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CAN TIGER WIN THE MASTERS?



SPORTS

Office pools: It's all about the brackets



Water taps open up a bit

Feds increase South Bay district's allotment from delta pumps this year

By Paul Rogers

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Significantly reducing the chance that Silicon Valley residents will face another summer of water restrictions, the Obama administra-

tion on Tuesday promised to pump a lot more water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta this year.

Benefiting from a rainy winter, cities and farms across California will receive

the bounty. The Santa Clara Valley Water District, which last year called for a mandatory 15 percent cutback in water use, will receive 32,000 acre-feet more this year than it had been expecting after last month's allotment — enough extra water for 160,000 people for a year.

"We could really use the

water, especially after a three-year drought," said Keith Whitman, water supply manager for the district.

Although many Bay Area counties have already declared they won't be imposing water restrictions this summer, Whitman said he expects to recommend less rigorous restrictions in Santa

Clara County, but will wait until mid-April to make the final call.

"If we continue on this path, the staff recommendation to our board would be to back away from the 15 percent," he said. "Exactly what it will be depends on how much rain and snow we get in the next month."

The water district, which provides water to 1.8 million residents in Santa Clara County, receives about half its water from the delta, and the other half from local groundwater sources.

Although they were asked to cut back by 15 percent,

See **WATER**, Page 6

INTEL CONTEST

Valley whiz kids win big

Bay Area students score 'junior Nobel Prizes'

By Mike Zapler

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WASHINGTON — David Liu started writing his own computer games at the ripe age of 6. By the time he was 11, he was running a one-kid programming shop online, winning jobs over bidders decades older.

And that, by all indications, was just the beginning.

At an awards ceremony here Tuesday night, the 18-year-old Lynbrook High School senior took second place and a \$75,000 cash prize in the nation's most prestigious science fair, the Intel Science Talent Search.



David Liu

Lynbrook High senior among two from South Bay to finish in the Intel contest's top 10.

It's the first time in the competition's 60-plus-year history that two Bay Area students have finished in the top 10 of what's known as "the junior Nobel Prizes" of science contests.

"I've always wanted to figure out how things work — the computer, the software," said David, who's probably heading to Stanford in the fall. "I didn't really take things for granted."

David's winning creation is a program that searches digital images for key characteristics, or "concepts," such as buildings or trees. The idea came to him when he was looking for a better way to organize his family photos.

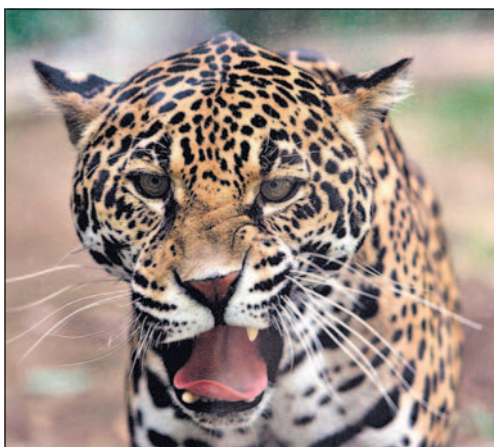
His invention has already been put to use by NASA/Ames Research Center (where David worked as an intern) to pinpoint construction activity near oil pipelines in Alaska — a frequent cause of pipeline breaks.

But the application could

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HAPPY HOLLOW REOPENS

READY FOR ITS



CLOSE-UP



KAREN T. BORCHERS/MERCURY NEWS PHOTOGRAPHS

A new entrance is part of the changes to Happy Hollow Park & Zoo. Visitors now enter from the east, through an expansive new plaza along Coyote Creek that is studded with animal sculptures.



COMING THURSDAY

Readers share their memories of the park; plus, a map of the new layout.

ONLINE

View more photos and find coverage throughout the week on the reopening at www.mercurynews.com/entertainment.

San Jose park adds some new high-tech features but still manages to retain its retro charm

By Holly Hayes

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Happy Hollow Park & Zoo's beloved Danny the Dragon ride has been given a super-glam makeover. The funky Crooked House has sharply improved curb appeal. And the park's venerable Puppet Castle Theater is rigged with modern electronics and sports a dreamy "magical blue" paint job.

When Happy Hollow reopens Saturday after a \$72 million, top-to-bottom reno-

vation, the San Jose park — a throwback to a simpler, pre-Silicon Valley time in Santa Clara County — will be poised to regain its status as the go-to place for the 2- to 10-year-old set — not to mention their parents and grandparents.

"Some of my fondest childhood memories took place within those ivy-covered walls," wrote Morgan Richardson, one of hundreds of Mercury News readers who

See **ZOO**, Page 10

HEALTH CARE

House looks at new option

Bill could be 'deemed passed' in maneuver

By David M. Herszenhorn

and Robert Pear

New York Times

WASHINGTON — As lawmakers clashed fiercely over major health care legislation on the House floor, Democrats struggled Tuesday to defend procedural shortcuts they might use to win approval for their proposals in the next few days.

The political maneuvering in the Capitol came as a study showed that nearly 1 in 4 Californians under age 65 had no health insurance last year, as soaring unemployment propelled vast numbers of once-covered workers into the ranks of the uninsured.

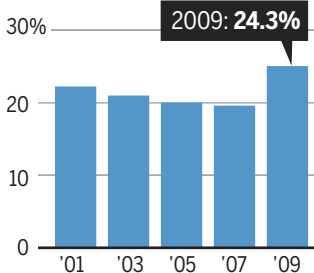
With House Democrats so skittish about the piece of legislation that is now the vehicle for overhauling the health care system — the bill passed by the Senate in December — they are now considering a maneuver that would allow them to pass it without explicitly voting for it.

Under that approach, House Democrats would approve a package of changes to the Senate bill in a budget

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The uninsured

Estimated percentage of Californians under age 65 with no health insurance (biennial data):



Sources: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, Los Angeles Times
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