counted the number of people present who have had some connection with the bookshop. Most of them were in their 40s, 50s or 60s. It was not a young audience.

This is what concerns rare book collector Victoria Dailey of Beverly Hills. Dailey said the future of the rare book business appears confusing at the moment because there aren't that many young people opening shops, even though they have a presence on the Internet.

Leonard Bernstein, owner of the 50-year-old Caravan Bookstore on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles, the same street where Dawson's first opened 100 years ago, was less concerned. There is always going to be a place for the "personal service and individual attention" that the big bookstore chains lack, he said.

Pointing out the need for more shops like Dawson's, Bernstein said they reflect a "give and take" relationship between the booksellers and their customers, each learning something from the other.

Carol Sandberj, owner of Michael Thompson Books on 3rd Street, has known of Dawson's for more than 30 years. She pointed out that Los Angeles has a long history of buying and selling old and rare books.

"I hope our generation is as confident to make it continue for our future generations," Sandberj said. In a speech, fifth-generation rare book seller Bernard Rosenthal of Berkeley talked of how the rare book trade has grown in Southern California. He also talked about his regular discussions with Michael Dawson on what it means to be a third-generation seller. "Who knows, Michael," he said, "the next generation may just be waiting in the wings."

As for Dawson, he's happy just to have made it this far. "My father and uncle wanted to make it to 100 years, and we made it. Beyond that, I'm just trying to work hard as long as I can," he said.

**Descriptors:** LARCHMONT VILLAGE (NEIGHBORHOOD); BOOKSTORES; ANNIVERSARIES

# Los Angeles Times

Saturday April 16, 2005

**Holding firm, yet remaining flexible**

**\* Hauwa Ibrahim, a vigorous lawyer in Nigeria, has saved lives by working within the framework of Islam.**

*Home Edition, Calendar, Page E-10*

*Calendar Desk*

*27 inches; 929 words*

**By Ammara Durrani, Times Staff Writer**

She began dreaming of wearing an academic gown and a mortarboard with the confidence of a university graduate she had seen pictured in a newspaper that the village shopkeeper had used to wrap her food. She would sell fruits and vegetables picked up from the nearby mountains, and she would hide that money in a hole under a tree inside the courtyard of her family home.

Other village girls of her age used that money to buy pots and pans to get married, in the village tradition, at age 12, but she saved it as "backup." She knew her family would never support her dream.

When she began pursuing it, she was asked to leave the house.

For 37-year-old Nigerian human rights lawyer Hauwa Ibrahim, the long road from her small village of Hinnah, in the state of Gombe, to her office in the capital city of Abuja is filled with landmarks of intense struggle and astonishing persistence. Years ago, when she was told by the local commissioner that she had little chance of entering a university without knowing English and having a secondary education, she discovered a new concept: "guts."

"The commissioner said I had 'guts,' and I had to look it up in the dictionary to see what that word meant," Ibrahim recalls with a laugh.

The first woman lawyer in her community, the Yamaltu district in northern Nigeria, she is comfortably sitting in the multi-hued conference room of the Feminist Majority Foundation in Beverly Hills. Arriving in Los Angeles this week to receive the 2005 Eleanor Roosevelt Award at the Inaugural Global Women's Rights Awards Gala, Ibrahim would later stand along with fellow luminaries Jane Olson of the Human Rights Watch and Landmine Survivors, Rep. Hilda L. Solis (D-El Monte), and Cheryl Howard Crew, author of the just-released novel "In the Face of Jinn," about two American sisters' adventures on a business trip to India, to receive her award Thursday night.

In 2003, her characteristic guts coupled with her brilliant mind took her to a mosque to meet the mullahs of Abuja, who had been baying for Ibrahim's blood since the day she began fighting Amina Lawal's case. Lawal, a poor woman from a tiny village in northern Nigeria, in 2002 had been convicted of adultery and



sentenced to death by stoning by the local shariah court that imposes Islamic law. By becoming Lawal's defense counsel, Ibrahim had incurred the clergy's wrath for being "anti-Islam" and "anti-shariah." Refusing to sit on the chair she had been directed to sit on, Ibrahim had walked forward and knelt on the ground in front of the elderly clerics, her eyes downcast. "I said to them I am a foolish lawyer and a stupid girl, but I have come to seek their wisdom and knowledge so that I could go out and do the right thing," she says. Perhaps "broken" by Ibrahim's respect for her culture, the clerics later told her that they would neither oppose nor support her as she argued her case in court.

"That was all I needed," she says. Lawal was acquitted that year and is married now, living in her village.

Ibrahim has fought more than 40 pro bono shariah-related cases since 1999, when some Nigerian states adopted Islamic law to deal with criminal issues. Returning home last fall after undertaking a one-year Humphrey Fellowship at American University Washington College of Law in Washington, D.C., she has taken up 32 new cases of both men and women, two of which involve death-by-stoning sentences for committing adultery. In fighting these, Ibrahim continues what she calls her "engagement" of the Nigerian clergy, mindful of the sociocultural sensitivities of her country.

"It's beyond Amina.... It's looking into the future," she says. "If we are not careful in whatever we do today, we will either make our future or destroy it."

Talking about the politico-legal intricacies back home, she says she has recently changed her strategy: Instead of making long arguments in court, she now writes letters to the grand qazi (chief justice) to point out the legal gaps in shariah's jurisdiction over criminal matters. In doing so, she stands committed to her past strategy of not confronting Islamic law but working within its framework to save the life of her client. Ibrahim's long-term strategy is to create regional networks with moderate Islamic countries, and international networks with organizations like the Feminist Majority Movement in "trying to diffuse the extremist interpretation of the Koran and the Hadith" (the sayings of prophet Mohammed).

On the night of her award, Ibrahim stood amid the glitz of the award ceremony at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Cloaked in flowing olive green and gold Nigerian robes and a matching headdress, she was both fascinated and inspired by her surroundings: Hollywood celebrities Jay Leno, Ron Howard and Gillian Anderson were among the guests.

"When I entered the hotel, I said to myself, 'What history!' " she exclaims. "And then I saw the personalities here -- the old, the middle-aged and the young -- what a blend!"

For Ibrahim, this blend is a message of the continuing struggle for enhancement of women's rights, flowing from one generation to the next. She praised the event organizers for their "creativity." "It's a wonderful way for us to seek funds for our work as well as maintain our dignity."

Feminist Majority Movement President Eleanor Smeal noted that the awards were meant to focus attention on the women's work and help them to get recognized. "We want to bring visibility and credit to their work, because with visibility comes power."

**Descriptors:** AWARDS; IBRAHIM, HAUWA

# Los Angeles Times

Friday June 03, 2005

## Letters

### No Matter the Culture, Women Face Obstacles

*Home Edition, California, Page B-12*

*Editorial Pages Desk*

*8 inches; 309 words*

*Type of Material: Letters to the editor*

Re "The Inner Mullah Shouts, but He's No Cheerleader" and "Inner Mullah? 'Yo Momma!' Covered Women Might Say," Opinion, May 29: In the articles on women's adjustment, or maladjustment, to living in the Muslim way of life, both writers were reasonable in their findings and opinions. Cara Anna understood that she was "a powerful distraction" to men -- and women as well -- mainly because of the traditions of society in Pakistan. Ammara Durrani felt she understood the value of conformity, suggesting that women should become informed about what techniques are acceptable "to fight for their rights."

Neither writer mentioned that the underlying problem is flagrant male chauvinism, the mentality that men are superior and women are best suited to having babies and raising them. This has left Muslims and other cultures back in the Middle Ages.

\*

I will probably not live long enough to enjoy reading that Muslim societies have granted women many of the freedoms that men relish, such as being able to openly enjoy being female, voting and running in public. I grieve for the talents and personalities of women buried in Islamic traditions. So much ingenuity and creative energy is being wasted. Scorned and "revered" women as well as chauvinist men are all losers.

Lou Jacobs Jr.

Cathedral City

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Never thought I'd say this, but a culture where a woman can put on a sheet in the morning and then go about the business of living becomes more appealing with every magazine cover at the supermarket checkout that shows female flesh with circles and arrows pointing out the cellulite of the stars. There are probably few women in Western culture who haven't felt more bullied by the media, by each other and by this culture into obsessing and loathing and remaking the female body than any mullah ever could.

Mary Dolphin

Laguna Beach