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Los Angeles Times

Larger Budget Shortfall Predicted

Finances: Governor's projected deficit of \$12.5 billion is \$5 billion short, analysis says. He calls report too pessimistic.

By JULIE TAMAKI
TIMES STAFF WRITER

SACRAMENTO—Lawmakers will need to come up with an additional \$5 billion to balance the state budget as the recession and weakening stock market take a heavier toll on California coffers than previously anticipated, Legislative Analyst Elizabeth Hill warned Wednesday.

Hill predicted that Gov. Gray Davis' \$97.9-billion spending plan for the next fiscal year—which contains a road map for closing a \$12.5-billion shortfall—would still leave the state's bank account \$5 billion out of whack.

So far, Davis and lawmakers have solved nearly \$3 billion of the now-\$17.5-billion problem by adopting a variety of cuts and budget adjustments in the current fiscal year, some of which will carry over into 2002-03.

In her annual critique of the governor's budget proposal, Hill blamed the growing gap on a combination of overstated revenues to the tune of \$3.9 billion and understated expenses of \$1.1 billion.

Hill has the advantage of analyzing December and January tax receipts, unlike the Davis administration, which fashioned its 2002-03 spending plan late last year.

Hill is predicting



4 Children Killed by Grill Fumes; 2 Hurt

Tragedy: The father is suspected of lighting the barbecue in the living room while they were sleeping.

By JOSE CARDENAS
and SANDRA MURILLO
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

Four children died of asphyxia and two siblings were critically injured after their father, apparently despondent over marital troubles, allegedly lighted a charcoal grill early Wednesday in the living room of the family's Pico Rivera home, authorities said.

UCLA Medical Center officials said they are pessimistic about the chances of one of the children surviving.

Adair Garcia, 30, and Adriana Ibeth Arreola, the children's mother, had been having marital problems, authorities said, declining to elaborate on what may have triggered the incident.

Adair Garcia was taken to Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital in Whittier, where he is in the critical care chamber, said Dr. Na-deem Chishti. Most likely, he will be transported to a county jail after being released. A sheriff's deputy is outside his hospital room door.

"We are investigating this as a homicide," said Lt. Don Bear of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's homicide bureau.

"Logic tells us that [the father] is the only person who would



Investigators retrieve the barbecue grill from the home. Neighbors say the family often had barbecues in the backyard.

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Palmdale: Girl killed, five injured in home fire. B3

cia, 6; and Anthony Garcia, 2, dead in their pajamas in their bedroom, said Scott Carrier, a spokesman for the county coroner's office. Cecilia Garcia, 4, died after

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Hidden Portrait of a City

■ Billed as the longest mural in the world, the half-mile painting is due for a badly needed update and restoration.

By DAVID FERRELL
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Unlike its Chinese counterpart, the Great Wall of Los Angeles is not exactly a big-time tourist attraction.

See it from the moon? It's tough enough to see from across the street.

The wall extends nearly half a mile through North Hollywood, on the face of the Tujunga Wash flood control channel. It is obscured by trees and chain-link fencing and is old only by Los Angeles standards—completed in 1983. Yet the broad reach of history is clearly apparent on what is billed as the world's longest mural.

Bold, flowing images in the style of the great Mexican mural masters illustrate how ethnic groups shaped the growth of America—and California in particular.

Rosa Parks and Albert Einstein are on the wall. So are Adolf Hitler and Sen. Joseph McCarthy. The wall is a memorial to pain and anger and war and ideas. It celebrates inventors, poets, film stars and thousands whose names will never be recorded: deported Mexican nationals, abused Native Americans, laid-off workers of the Great Depression, coolie laborers and people of Japanese heritage imprisoned in internment camps.

It is a wall of tears and subtle humor. A scene devoted to the boom of the suburbs shows a sprawl of blue-roofed homes and a platoon of trucks. "White's Morning," says the script on one truck—a bit of social commentary that really was the name of a 1950s van company, according to the wall's creator.

"That's a pun I couldn't resist," says Judith F. Baca, founder of SPARC, the Venice-based Social and Public Art Resource Center.

The effort to paint the wall has



Photos by MYUNG J. CHUN / Los Angeles Times

The Great Wall of Los Angeles runs half a mile in a flood control channel along Coldwater Canyon between Burbank Boulevard and Oxnard Street in North Hollywood.

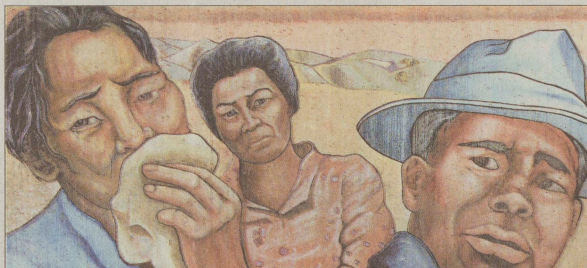
an interesting history itself. The nonprofit group organized more than 400 people—most of them disadvantaged youths—to design and paint the landmark, a project that took years and changed the lives of some of the teenagers involved.

The mural is 13½ feet high and stretches 2,470 feet down one side of the flood channel, along Coldwater Canyon Avenue. It extends from Burbank Boulevard to Oxnard Street.

No one has added to the wall, or even done touch-up work, for 19 years. Rain, high water and debris have dulled the paint and peeled it in places. Worse, the mural's visual story—which begins with saber-toothed cats and mastodons—stops abruptly with Olympic track stars Wilma Rudolph and Billy Mills of the early 1960s.

Omitted events include the Vietnam War, the Watts riots, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., the Apollo moon landings and the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Baca has been working on many fronts to salvage the mural and add new expanses of art to make it current. The Los Angeles City Council has committed \$100,000 toward restoration. Meanwhile, designers are sifting through thousands of ideas and images to come up with a montage for each missing decade.



A portion of the mural depicts the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Four 350-foot sections would extend the wall more than a quarter-mile to the north.

The brainstorming involves many people from many backgrounds and fields of expertise. The designs are being roughed out by Baca's mural students at UCLA. The students are contributing some of the ideas; others are being cultivated in planning meetings with professional artists, art scholars, historians and residents of neighborhoods scattered around the city. The *sparcwmurals.org* Web site also invites suggestions for the wall.

Responses have been informative and often surprising, Baca says.

"Someone sent us an image of Michael Jackson as a white guy with a monkey in his lap," Baca says, referring to a depiction of the pop singer made famous by sculptor Jeff Koons. That image, if it is used, would offer a nod to the singer and commercial artist as symbols of the crass materialism of the 1990s, Baca says.

"It's smart stuff, by people who know the art world," she says. "My favorite one for the 1990s is a guy dressed up as an Aztec warrior—

the face of an Aztec warrior in full costume—and on his back is a leaf blower."

Highly stylized, the warrior is shown in luminous profile, a rendering submitted to the Web site by a man named Serg Hernandez. He also supplied a caption: "A once-proud Aztec people now works as gardeners blowing leaf and grass."

Creating the right weave of metaphors is crucial and time-consuming. Although the design work began in the fall of 2000, funded by \$208,000 in grants from the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, only

small sections of the future wall have been pieced together. Some of the images are posted on SPARC's Web site; others exist only on the computer screens of the designers.

Looking at them is a fascinating glimpse at history as it was and art as it will be. The rendering of the 1960s, for example, shows blacks at a whites-only lunch counter. Fire hoses spray racial demonstrators in Birmingham, Ala. The water flows into a stream that irrigates a field. The stream then morphs into a line of people following farm labor leader Cesar Chavez.

The 1970s design is largely incomplete. The section dealing with the 1980s shows the AIDS quilt and President Ronald Reagan half-hidden behind a mask of himself—a commentary on Reagan's adroitness with the media.

Missiles overhead suggest the heightened military armament of the Reagan years. A deeper part of the sky is lighted with the exploding space shuttle Challenger.

The 1990s art is even more striking: a Los Angeles cityscape vibrant with global themes. Fires mark the burning oil fields of the Persian Gulf War as well as the 1992 riots.

"I think the World Trade Center should be the final image," Baca says, but designers are not that far along.