

Local/State Focus

Quotable

"Perhaps we haven't reached the proper stage of enlightenment yet, but were' more inclined to support propositions with defined sources of funding attached to them."

S.F. Chronicle editorial on Alcatraz plan, B6.

Striking writers close in on deal

By LYNN ELBER
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A breakthrough in contract talks has been reached between Hollywood studios and striking writers and could lead to a tentative deal as early as next week, a person close to the ongoing negotiations said Saturday.

The two sides breached the gap Friday on the thorniest issues, those concerning compensation for projects distributed via the Internet, said the person, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly.

A second person familiar with the talks, also speaking on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to comment publicly, said that significant progress had been made and a

deal might be announced within a week.

The people did not provide specific details on the possible agreement. Major points of contention include how much and when writers are paid for projects delivered online after they've been broadcast on TV.

The studios have been insisting that programs be streamed online for a certain period, deemed promotional, during which writers would forgo residuals. When payment kicked in, the companies sought to limit it to a flat \$1,200 fee, while the guild wanted a percentage of a distributor's revenue.

The Writers Guild of America did not immediately reply to a request for comment. The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, the trade group representing the studios,

declined comment, citing a news blackout agreed to by both sides during the talks.

Guild leaders have said they are fighting for a piece of the future, reflecting the widespread belief that Internet-delivered entertainment fare would inevitably claim an increasing and perhaps even dominant market share.

Although work remains to be done on elements of the agreement, prospects for a deal appeared solid, said those close to the situation. The tentative agreement would have to be approved by a majority of guild members.

The guild, whose 3-month-old strike has brought the entertainment industry to a standstill, began informal talks with top media company executives Jan. 23 in an attempt to reach a new

deal covering governing work for film, TV and digital media.

Negotiations between the guild and alliance negotiators collapsed Dec. 7 after the alliance demanded that proposals for unionization of animation and reality shows be taken off the table. The guild refused.

During the negotiations impasse, the Directors Guild of America began its own talks with studio chiefs and swiftly reached a tentative deal that was announced Jan. 17 and covered some of the digital media issues key to the writers guild.

Major studio executives called on the writers guild to begin informal talks, which essentially are standing in for formal negotiations, according to those familiar with the situation.

Fists of Fremont



MARIA J. AVILA/MediaNews

Yan Xing teaches student Kevin Lai, 6, of Fremont the art of Shaolin at the Shaolin Temple. Fremont, with its large Chinese and Indian population, has quietly become the American outpost one of the most storied martial arts institutions in popular imagination — the Shaolin Temple.

GO! Calendar

Mail to: Entertainment Calendar, P.O. Box 271, Monterey 93942, fax: 372-8401, or e-mail to GoCalendar@montereyherald.com

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- Wednesdays: **TASTE**
- Thursdays: **GO!**
- Sundays: **LEISURE**

On the Web
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Lottery Saturday, Feb. 2

FANTASY FIVE
7, 9, 11, 13, 15

DAILY 3 afternoon draw
4, 8, 8

DAILY 3 evening draw
9, 3, 9

DAILY DERBY
1, 7, 3 Time: 1:49.25

SUPER LOTTO PLUS
10, 11, 16, 35, 43 Mega 9

MEGA MILLIONS for Friday
3, 14, 30, 44, 56 Mega 5

No ticket matched all six numbers.
Wednesday's estimated jackpot:
\$102 million

Latino vote

From page B1

various camps. Discussions are taking place in offices and living rooms all over the United States, and Latinos are debating among themselves which candidate would better represent their interests.

On Friday's edition of Democracy Now, a daily radio and TV news program, Assemblyman Gil Cedillo said he supports Obama, unlike his friend and former colleague, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villarraigosa, who is campaigning for Clinton in Iowa and other states. Cedillo, a strong supporter of immigration reform that would outline a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants,

said his views align with those of Obama.

In Salinas, a handful of Latino leaders came out in support of the Illinois senator Thursday, a week after Hillary Clinton traveled to the farming city to receive the endorsement of the United Farm Workers.

For Juan Uranga, executive director of the Center for Community Advocacy, the debate points not to a split in, but to the maturity of, this segment of the electorate.

"The Latino community is like every other community. The electoral white people do not all support (one candidate), neither do all Afro-Americans," said Uranga, who Thursday expressed his support for Obama. But his wife, Assemblywoman Anna Caballero, was all praise for Clinton

during the candidate's visit to Salinas.

"I don't see it as a split as much as the Latino community becoming more engaged in the electoral process and acting like everybody else," Uranga said.

Luis Valdez, founder of El Teatro Campesino, recently began campaigning for Obama to demonstrate that not all Latinos are in Clinton's camp.

"I'm speaking out to let my friends and other people know I support Obama," he said. "The Latino vote is too important in California, and I want Latinos to make up their own minds and not to play it safe. We can't afford to play it safe."

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Greens

From page B1

and conservation are.

"It's surprising to me that there is a conflict between environmental protection and food safety," Beretti said. "I think these two concepts go hand in hand."

Beretti found more than 90 percent of the farmers surveyed have adopted new practices to improve water quality or conditions for local wildlife. But many leafy greens farmers have been told or asked by buyers to remove some practices to encourage food safety.

Many of those surveyed said they were asked by buyers to remove noncrop plants on their farms, which could attract animals. But Beretti believes the extra vegetation could make crops safer by filtering contaminated water that runs onto fields from neighboring farms or ranches.

Though the 2006 outbreak was pinned on cows, buyers are concerned about all

animals near farms, including native wildlife, Beretti said.

"We had one grower who was fairly certain he was trapping kangaroo rats, which are federally protected," Beretti said. "But he couldn't sell his crops unless he had the traps out there."

Large conventional farmers bend the most to buyers' requests, Beretti found. No exclusively organic farmers who responded to the survey reported changing their conservation practices based on buyers' guidelines.

Adding to the confusion for growers, not all buyers have the same safety requirements.

Hank Giclas, Western Growers Association vice president of science and technology, would like to see consistent guidelines or requirements applied across the board. Instead, buyers sometimes make their own rules.

"It's a long-standing struggle on the part of our membership to try to meet five to a dozen different standards," Giclas said.

In some cases, stringent guidelines arise from

competition "in the name of 'my product is safer than yours,'" said Bob Martin, general manager of Rio Farms in King City.

As a result, some buyers are unreasonably demanding on their growers, Martin said.

"We grow these crops outside, where animals roam and birds fly, not in glass greenhouses," Martin said.

Maria Brous, spokeswoman for Publix Super Markets, a chain with most of its stores in Florida, said marketing agreements are essential to keep leafy greens safe, but their safety specifications can do more to protect their customers.

"Our specifications are set to ensure the highest quality of product," Brous wrote in an e-mail.

Farmers might not always agree with buyers' strict guidelines, but the produce market is so competitive that many don't want to risk losing business by rocking the boat, said Martin.

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Today in History

Today is Sunday, Feb. 3, the 34th day of 2008. There are 332 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History

On Feb. 3, 1959, a plane crash near Clear Lake, Iowa, claimed the lives of rock-'n'-roll stars Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson. That same day, an American Airlines Lockheed Electra crashed into New York's East River while approaching LaGuardia Airport, killing 65 of the 73 people on board.

On this date

In 1809, Congress passed an act establishing the Illinois Territory.

In 1908, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Loewe v. Lawlor*, ruled the United Hatters Union had violated the Sherman Antitrust Act by organizing a nationwide boycott of Danbury Hatters of Connecticut.

In 1913, the 16th Amendment to the Constitution, providing for a federal income tax, was ratified.

In 1916, Canada's original Parliament Buildings, in Ottawa, burned down.

In 1924, the 28th president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, died in Washington, D.C., at age 67.

In 1930, the chief justice of the United States, William Howard Taft, resigned for health reasons. (He died just over a month later.)

In 1943, during World War II, the U.S. transport ship *Dorchester*, which was carrying troops to Greenland, sank after being hit by a German torpedo. (Four Army chaplains gave their life belts to four other men, and went down with the ship.)

In 1946, the Soviet probe Luna 9 became the first manmade object to make a soft landing on the moon.

In 1994, the space shuttle *Discovery* lifted off, carrying Sergei Krikalev, the first Russian cosmonaut to fly aboard a U.S. spacecraft.

In 1995, *Discovery* blasted off with a woman, Air Force Lt. Col. Eileen Collins, in the pilot's seat for the first time in NASA history.

Ten years ago: The state of Texas executed Karla Faye Tucker for the pickax killings

of two people in 1983; she was the first woman executed in the United States since 1984. A U.S. Marine plane sliced through the cable of a ski gondola in Italy, sending the car plunging hundreds of feet, killing all 20 people inside.

Five years ago: President Bush sent lawmakers a \$2.23 trillion budget for 2004. Abandoning a two-month-long general strike that failed to oust President Hugo Chavez, Venezuela's workers returned to work in all sectors but the vital oil industry. Record producer Phil Spector was arrested in the shooting death of actress Lana Clarkson at his mansion in Alhambra, Calif. (Spector's murder trial ended in a jury deadlock in September 2007.)

One year ago: A suicide truck bomber struck a Baghdad market in a predominantly Shiite area, killing more than 130 people. President Bush designated four central Florida counties disaster areas in the wake of tornadoes that ripped through the region, leaving 21 dead. Running back Thurman Thomas, offensive lineman Bruce Matthews, defensive back Roger Wehrli and wide receiver Michael Irvin were elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Today's Birthdays

Comedian Shelley Berman is

82. Football Hall-of-Famer Fran Tarkenton is 68. Actress Bridget Hanley is 67. Actress Blythe Danner is 65. Singer Dennis Edwards is 65. Football Hall-of-Famer Bob Griese is 63. Singer-guitarist Dave Davies (The Kinks) is 61. Singer Melanie is 61. Actress Morgan Fairchild is 58. Actor Nathan Lane is 52. Rock musician Lee Ranaldo (Sonic Youth) is 52. Actor Thomas Calabro is 49. Actor-director Keith Gordon is 47. Actress Michele Greene is 46. Country singer Matraca Berg is 44. Actress Maura Tierney is 43. Actor Warwick Davis is 38. Reggaeton singer Daddy Yankee is 32. Musician Grant Barry is 31. Singer-songwriter Jessica Harp (The Wreckers) is 26. Rapper Sean Kingston is 18.

Thought for Today:

The path of civilization is paved with tin cans." — Elbert Hubbard, American author and publisher (1856-1915).

Names in the News

NEWMAN SAYS HE'S FINE, BUT HIS FEET AREN'T

Paul Newman denies tabloid reports that he's in ill health.

"In answer to the rumors about my 'failing health,' the doctors have been treating me for athletes foot and hair loss," Newman said in a statement issued Friday by his publicist, Warren Cowan in Los Angeles.

The 83-year-old Oscar winner (for "The Color of Money") celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary to Joanne Woodward this week.

Mendes attends to her 'issues,' whatever they are

Eva Mendes has "issues." "Eva has been working hard for the past year and made a positive decision to take some



Mendes

much-needed time off to proactively attend to some personal issues that, while not critical, she felt deserved some outside professional support," the 31-year-old actress' publicist, Brad Cafarelli, said Friday in a statement.

The celebrity Web site TMZ reported Friday that Mendes checked into a Utah rehab center for substance abuse.

Mendes' screen credits include "Training Day," "2 Fast 2 Furious," "Hitch" and "Ghost Rider."

His highness wants to limit London's high rises

Prince Charles warned Thursday that historic sites such as the Tower of London have been "vandalized" by high-rise construction that threatens to ruin the character

of the capital.

The heir to the British throne, who spoke at a conference on city planning, argued that poor planning could damage the integrity of Britain's historical areas — particularly criticizing tall buildings that dwarf smaller structures.

"We seem to be determined to vandalize these few remaining sites which retain the kind of human scale and timeless character that so attract people to them and which increase in value as time goes by," Charles said at St. James' Palace in London.

The speech was a challenge to London Mayor Ken Livingstone's support for a project near the tower. The building, known as the "Shard of Glass," would be Britain's tallest skyscraper.

Charles suggested tall buildings be clustered in corporate areas. He pointed to Paris' La Defense, a business district full of skyscrapers kept separate from the city's famous museums and landmarks.

"The key point I want to make is that I am not opposed to all tall buildings," he said. "My concern is that they should be considered in their context; in other words, they should be put where they fit properly."

'Grey's Anatomy' play doctor seeks real help

Justin Chambers, who plays a doctor on "Grey's Anatomy," has gotten medical help.

Chambers, 37, voluntarily checked himself into UCLA Medical Center on Monday "to get help with a pre-existing sleeping disorder," said his publicist, Danica Smith.

He checked out Wednesday and "asks that the press respect his privacy and that of his family," according to a statement issued Friday.

Chambers plays Dr. Alex Karev on "Grey's Anatomy."

— Herald wire services