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desired field

Developer eyes strawberry patch

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INLAND VALLEY Daily Bulletin

TODAY'S WEATHER



SUNNY
80s / 50s
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FRIDAY | APRIL 18, 2008

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the SCOOP AIDE PUT ON LEAVE

San Bernardino County Assessor Bill Postmus put his top executive staff member and longtime friend Adam Aleman on paid administrative leave.

The Assessor's Office was raided last week by district attorney's investigators. Investigators removed several computers, including Aleman's. It's not yet clear how Aleman could be tied to the widening inquiry, which sources say covers a range of issues, from running political operations out of a county department to hiring practices by Postmus' office.

Read more on Page A9



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Stadium 'a certainty'

Developer shows off NFL plans

By Jennifer McLain
Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES — A National Football League team could be playing in the Southland as soon as 2011.

Edward Roski, a billionaire land developer and co-owner of the Los Angeles Lakers and Kings, unveiled his plan Thurs-

day for an \$800 million NFL stadium in Industry.

"The stadium is a certainty and will be built," Roski said Thursday. "This is the first time that we can say to you: We can do it."

The so-called Los Angeles Stadium would be north of the 60 Freeway and west of the 57 Freeway. It would be cut into a

hillside and is expected to be an entertainment complex comparable to Staples Center and City Walk, Roski said.

Although Roski said that he is "certain" that he will bring an NFL stadium to Los Angeles County, the promise of attracting a team to play here is not as absolute.

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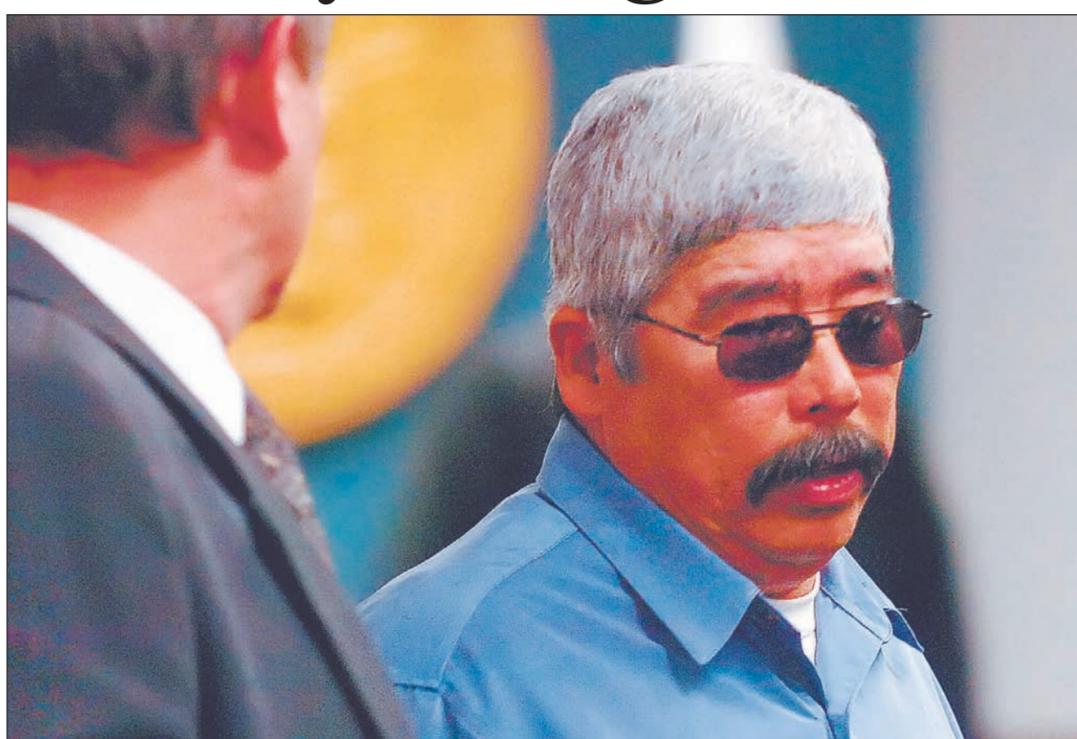


Edward Roski announced plans to build an NFL-ready stadium in Industry. He hopes to draw a team from another city to play there by 2011.

Mike Mullen
Correspondent

CHINO SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Cruelty charges stand



Therese Tran/Staff Photographer

Daniel Ugarta Navarro appears on Thursday in Chino Superior Court. He faces five felony and three misdemeanor charges of animal cruelty and illegally moving nonambulatory animals while working at Westland/Hallmark Meat Co. in Chino. His attorney had asked for the charges to be dismissed. A judge refused.

By Rod Leveque
Staff Writer

CHINO — A judge refused to dismiss charges Thursday against a former worker from a slaughterhouse here who is accused of abusing sick or injured cows.

Attorneys for Daniel Ugarta Navarro asked the judge to toss out five felony and three misdemeanor charges against their client on technical grounds.

Judge Gerard Brown, however, upheld the charges and ordered Navarro back to Chino Superior Court on June 20.

Navarro's attorney, Ruben Salazar, said Navarro probably would appeal the decision.

"We believe the judge abused his discretion," the defense attorney said.

Prosecutors say Navarro is one of two workers caught on videotape abusing cows that were unable to stand at the Westland/Hallmark Meat Co.

The video appears to show him and other workers jabbing a cow in the eye, dragging animals with forklifts and squirting water at high pressure into the

noses and mouths of the creatures, possibly to get them to walk into slaughter chutes.

The slaughter of so-called downer cows violates state and federal regulations.

Revelations of the alleged abuse at the Chino meat company prompted nationwide concern over both the humane handling of animals at the nation's slaughterhouses and the safety of the country's food supply.

As a result, Westland/Hallmark recalled 143 millions pounds of beef in what amounted to the largest such recall in U.S. history.

Navarro is charged with five felony counts of animal cruelty and three misdemeanor counts of illegally moving nonambulatory animals.

He has pleaded not guilty.

His lawyer, Salazar, asked that the charges be dismissed Thursday.

He argued that the misdemeanor charges are applicable only to business entities, such as slaughterhouses, and not to individual people or workers.

See NAVARRO | Page A4

Union chief rips USDA on practices

By Frederic J. Frommer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The head of the union that represents 6,000 federal food inspectors told a congressional committee Thursday that the Agriculture Department tried to intimidate him and other employees who reported violations of regulations, an allegation denied by the agency.

Union chief Stan Painter said that following a mad cow disease scare in 2003, he told superiors that new food safety regulations for slaughtered cattle were not being uniformly enforced. Painter said he was told to drop the matter, and when he didn't, was grilled

See SLAUGHTERHOUSE | Page A4

Trial near in trio of deaths

Manslaughter charges filed

By Rod Leveque
Staff Writer

RANCHO CUCAMONGA — A crane operator has been charged with three counts of involuntary manslaughter in the deaths of a co-worker and two motorists in 2006.

The three people were killed when Joseph Dimaano, now 33, of Menifee, lost control of a power pole he was installing in Upland. He is set to be arraigned on the charges Tuesday in West Valley Superior Court.

"This was a tragedy, and we're very saddened by the filing of criminal charges," said Dimaano's attorney, Mark Werksman, on Thursday.

Dimaano was one of two workers from Riverside-based Pouk and Steidle Co. who were installing wooden power poles on Dec. 6, 2006 near Benson Avenue and 11th Street.

He and the other worker lost control of a 75-foot pole, which swung across traffic lanes.

A Buick Riviera driven by 81-year-old Joel Everett Ridley of Montclair slammed into it. Ridley and his wife of two days, 80-year-old Betty Deyo-Ridley, were killed.

The impact pushed the pole into Dimaano's co-worker, David Jenkins, 29, of Lake Elsinore, killing him.

Deputy District Attorney James Secord said Dimaano was charged under a negligence theory.

The prosecutor said Dimaano and Jenkins did not use cones or signs to warn passing drivers of dangers from low-slung poles.

"They had started unloading the power pole before the sign crew and the crew that was going to do traffic control had arrived," he said.

In addition to the three manslaughter charges, Dimaano faces a count under the state's Labor Code alleging he violated work-safety standards, causing the death of his co-worker.

Pouk and Steidle was performing contract work for Southern California Edison. The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health fined the company \$50,000 last year for safety violations stemming from the crash.

r_levaque@dailybulletin.com
(909) 483-9325

DINE WITH THE FINEST

Business people and residents have an opportunity to lunch with Ontario's finest next month.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual Police Recognition Luncheon at the DoubleTree Hotel on May 6. The chamber is looking for people to attend or sponsor an officer by paying for a seat.

Sit with an officer you're sponsoring, or sponsor one or more officers, even if you can't make it. Reserved seats are \$45, or organizations can reserve a table for 10 for \$500.

Register on the chamber's Web site, www.ontario.org, or call (909) 984-2458.

TARGET ON TEENS

Aeropostale is set to open a store in Victoria Gardens today.

The store, which sells casual clothes and accessories designed for 14- to 17-year-olds, will be on South Mainstreet next to Verizon Wireless.

Another store with merchandise targeting teens — Metropark — is set to open at the mall this summer.

For foodies, two new restaurants are on the horizon at Victoria Gardens. Wapango, a Texas-based eatery serving Cuban, South and Central American-inspired cuisine, is set to open next month. Mexico Cantina will open this spring.

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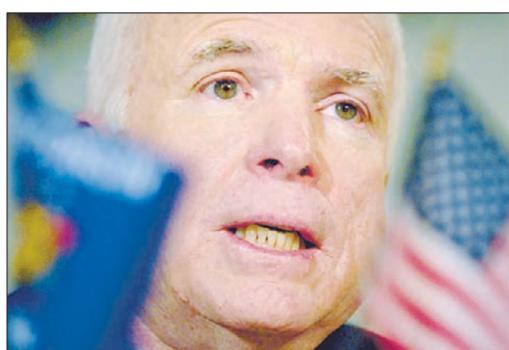
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McCain makes up ground in polls



The Associated Press

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., speaks at an economic summit in South Milwaukee, Wis., on Wednesday. He has gained steam in national polls while the race to determine his Democratic opponent drags on.

The 2008 presidential election isn't going to be the slam-dunk many Democratic supporters thought it would be a few months ago.

Growing numbers of people like what they see in presumptive Republican nominee John McCain, vaulting him into a tie with the two Democratic presidential contenders just a few months after Republicans faced a steep disadvantage.

The Arizona senator has made a race of the White House contest by attracting disgruntled GOP voters, independents and even some moderate Democrats who shunned his party last fall, according to a new poll released Thursday.

About two-thirds of those

voters have grown disenchanted with President Bush despite voting for him in 2004, including many GOP-leaning independents, while the remaining third usually support Democrats but like McCain anyway.

McCain's image with voters has progressed since November, but it is far from overwhelmingly strong. Yet he has done better than his two rivals: Opinions of Hillary Rodham Clinton have soured slightly since the fall, while views of Barack Obama have improved, although less impressively than McCain's.

Read more on Page A12