



Community sport digest
.....Page 6



Your health:
Ask Dr. Gott
.....Page 3

REGION

Hunter fire still spreading
.....Page 1

INSIDE

World briefly
.....Page 2



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The Ukiah

Mendocino County's
local newspaper

DAILY JOURNAL



Tomorrow: Plenty of
sunshine

TUESDAY
Aug. 1, 2006

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Man arrested after accident

Lake Mendocino JetSki mishap ends with one injury

The Daily Journal

One man was hurt and another arrested in connection with a collision between a boat and a JetSki that occurred at Lake Mendocino at 11:47 a.m. Sunday.

Patrick Kirshner, 35, of San Francisco, suffered injuries to his neck and back when he was struck by an older model ski-boat driven by Gabriel Perez, 38, of Ukiah, according to reports from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

According to the report, Kirshner was operating his JetSki, approximately 500 yards off the Oak Grove shoreline when he was struck by Perez. Kirshner told Sheriff's deputies he believed Perez was traveling at an excessive speed.

Kirshner had a brief conversation with Perez during which he told Perez he had been injured. Perez then fled the scene according to the report.

Sheriff's deputies, with the help of rangers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, performed a search of the Lake Mendocino shoreline in a patrol boat. At the Pomo A campground, deputies located Perez and directed him to the deputies who were investigating the collision.

Perez was arrested on suspicion of fleeing a boating collision that caused an injury and booked into the county jail. Alcohol is not considered to have been a factor in this collision.

Kirshner refused an ambulance at scene and instead had someone drive him to the hospital for medical treatment.

B'trails tackles water hogs

Some use more than 11 times their share

By CLAUDIA REED

The Willits News

BROOKTRAILS - While water shortages are preventing property owners from building homes, three Brooktrails households are consuming 40,000 to 60,000 gallons per month each.

The average household water use in Brooktrails is about 5,254 gallons per month, according to calculations by General Manager Mike Chapman.

In other words, the water in excess of normal needs consumed by three households could have provided 19 to 31 families with a reliable supply.

"It makes you wonder what

See WATER, Page 16

Teens say Willits skatepark still sick*

By LAURA MCCUTCHEON
The Daily Journal

About a dozen skaters were shredding, grinding, doing power-slides and front-side-airs Friday in Willits, at the only skate park in Mendocino County.

As Ukiah gets closer to having its own skatepark, youngsters in Willits continue to think theirs is pretty cool - although they have some suggestions for Ukiah's designers.

As in Ukiah, the interest in building a Willits skate park was sparked many years ago, but the ball didn't get rolling until 2000, when several people approached the city of Willits to discuss the idea.

By May 2001 a skate park committee was formed, according to Willits skatepark.com. Soon after, fund-raising and grants followed, and around October of 2004 area youth were swarming the cement facility.

Jer Polson, 14, of Laytonville, at the park on Friday, said he likes "everything" about it.

"There's vert, there's street, there's handrails ..." he said, noting he could do without the volcano (a small cement mound), however, as it gets in the way sometimes.

Thirteen-year-old Torrey Hansen, with him, agreed. "I like it a lot ... it's better than skating the streets."

Torrey, who skates "pretty much every day," said he likes the freedom that comes with it. "There's no coach or boss ... you can do what you want to, when you want to."

"It's fun, it's free ..." 14-year-old Travis Moretto said.

"It's great," Gus Ford, also 14, and also with the group from Laytonville, said of skating and the park itself. "But if Ukiah Skate Park had more stairs and rails; that'd be awesome," added Ford, when asked his recommendations for Ukiah's upcoming park.

A good skate park needs "good flow," said Polson. "Where you just flow through the bowls ... and some more stairs," he said.

And the bigger and smoother the park is, the better, said 36-year-old Kevin Knight of Truckee, who has been skateboarding off and on since he was 16.

"Ultimately a good park needs a variety of mini-ramps, bowls, vertical sections and street environment - like rails and ledges, and also a place to slalom and freestyle. ... It also needs shade and water and a



Ryan Garner/The Daily Journal

Jeremiah Polson pulls off a nose slide Friday afternoon at the Willits skate park. Several youngsters took advantage of the perfect weather to work on their skateboarding tricks.

picnic table," Knight said.

While there is no shade -- or picnic tables -- at the Willits Skate Park, Knight had only positive things to say about it. Most importantly, he said: "It's good for the kids. It gives them a place to skate."

Justin Capri, owner of Freedom Skate Shop in Ukiah, and vice president of the local skate park committee, simply said, "Love it," when

asked what he thought of the Willits park.

"I like the flow of the park. It's got a flow, you can push a couple times and you don't have to really take your foot off the board the whole time if you know how to skate it right ..." Capri added.

As head of the Ukiah Skate Park's design committee, Capri is

See SKATE, Page 16

* see gnarly, rad, killer, awesome

Vehicle code may conflict with safety, citizens tell board

By CONNIE KORBEL
Fort Bragg Advocate-News

FORT BRAGG - A week ago, residents on the coast didn't have a clue that the county had plans to raise the speed limit on a section of Sherwood Road. By the time the county Board of Supervisors met at Town Hall, a citizens' petition opposing the change, with over 150 names on it and more coming, was entered into the public record.

Placed on the agenda as a Department of Transportation report, increasing the speed limit from 40 to 45 m.p.h. was intended to be a simple

amendment to the Mendocino County Code. The section of the road affected would be between milepost .50 and 1.75.

First at the podium was David Goble, a resident of Sherwood Road and the director of public works for the City of Fort Bragg.

Goble, who expressed his surprise at the item, said there are a lot of issues to be considered with such a change. He cited as examples his concern for corners that throw drivers off, the number of blind private roads and driveways, limited visibility in areas, and the number of

youth who drive on it during off-peak hours.

Eve Yeomans, also a resident, characterized the area as "the chaos zone" where drivers pick up speed without care. Yeomans mentioned two accidents involving young people in recent years.

Other residents spoke, as well. The message was the same. Safety issues for everyone -- residents and drivers -- are already a serious concern. The condition of the road, accident history and proposed higher speed limit just added to their fears.

Howard Dashiell, county Department of Transportation

director, explained that his predecessor had promised a study of traffic on Sherwood Road, performed according to the vehicle code, because of resident concerns expressed some time ago.

Dashiell then explained that the current speed limit signs are actually unofficial. The central point of the issue for the county is that the California Highway Patrol can't enforce speed limits that are not established according to the state vehicle code. The study, now completed according to the vehicle code formula, ironically resulted in the determination that the limit

should be raised to 45 m.p.h. in that location.

Fourth District Supervisor Kendall Smith opened the supervisors' discussion. "Logic tells us it (the speed limit) should be 35 or 40, based on valid concerns. Some (vehicle) codes are not written for rural areas. This is very problematic," she said.

Clearly, based on comments from supervisors from the various districts, this situation is not unique. The supervisors saw themselves, as Smith put it, between a rock and a hard place. The supervisors took no action, but directed staff to study the matter.

See FIRE, Page 16

DA rests in Pitman theft trial
Pitman expected to testify today

By BEN BROWN
The Daily Journal

The prosecution rested its case Monday in the trial of Linda Pitman, the former library employee who was arrested in May of 2005 on suspicion of embezzling \$65,000 from the Mendocino County Library.

The prosecution rested its case on the testimony of Meredith Ford, assistant auditor for Mendocino County. Ford has previously investigated cases of suspected fraud.

Ford testified that she was asked by former library director Erika DeMille, to audit treasurer's reports after DeMille became concerned about discrepancies between the amount of money the library was recorded as taking in and the actual amount that was being deposited.

See TRIAL, Page 16

Hunter fire still spreads

By JAMES ARENS
The Daily Journal

The Hunter fire, which has been burning in the Mendocino National Forest since July 24, has spread to 2,700 acres as of Monday.

"We are dealing with a very tenacious fire," said Wendell Peacock, incident information officer for the Arizona Central West Zone Incident Management Team. "But we've managed to get everything we have asked for in terms of help."

More resources have arrived since Sunday, and there are now 417 personnel on site backed up by 10 crews, 18 engines, 2 water tenders, 6 dozers and 3 Type 1 helicopters.

Seemingly manageable on Thursday and Friday, the Hunter Fire spread quickly Saturday and grew by over 1,000 acres by Monday. With lower humidity and strong winds, the fire has moved toward the northeast.

"With the lower humidity fires tend to be more active,"

3-DAY FORECAST

TODAY

89°

Plenty of sunshine

TONIGHT

52°

Clear

WEDNESDAY

95°

54°

Plenty of sunshine

THURSDAY

94°

53°

Brilliant sunshine and seasonably warm

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 6:13 a.m.
 Sunset tonight 8:25 p.m.
 Moonrise today 1:26 p.m.
 Moonset today 11:50 p.m.

MOON PHASES

First Full Last New
 Aug. 2 Aug. 9 Aug. 15 Aug. 23

ALMANAC

Ukiah through 2 p.m. Monday

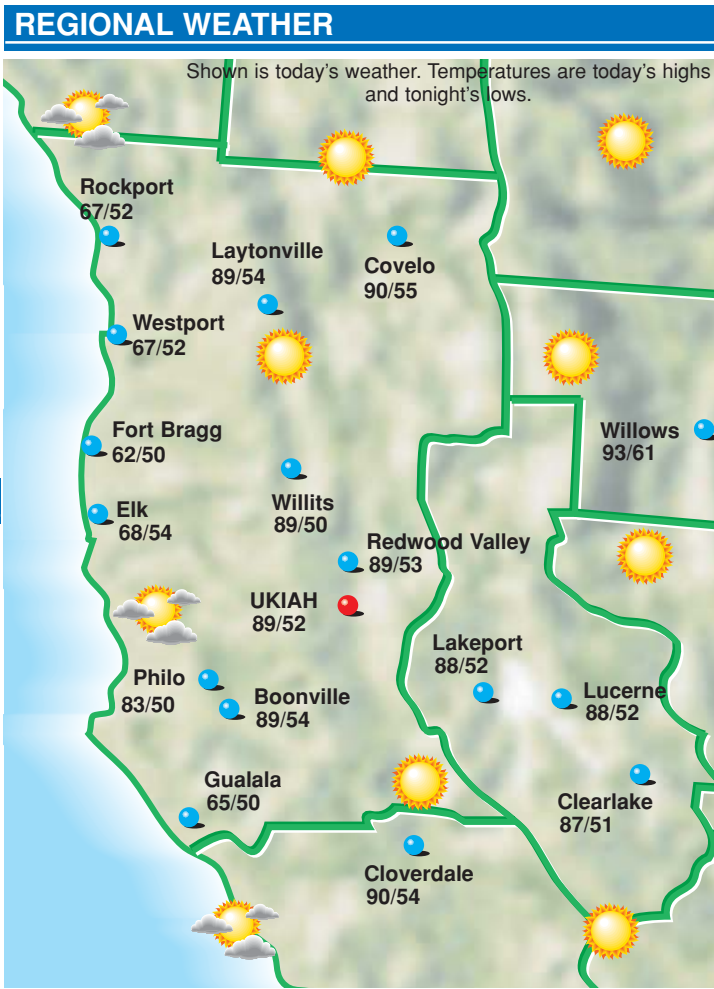
Temperature

High 80°
 Low 55°
 Normal high 91°
 Normal low 56°
 Record high 111° in 1977
 Record low 43° in 1924

Precipitation

24 hrs to 2 p.m. Mon. 0.00"
 Month to date 0.00"
 Normal month to date 0.05"
 Season to date 0.00"
 Last season to date 0.00"
 Normal season to date 0.05"

Forecasts and graphics provided by
AccuWeather, Inc. ©2006



CALIFORNIA CITIES

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Wed. Hi/Lo/W	City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Wed. Hi/Lo/W
Anaheim	82/65/pc	86/63/pc	Napa	83/50/s	84/51/s
Antioch	86/57/s	89/56/s	Needles	100/80/s	106/80/s
Arroyo Grande	74/50/pc	76/52/pc	Oakland	71/56/pc	73/56/pc
Atascadero	86/53/pc	89/53/pc	Ontario	86/64/pc	90/64/pc
Auburn	89/58/s	92/58/s	Orange	83/61/pc	86/61/pc
Barstow	97/68/s	99/70/s	Oxnard	75/59/pc	75/59/pc
Big Sur	64/56/pc	65/56/pc	Palm Springs	102/76/s	104/78/s
Bishop	92/49/s	94/51/s	Pasadena	80/65/pc	86/66/pc
Blythe	101/80/s	103/79/s	Pomona	85/58/pc	91/60/pc
Burbank	81/62/pc	87/63/pc	Potter Valley	89/53/s	94/55/s
California City	91/58/s	93/62/s	Redding	95/62/s	97/62/s
Carpinteria	74/57/pc	75/58/pc	Riverside	86/61/pc	92/63/pc
Catalina	68/58/pc	72/58/pc	Sacramento	90/58/s	92/60/s
Chico	93/61/s	95/63/s	Salinas	71/55/pc	72/57/s
Crescent City	61/51/pc	60/51/pc	San Bernardino	86/62/pc	93/63/pc
Death Valley	107/79/s	107/79/s	San Diego	77/67/pc	75/62/pc
Downey	80/63/pc	82/65/pc	San Fernando	82/63/s	88/62/s
Encinitas	76/64/pc	76/63/pc	San Francisco	70/56/pc	72/56/pc
Escondido	82/62/pc	86/62/pc	San Jose	79/56/s	81/58/s
Eureka	63/48/pc	60/49/pc	San Luis Obispo	74/54/pc	77/54/pc
Fort Bragg	62/50/pc	61/50/pc	San Rafael	82/53/pc	83/54/pc
Fresno	92/65/s	96/68/s	Santa Ana	78/66/pc	78/66/pc
Gilroy	87/52/s	89/52/s	Santa Barbara	75/55/pc	75/55/pc
Indio	101/75/s	104/76/s	Santa Cruz	72/55/pc	73/56/pc
Irvine	80/66/pc	81/65/pc	Santa Monica	75/63/pc	78/63/pc
Hollywood	80/63/pc	85/64/pc	Santa Rosa	83/50/pc	84/52/pc
Lake Arrowhead	79/52/pc	81/53/s	S. Lake Tahoe	74/37/s	78/41/s
Lodi	91/57/s	94/59/s	Stockton	92/57/s	95/59/s
Lompoc	73/49/pc	73/52/pc	Tahoe Valley	74/37/s	78/41/s
Long Beach	78/63/pc	80/64/pc	Torrance	74/64/pc	75/65/pc
Los Angeles	80/64/pc	82/64/pc	Vacaville	89/58/s	94/59/s
Mammoth	73/37/s	75/40/s	Vallejo	80/51/s	86/52/s
Marysville	92/55/s	96/59/s	Van Nuys	83/63/pc	89/62/pc
Modesto	90/61/s	93/62/s	Visalia	90/60/s	93/63/s
Monrovia	84/63/pc	89/64/pc	Willits	89/50/s	93/52/s
Monterey	67/55/pc	68/55/pc	Yosemite Valley	85/48/s	88/50/s
Morro Bay	73/56/pc	73/57/pc	Yreka	85/49/s	89/50/s

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

Lake Mendocino - Lake level: 742.17 feet; Storage: 76,294 acre-feet (Maximum storage 122,500 acre-feet) Inflow: 57 cfs Outflow: 124 cfs
Air quality - Ozone: .039 ppm (State standard .090 ppm) Carbon monoxide: .23 ppm (20.0 ppm) Nitrogen dioxide: .007 ppm (.25 ppm)

Water

Continued from Page 1

those excess users are using the water for especially in this county," commented Brooktrails board president George Skezas.

Apparently, outdoor gardens and landscaping don't provide an answer. Chapman reported water use of about 27,000 gallons enough to fill two large swimming pools in one of the households during the month of December.

Several board and commu-

nity members suggested indoor marijuana growing as one possibility.

"In some places people have converted rental houses into marijuana growing operations," suggested former board member Bob Whitney. "They come in from elsewhere because Mendocino is an easy target."

So far, the primary response of the Brooktrails board is an attempt to raise water rates for high-end consumers in order to protect water availability for the rest of the community. The board is also looking into the legality of an outright ban on exces-

sive water use, particularly since the moratorium on new water connections was accompanied by a declaration of emergency.

On July 25, board members voted to add a seventh tier to water rates, setting the rate for usage in excess of 4,410 cubic feet (30,989 gallons) per billing period at 25 cents a cubic foot. That means seventh tier water usage could cost the big three about \$1,000 each per month.

The rate change, however, must be subject to a public hearing and then returned to the board for final vote in order to become binding.

Given the required public notice period, the hearing will probably take place in September. Board approval at that time would apply the new rate to the October water bill.

"If there's no effect, we need to have a discussion of other options," said board member Rick Williams.

Unlike the handful of repeat offenders, the majority of Brooktrails residents typically use as little water as 50 percent of the state average. Overall, the community's water supply appears to be about eight acre/feet better than predicted for the end of July.

Willits grade fire burns 100 acres

The Daily Journal

A wildland fire just off Highway 101 south of Willits in the Centennial Dam area burned about 100 acres and was expected to be contained Monday night. The fire, which started at just before 4 p.m. Monday was largely under control by about 8 p.m.

The fire burned an area entirely on the east side of the highway and local fire agencies rushed to suppress it with the California Department of Forestry and Fire, Little Lake,

Laytonville, Brooktrails and Redwood Valley fire units all responding.

Three CDF tankers, a helicopter and air attack plane all responded and there were five engines, two dozers, four fire crews and a water tender at the scene.

According to CDF spokeswoman Jann Smith at Howard Forest, no structures were threatened and the cause of the fire is unknown although it may have been mechanical.

Fire

Continued from Page 1

Peacock said. "When there is higher humidity in the air, fires tend to be easier to get a handle on."

Firefighters conducted firing operations by setting a smaller controlled fire and then putting it out to remove fuels that could be used by the larger fire on Sunday. They did this around a cabin near Salmon Creek. The primary dozer line down O'Neil Ridge was completed while contingency plans were prepared for a secondary fireline north of the fire.

As of Monday morning, the Hunter Fire is in the Black Butte River watershed. The Hunter and East Fires combined could significantly

impact a large section of the Black Butte River drainage and the containment is hampered by critical resource shortages because other fires throughout the state have stretched non-local personnel and equipment. Another concern is plume influence which makes it extremely difficult to tell which way the wind is blowing because the smoke creates it's own weather above a fire when a plume is visible. There are also spots from the East Fire affecting control operations.

There is a substantial increase in fire movement with group torching and short uphill runs. Group torching causes trees in groups to burst into flames at the same time instead of a single tree burning or catching fire. The fire burned north onto O'Neil Ridge and crossed to the south

over Baldy Creek.

Movement is also expected to the north and south. Firefighters will be busy digging a handline on the south-west flank of the fire, preparing for future firing operations or direct attack on the fire as weather permits.

On Monday the planned actions involve the continued actions of preparing M1 road for use as the west boundary of the fire. Also firefighters will be trying to construct a fireline west and south of the fire. They also plan for fireline construction on the northwest side of the fire.

Temperatures in the area are expected to be between 74 and 82 degrees Fahrenheit till Tuesday with humidity projected between 25 percent and 40 percent and winds blowing from the northwest between three mph and six mph.

As of Monday morning, the fire was 5 percent contained and there were no injuries as of Monday morning. The projected date on containment is Aug. 10 but Peacock finds it very difficult to predict a date for the containment of a fire.

"Mother Nature could shine on us and give us some rain and we could have it out in three days," Peacock said. "But there could be more heat and the fire could get worse. This is an inexact science when it comes to predicting what a fire would do."

To maximize safety a road closure is in effect. A portion of M1 is closed from 22N34 south to 20N14 and Forest Highway 7 is closed at Mendocino Pass. This order will remain in effect until further notice.

James Arens can be reached at udjja@pacific.net

Trial

Continued from Page 1

"She asked us to look into it," Ford said.

Ford testified that she audited all monthly treasurer's reports made between July of 2000 and February of 2005. These reports detail how much money the library takes in each month from fees, fines and other sources of revenue.

Ford testified that she compared that amount, to the amount of money deposited by Pitman while she worked at the library, and found that the amount deposited was generally lower than the

amount recorded in the monthly reports.

Ford also testified that the audit turned up other irregularities in how the records were kept. Between 2000 and 2005, many checks were not deposited until months after they were written, and sometimes checks were turned in with receipts that did not match, Ford said.

"There are checks from May, June and October, they're all over the place," said Ford of a filling made in November of 2002.

Ford said there was no reason for checks to be held that long and it caught her attention because both deposits and reports are made monthly.

In other instances, Ford

said receipts written for the Fort Bragg and Willits libraries would show up in the Ukiah library entries with different checks. In some cases the receipts appear to have been altered to change the date the check was received, Ford said.

Ford testified that the delay in depositing checks and the altered receipts from the Willits and Fort Bragg libraries could be an indication that someone was diverting funds or stealing money from the library.

"I believe they were being exchanged for cash," she said.

According to log-in records kept by the computer system, Pitman was the only person

who entered information for treasurer's reports between 2000 and 2005, Ford said.

Earlier on Monday, Anne Fuller, manager of Mendocino County Information Services, testified that county employees who are given access to the financial system are given a user name and password.

The user name is the employee's last-name and first initial. The password is determined by the individual employee and even information services doesn't know what it is.

Pitman is expected to take the stand in her own defense on Tuesday.

Ben Brown can be reached at udjbb@pacific.net

Skate

Continued from Page 1

always looking for elements to incorporate into Ukiah's future skate park.

"We always travel and skate other parks and we try to take elements from every stop, and the streets. Skateboarding is a lifestyle,

so we take everything we look at, we picture it and how we can be creative with it on a skateboard ... sets of stairs, blocks to grind on, handrails ... they all bring those street elements into our park," Capri said.

But he wants to accommodate more than just the skaters themselves.

"We want to make it comfortable down there and have an inviting area for everybody ... moms and dads who watch their kids, or just random passersby. ... We care about the surrounding of the park, as well as the skate park (itself). After this long, we really want a nice, unique skate park," he added.

It's been in the planning process for nearly 20 years, and Ukiah is still waiting for a skate park to materialize.

In June of 2004, a piece of property adjacent to the city

of Ukiah's new Depot Park on Perkins Street was secured. In June of this year, the city of Ukiah included funding for a skate park in its 2006-07 fiscal year budget.

The goal is to break ground in Spring of 2007, Capri said, noting it takes about three and a half months to build a skate park.

The cost?

"It's gotten more and more expensive as the years have gone on. It was about \$150,000 when we first started the (current) committee in 1995, and it's gone up to about \$1 million to build a park. ... We (skate park com-

mittee) are estimating \$1 million to \$1.2 million," Capri said, noting, however, he thinks it will be done for less due to all the community support.

Nonetheless, Ukiah needs a skate park, he said: "It's necessary, to put it in a nutshell. When you have this many people in a community that are involved in skateboarding you must do what it takes to support that."

Laura McCutcheon can be reached at udjlm@pacific.net.

DAILY DIGEST

POLICE REPORTS

The following were compiled from reports prepared by the Ukiah Police Department. To anonymously report crime information, call 463-6205.

ARREST -- Cory Dickson, 21, hometown unknown, was arrested on suspicion of burglary in the 600 block of S. State St. at 10:16 p.m. on Sunday.

SHERIFF'S REPORTS

The following were compiled from reports prepared by the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office:

BOOKED -- Kevin Allan Degan, 33, of Olivehurst was arrested on suspicion of being under the influence of a controlled substance and suspicion of driving under the influence at 2:24 a.m. on Sunday.

BOOKED -- Lawrence

Jackson Stedman, 41, of Ft. Bragg was arrested on suspicion of infliction of corporal injury at 7:14 p.m. on Sunday.

BOOKED -- Gina Lynn Dyer, 42, of Ft. Bragg was arrested on suspicion of theft of personal property, pet theft, defraud of an innkeeper and resisting arrest at 8:53 a.m. on Saturday.

BOOKED -- Walter Joseph Stough, 52, of Ft. Bragg was arrested on suspicion of theft of personal property, pet theft, defraud of an innkeeper and resisting arrest at 12:52 p.m. on Saturday.

Those arrested by law enforcement officers are innocent until proven guilty. People reported as having been arrested may contact the Daily Journal once their case has been concluded so the results can be reported. Those who feel the information is in error should contact the appropriate agency. In the case of those arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of an intoxicant: all DUI cases reported by law enforcement agencies are reported by the newspaper. The Daily Journal makes no exceptions.

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Lady In The Water
 PG13
 1:00, 4:10, 6:50
Monster House
 PG
 1:20, 3:40, 6:30
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