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It's always beach time in Southern California



Photo by Jeff Gritchen

PRESSTELEGRAM.COM/BLOGS READ ABOUT THE LATEST HAPPENINGS IN LB POLITICS.

HAITI TOLL DEVASTATING

Poor and privileged suffer, with tens of thousands feared dead, millions needing aid



Thony Belizaire AFP/Getty Images

A young Haitian walks amid rubble Wednesday in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, one day after a magnitude-7 earthquake collapsed large and small buildings alike.

By Jonathan M. Katz The Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Dazed survivors wandered past dead bodies in rubble-strewn streets Wednesday, crying for loved ones, and rescuers searched collapsed buildings as officials feared the death toll from Haiti's devastating earthquake could reach into the tens of thousands.

The first cargo planes with food, water, medical supplies, shelter and sniffer dogs headed to the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation a day after the magnitude-7 quake flattened much of the capital of 2 million people.

Tuesday's earthquake brought down buildings great and small — from shacks in shantytowns to President Rene Preval's gleaming white National Palace, where a dome tilted ominously above the manicured grounds.

Hospitals, schools and the main prison collapsed. The capital's Roman Catholic archbishop was killed when his office and the main cathedral fell. The head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission was missing in the ruins of the organization's multistory headquarters.

Police officers turned their pickup trucks into ambulances to carry the injured. Wisnel Occilus, a 24-year-old student, was wedged between two other survivors in a truck bed headed to a police station.

He was in an English class when the earth shook at 4:53 p.m. and the building collapsed.

"The professor is dead. Some of the students are dead, too," said Occilus, who suspected he had several broken bones. "Everything hurts."

"This is much worse than a hurricane," said doctors' assistant Jimitre Coquillon. "There's no water. There's nothing. Thirsty people are going to die."

Bodies were everywhere in Port-au-Prince: those of tiny children adjacent to schools, women in the rubble-strewn streets with stunned expressions frozen on their faces, men hidden beneath plastic tarps and cotton sheets.

Haiti's leaders struggled to comprehend the extent of the catastrophe — the worst earthquake to hit the country

HAITI A5

More Inside

President Obama pledges that the United States will send aid, troops and more to Haiti in the wake of the disastrous earthquake. A6

State urban rescue team will deploy to quake area

By John Antczak The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A California team of urban search-and-rescue specialists received orders Wednesday to deploy to earthquake-stricken Haiti, where thousands are feared dead or trapped in rubble.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department's 72-member team and thousands of pounds of equipment and supplies headed immediately to March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County.

Fire Inspector Matt Levesque said the team

AID A5



Francis Specker The Associated Press

Equipment for Haitian aid efforts by the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Task Force 2 Search and Rescue Team is placed on a pallet for loading onto an Air Force C-17 cargo plane Wednesday.

How you can help

The American Red Cross Greater Long Beach Chapter is urging those wanting to help to donate money.

Financial assistance "is the best way they can help right now at the moment," said Guillermo Sanchez, the group's public relations coordinator.

You can call 562-595-6341 or visit www.redcrosslb.org.

To donate blood, call 800-448-3543.

— Kevin Butler

McGinnis takes seat on board

LBUSD: The former teacher and librarian takes oath of office after special election.

By Kevin Butler Staff Writer

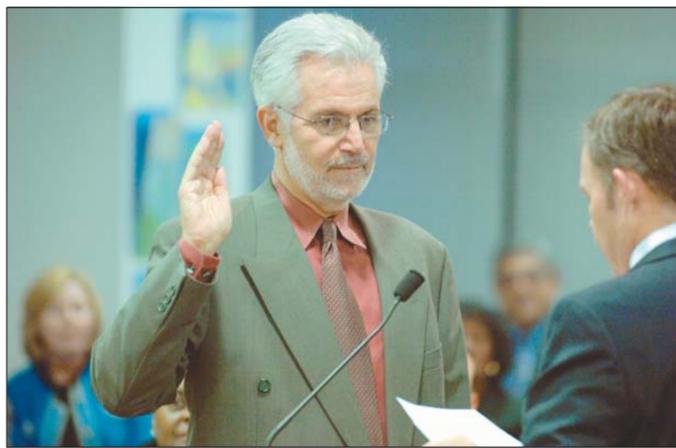
LONG BEACH — Retired educator John McGinnis on Wednesday was sworn in as the newest member of the Long Beach Board of Education.

In a Dec. 29 election marked

by low voter turnout, McGinnis beat four other competitors for the opportunity to replace Michael Shane Ellis representing the 3rd District in downtown Long Beach. Ellis resigned Sept. 1, triggering a special election.

After taking the oath of office at a meeting of the Long Beach Unified School District's board, McGinnis took his seat on the dais and thanked his supporters.

MCGINNIS A7



Brittany Murray Staff Photographer

Newly elected 3rd District school board member John McGinnis, chosen by voters to replace resigned board member Michael Shane Ellis in the downtown district, is sworn in Wednesday by Superintendent Chris Steinhauser at a meeting of the Long Beach Board of Education.



TIM GROBATY What's Hot!

LB lands the mad, mad, mad, mad airshow Flugtag

FLUGTAG — L.B. IS IT: It's definitely not a bird or a plane. More likely it's a flying cow or a pig. No, it's a piano! A flying grand piano! A dog, a rocket, a winged Big Wheels trike. It's an airborne baby carriage! It's winged jalapenos, a taco taking to the air, a soaring shark.

Flugtag, Red Bull's immensely popular, whimsical, riotous, inventive madcap airshow, is coming to Long Beach this summer.

Although the Long Beach flyby is early in the planning stages, Flugtag (German for air day, or air show) is reportedly set for the Aug. 6-7 weekend at — where else these days? — the Pine Avenue Pier at the

GROBATY A2



ONLINE POLL

Today's question: Are you giving a donation for Haiti earthquake relief?

Vote at presstelegram.com.

Yesterday's question: Do you check your earthquake supplies after a big quake elsewhere?

YES 18% NO 45% DON'T HAVE ANY 37%

- Bridge C5, D1 Healthbeat C1
Business A9 Horoscope C5
Classified A1 Lottery A2
Comics C4-C5, D2 Movies C3
Crossword C5, D1-2 Passages A12
Dear Abby C3 Puzzles C5
Editorial A10-11 TV C6

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