

# Daily News

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## 'IDES OF MARCH'

George Clooney, Evan Rachel Wood star in political thriller. **L.A. LIFE**



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# The American dream takes a hit

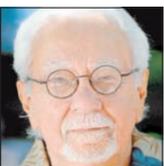
**HOUSING:** Homeownership sees biggest drop since Great Depression, and changes in the market 'are mind-boggling.'

**By Hope Yen** The Associated Press  
The American dream of homeownership has felt its biggest drop since the Great Depression, according to new 2010 census figures released Thursday. The analysis by the Census Bureau found the homeownership rate fell to 65.1 percent last year. While that level remains the second highest decennial rate, analysts say the U.S. may never return to its

mid-decade housing boom peak in which nearly 70 percent of occupied households were owned by their residents. The reason: a longer-term economic reality of tighter credit, prolonged job losses and reduced government involvement. Unemployed young adults are least likely to own, delaying first-time home purchases to live with Mom and Dad.

Middle-aged adults 35-64, mostly homeowners who were hit with mortgage foreclosures or bankruptcy after the housing bust in 2006, are at their lowest levels of ownership in decades. Measured by race, the homeownership gap between whites and blacks is now at its widest since 1960, wiping out more than 40 years of gains. "The changes now taking place are mind-boggling: the housing market has completely crashed and attitudes toward

**MORTGAGE RATE AT NEW LOW**  
**New record:** Freddie Mac says the rate on the 30-year fixed mortgage fell this week to 3.94 percent from 4.01 percent. That's the lowest ever and the first time rates on the loan have fallen below 4 percent in history.  
**Few takers:** The super-low rates haven't been enough to lift the housing market, which has struggled with bad sales and falling home prices.  
**Big obstacles:** For many Americans, buying a house is too big a risk when unemployment is high, raises are scarce and millions of foreclosures are forcing down prices.  
See story, **BUSINESS A11**



**AL MARTINEZ**

## Rooney's presence a slice of Americana

He was the crotchety old grandpa who visited every Sunday evening and told us what was wrong or funny or strange or dumb about, well, everything. I don't believe that in his 33 years as house curmudgeon for "60 Minutes" Andy Rooney missed many subjects. He complained about or held forth on doors, dogs, prescription labels, coffee containers, mayonnaise jars, ketchup viscosity, doctors, bicycles, cats, howling babies, movies, paper clips, closets, books, coins, turkeys, pencils, tools, fingernail clippers, hobbies, art, ants and automobiles.

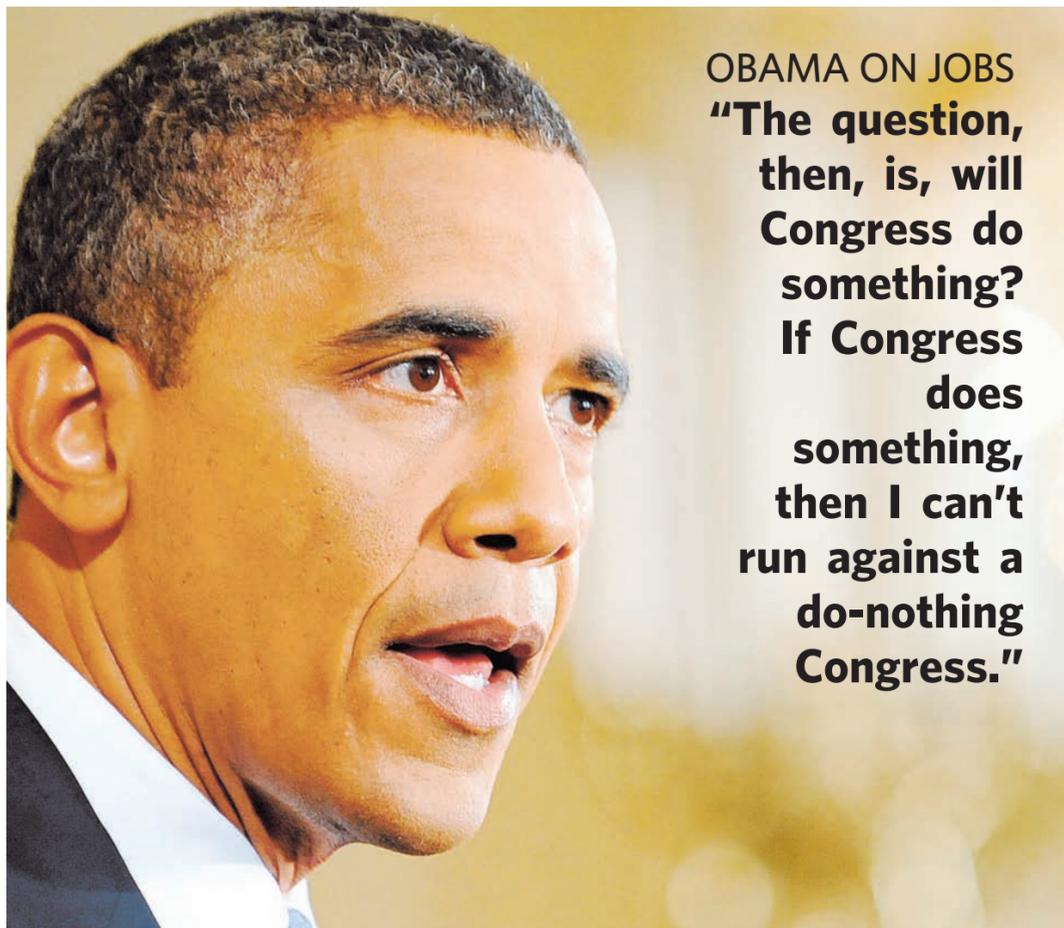
On his last day he even complained about being hounded by his fans, demanding to know "What kind of idiot wants my name?" to those seeking his autograph. A cantankerous nature fueled his humor, but that's what we liked about him. He was a combination of Will Rogers and H.L. Mencken, making small talk with that famous scowl, under bushy peaked eyebrows in a voice as drroll and dry as a desert wind.

For all of his irascibility, however, there was a sense of wonder about Rooney as he wandered through the culture noticing this and dismissing that. He was a man of discovery, surprised at what he found, amazed at what we hadn't noticed.

I saw him once at a Super Bowl tailgate party in an upscale L.A. restaurant. We had both written short, funny pieces for the game program published by the NFL and were both in the crowded upstairs bar when I spotted Rooney on the far side of the room.

Standing alone by a flight of stairs, he seemed somehow bewildered by it all and maybe ill at ease. I had the impression that at any

**MARTINEZ A14**



President Obama said Thursday the GOP risks bearing the brunt of voters' anger if it doesn't support his jobs bill.

**OBAMA ON JOBS**  
"The question, then, is, will Congress do something? If Congress does something, then I can't run against a do-nothing Congress."

## Obama challenges GOP



President Obama struck a combative tone on Thursday.

### President goes on the offensive to get his agenda back on track

**By Nancy Benac** The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — He deployed hand chops, finger wags, furrowed brows. He was sarcastic, demanding, partisan.

"I'm not going to cave to the competition," President Barack Obama declared midway through Thursday's news conference.

He was talking about America's economic rivals abroad. But he could just as well have been referring to his Republican antagonists at home.

Obama, so often partial to a measured, professorial mien, opened his hour-plus news conference by throwing down a marker to the Republicans who have dared to dis his jobs plan.

"Why would you be opposed?" he demanded of those who are against his jobs proposal.

"Any senator out there who's thinking about voting against

**OBAMA A10**

### DEFIANT: Republicans should back jobs bill or risk being 'run out of town' by voters, he says.

**By Ben Feller** The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A combative President Barack Obama challenged a divided Congress on Thursday to unite behind his jobs bill or get ready to be run "out of town" by angry voters. Hoping to use public frustration and economic worry as leverage, he called his proposal an insurance plan against a painful return to recession.

In a news conference long on restatements of his ideas, Obama laid bare the dynamic that now is Washington: The era of compromise is over.

Frustrated over getting nowhere with Republicans, Obama demanded that they explain themselves to the country and promised to keep "hammering away until something gets done."

Despite Obama's taunts, Republicans showed no signs of switching positions. Instead, they pressed for a symbolic vote so they could oppose the bill the president submitted three weeks ago. They also predicted they would prevail next week when Democrats try to advance a reworked version.

**JOBS A10**

### Related story

For more Americans, being out of work has become a semipermanent condition. **A8**

## MOTION PICTURE & TV HOME

# Deal for takeover of facility collapses

**CARE:** Negotiations said to be under way with another party.

**By Susan Abram** Staff Writer

The financially troubled Motion Picture & Television Fund has backed out of a tentative deal for the takeover of its hospital and skilled nursing home and is negotiating with another health care provider, officials said Thursday.

Providence Health & Services had been in discussions to oversee the operation of the Woodland Hills facility, which was founded 90 years ago to care for retired entertainment industry workers.

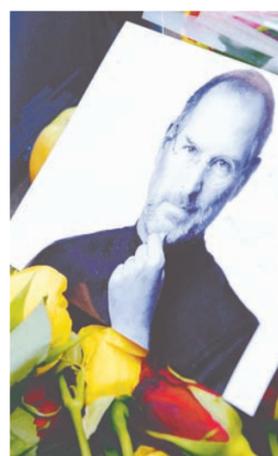
"The specifics of what we originally spoke about have changed," said Bob Beitcher, chief executive officer of the Motion Picture & Television Fund. "We are in discussions with other potential health care organizations."

Beitcher said he hopes a formal announcement will be made by the end of the month.

"The fund is committed in keeping the hospital and long-term care facility open," he said.

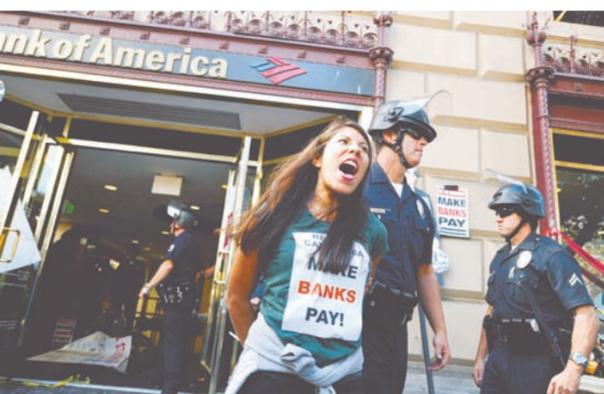
A Providence spokeswoman referred calls to the Motion Picture & Television Fund.

**HOSPITAL A14**



## Apple's mystique may grow with Steve Jobs' death

The iPhone, iPad, iPod and Mac will no doubt get a sales boost as consumers pay the ultimate tribute to one of America's creative geniuses. **A7**



## Wall Street protests in L.A.

Their chief target is Wall Street, but many demonstrators in New York, Los Angeles and across the country are also disgusted with Washington, blaming politicians of both parties for policies they say protect corporate America at the expense of the middle class. **A6**

## PROBATION SHAKE-UP

# Blevins: Departure voluntary

**By Christina Villacorte** Staff Writer

Los Angeles County's beleaguered probation chief insisted Thursday he is resigning voluntarily, with a legacy of accomplishments, but several sources said he is merely pre-empting his firing by the Board of Supervisors.

Probation head Donald Blevins and the board have been negotiating the terms of his departure from the \$227,000-a-year post, which he held for about 18 months.

Several sources said Blevins has lost the support of three of the supervisors — Gloria Molina, Mark Ridley-Thomas and Michael Antonovich — although the board has not taken a formal vote about the Probation chief's future.

However, he said on radio station KPCC-FM (89.3) that he wants to leave to spend more time with his family.

"While the board and I have had some differences of opinion on issues affecting the department, I can tell you it was a mutually agreeable decision, that it was time for me to move on and for the department to head in a different direction, so I just want to put those rumors to rest," Blevins said.

"I can tell you that this has been an all-consuming position. From a personal standpoint, my family has suffered a little bit in this process. The vacation (last week) just reinforced that.

"I'm anxious to reclaim some of that

**BLEVINS A10**

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