

California and the West

CALIFORNIA DATELINE / PATT MORRISON

Snapshot of life in the Golden State.

Red Light Runners Traffic in Chromosomal Patterns

Just as Your Legislature at Work has decided to continue a program permitting intersection cameras to catch red light runners...

...in a study from the Department of Health in San Francisco, where red light camera are effective, but so expensive the city installed faces at some intersections. The cameras—real or faux—may make drivers mind their Ps and Qs, but the study found that much of the bad conduct comes down to Xs and Ys, as in chromosomes.

Focus groups of 500 residents who admitted running a red light at least once—65% of them were men and the rest women—found two distinct categories of red light runners: the aggressive and the distracted. In the latter, the aggressive drivers were men usually driving too fast, and the distracted drivers were women who had other things on their minds.

Abbe Yan, who coordinated the health department's program, said the survey characterized distracted drivers as the daydreamers, eaters and applicators of makeup. Leadfoot exhibits animosity toward other drivers and dodge their culpability with excuses like, "The yellow light too short."

Students of human behavior would find no surprise in this survey result. Most respondents regard themselves as good drivers, and say it's all those other red light runners who are the problem.



Los Angeles Times
Running red lights is a chromosome thing.

Courts: In ruling that may apply to a California case, U.S. Supreme Court says lower court erred in denying an appeal.

By DAVID SAVAGE
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—In a ruling that gives a glimmer of hope to a California murderer facing execution, the Supreme Court said Monday that an Arizona death row inmate is entitled to one hearing before a federal judge to argue that his life should be spared because he is insane.

The 7-2 decision marks one of the rare times the high court has sided with the U.S. 9th Circuit

Court of Appeals in a death penalty case.

The issue of the death penalty and insanity has gained wide attention recently because of the case of Horace Kelly, the 28-year-old triple murderer who faces execution in San Quentin.

Twelve years ago, the Supreme Court barred the states from executing an insane person on the grounds that it would be cruel and unusual punishment.

Lawyers for Kelly said he should be spared because he is insane, but last week a jury in Marin County disagreed. By a 9-3 vote, jurors agreed with prosecutors who said that the condemned man understood his crimes and the reason for his punishment. He faces a June 8 execution.

Monday's high court decision, however, could give Kelly's law-

yers another chance to make the same claim of insanity before a federal judge.

Richard Mazer, Kelly's lawyer in San Francisco, did not return a call seeking comment.

State prosecutors said they were uncertain what will happen next because of procedural differences between Kelly's case and the Arizona case decided by the high court.

Most death row inmates have appeals heard over several years in federal court before they face an execution. However, Kelly was barred from going into federal court because his lawyers missed the new one-year deadline for filing a federal appeal.

Congress established the one-year deadline in 1996 as part of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, a measure

designed to limit lengthy appeals in federal court.

"We are not sure what this will mean for Kelly, since he never did a first round of habeas [appeals in federal court]," said Diane Galletti, the California state prosecutor who oversees death penalty cases.

The Arizona inmate, Ramon Martinez Villareal, faced execution for killing two people in 1982. He said in a 1993 federal appeal that he had gone insane while on death row, but a federal judge refused to hear the case then because Martinez-Villareal was not facing execution.

Last spring, when he did face an imminent execution, his lawyers raised the same issue before a federal judge in Phoenix. This time, the judge refused to hear the case because it was too late. He cited

Please see SANITY, A27

Name brand: In his press release, Chief Deputy California Atty. Gen. Dave Stirling, who's running for attorney general in the state's a June 2 primary, touts his "Stirling record."

A campaign slogan using his birth name might have been unworkable, like "Kahn job." Stirling, who once represented the San Gabriel Valley in the state Assembly, changed his name when he was in his middle 20s. His original name was Moses David Kahn Jr. Shades of ex-Colorado senator and Democratic presidential candidate Gary Hart, who shortened his name from "Hartington."

As was the case because he entered public life, Stirling won't discuss why he chose to become an ex-Kahn. "It's a private matter, not for public consumption," he says. Stirling did say it had nothing to do with any sort of a family falling-out, and that there is nothing nefarious about it. "It's nobody else's business. It's just not part of the public domain."

From Cabin to Cell

Now that convicted Usabomber Ted Kaczynski has been sentenced to four life terms in federal prison, let's compare his new accommodations in Florence, Colo., with his now-infamous woodland cabin in Montana.

	Cell	Cabin
Size	7x12x10 ft.	10x12x13 ft.
Composition	concrete & steel	tar paper & plywood
Lighting	electricity	candlelight
Plumbing	shower, toilet, sink, water fountain	combination
Bed	mattress-covered concrete slab	nanow cot
Windows	1: 6'x4 ft.	2: 12" square
Books	3 paper-back limit	Shakespeare & Thackeray
Typewriters	none	3
TV	yes, built-in 12" B&W	none
Cooking	available on the TV	none
Meals	delivered mechanically	home-style: hunted deer, coyotes, squirrels, rabbits and porcupine; broiled in a barrel
Daily Housing	\$60.00	\$1
Living Costs		



Source: LA Times; inset: Alan, Federal Bureau of Prisons. Researched by TRACY THOMAS/Los Angeles Times

REBECCA FERRY/Los Angeles Times

Got boiled milk scam? Just as scam is beginning to get some respect—a UCLA paleontologist who found that early life on Earth resembled pond scum was elected to the National Academy of Sciences—the town of Saratoga wants nothing to do with it.

Given that a U.S. congressman has been scolded for using a scam-related word to describe President Clinton, no self-respecting city would want to have anything to do with it, so Saratoga, after having researched historical records in New York, is getting behind a new translation: "Hillside Country of the Great River, Place of Swift Water."

Otherwise, it could have gone back to the town's original name—McCarthyville.

One-offs: Activists in plastic ponchos and paper masks protested Mexican policies in Chiquay by alighting employees at the Mexican Consulate in San Francisco with barbecue sauce and red paint. . .

The Boy Scouts' stand against its members has cost it a place alone of the paycheck-deduction charities in San Francisco's annual giving campaign among city employees, and in Berkeley, where the Texas-based Sea Scouts had enjoyed a waiver of \$12,000 in annual marina berthing fees, the City Council revoked the waiver because of the Sea Scout affiliation with the national Boy Scouts. . . A man brandishing a butcher knife hijacked a Fairfield city bus because he wanted to go to Varaville for pizza, police said.

EXIT LINE

"His freneticism makes me look like I'm on Valium."

—Cynthia Scott, Senate President Pro Tem John L. Burton (D-San Francisco), speaking of his colleague on the other side of the state Capitol, Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles).

California DateLine appears every other Thursday.



Photo by DOUG BERNI / The Times

Constance Walsh has seen 'em come and seen 'em go since setting up living quarters in Pioneertown nearly 20 years ago.

CALIFORNIA ALBUM

Headed for a Showdown

■ Pioneertown residents can't agree whether to cling to their backwater identity or court the entertainment industry, which built and then forgot the high desert town.

By DIANA MARCELM
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

PIONEERTOWN, Calif.—Ed Grin's favorite time of day is when he stands up in his hoggy and lets his powerful horse, Bahful, race to town.

That's after his chores are finished at the homestead where he and his girlfriend support themselves by raising calves and chickens and breaking horses. They live in a cabin with no electricity and no telephone, but they do carry papers.

The jambed rocks and blazing blue skies—straight out of a western movie—were a powerful draw for Grin, who quit his job as an amusement park manager and settled in the tiny High Desert hamlet a 1½-hour drive from Palm Springs.



Please see TOWN, A31

Pioneertown's rustic appeal to Hollywood has returned in recent years.

Cannabis Club Backers Seek Alternatives

By MARY CURTIS
TIMES STAFF WRITER

SAN FRANCISCO—Spurred by a federal court ruling ordering six Northern California cannabis clubs to close, medical marijuana advocates joined state and local officials Monday in calling for a search for alternative ways to get pot to sick people.

State Sen. John Vasconcellos announced that he will sponsor a May 26 summit in Sacramento to study other ways to distribute the drug. The Santa Clara Democrat was joined Monday by police, prosecutors and public health officials who say they want to make the medical marijuana law approved by California work.

"It's very clear to me that, under Proposition 215, the majority of the people here in California want to have seriously ill people have access to medical marijuana," said Spitta Clara Curry D. Atty.

Bill Allowing Cameras for Red Light Violations OK'd

■ Capital: Assembly approves device to spot traffic violators. Critics complain about Big Brother, but backers say it increases safety.

By MAX VANZI
TIMES STAFF WRITER

SACRAMENTO—Weighing fears of Big Brother against claims of safer streets, the Assembly on Monday approved and sent to Gov. Pete Wilson a bill allowing cameras to catch drivers who run red lights.

The legislation would make permanent the authority of police, with the approval of local governments, to use the film evidence to nail violators, who would face first-offense fines of \$270. The camera is an experimental use in six California cities, with 15 others lined up to follow suit.

A Wilson spokesman said the governor has not reviewed the legislation by state Sen. Quentin L. Kopp (D-San Francisco), but noted that the governor signed the bill authorizing the pilot program three years ago and "is inclined to support measures that provide public safety."

Without enactment of Kopp's legislation, cities would have to dismantle the camera at busy intersections this year. State analysts said the cameras in the past year have accounted for almost 16,000 citations. Red light runners colliding with other vehicles are "an epidemic problem" that cost 350 lives last year and 30,000 serious injuries in California, said Assemblyman Kevin Shelley (D-San Francisco). The devices "work and they save lives," said Shelley, who noted that San Francisco "has seen a 42% reduction in red light running where the cameras operate at four busy intersections. "It's appropriate to have cam-

Please see CAMERAS, A28



Associated Press
Sen. John Vasconcellos is sponsoring medical marijuana summit.

Please see CANNABIS, A29

W.N.: Shades of the Old West in High Desert Pioneer

Continued from A3

More than four decades ago, this same guy had built tired Roy Rogers, Lucky Hayden and 15 other Hollywood cowboys. They built Pioneertown as a movie set, complete with a rustic post office, saloons, hitching posts and the OK Corral of "High Noon" fame. The early buildings had just three sides, all the better for lighting and camera angles.

Hollywood eventually moved on and regular people moved in, putting down roots and putting up a fourth wall on the sides and over the town's main drag.

"It may have started off as a movie set, but we filled the voids and shadows between the props," said the 39-year-old Green.

But a funny thing has happened in recent months. Many of the same people who moved to this tranquil outpost to escape Southern California's sprawl are now pushing a campaign to tout Pioneertown as a film location.

The campaign has sparked abouting fests at town meetings along with some visible results.

In the past year, a dozen projects have been filmed here, including a commercial featuring a Mercedes-Benz curving to the song "Don't Fence Me In" and a fast-food spot featuring cowboys around a campfire who mistake smiling fajitas for a movie set.

Some residents, however, are angry at the specter of Hollywood playing a return engagement.

"People are getting away from it all," said Danny Sall, who has lived in Pioneertown all his life and is believed to be the first person here on his own.

"I'm out here on 100 acres, no one within a quarter of a mile from me, and I'm getting away from it all," said Sall. "When they filmed at the house across the road, they lit up the hills, they lit up the mountains, they lit up the sky like a Kmart parking lot for three weeks."

Other residents, like John and



Eric Keeler, who has lived in Pioneertown for 12 years, sits on the porch of his house. "The people are real," one resident says.

Carolyn Ristatos, are bringing the movie back to Pioneertown as nothing less than reclaiming a priceless heritage.

Last year, the Ristatos bought Hayden Ranch, a landmark property once owned by Lucky Hayden, Hopalong Cassidy's sidekick. The 37-acre ranch includes a reproduction of the Texas town where the television series "Judge Roy Bean" was set and an authentic 1880s railroad saloon car.

"This is history, we have to do it," said Ristatos, who will lead a movie visit to the ranch and lead a rodeo poster that John and Rina have made, leaving only a few readable manager names.

Hon Young, 67, is the owner of Pioneer Bowl, where everyone in town can, and does, tell you that Roy Rogers was the first person to roll a ball down the lanes. Young said he is sitting out the dispute between his neighbors and customers.

After all, it's not like Spielberg has come riding into town. "They've been talking about bringing the movies back to Pioneertown on and off for years," Young said. "You would think if the movies were coming back they

would have been by now."

The movie town began to go bust in the late 1950s, as Los Angeles housing boom brought real estate agents heading back of clients to Pioneertown to buy home sites.

Rogers and other early investors led at developers taking advantage of the western town into subdivisions of California ranch-style homes. The developers, however, eventually were fouled by a story line as much a part of California history as the movies—to access to the water.

Pioneertown grew quiet. And aside from the occasional film crew creaking up dust over the years, it has largely stayed that way.

There is no store, no gas station, not a single ATM. But there is the bowling alley, a motel where Gene Autry used to play cards in Room 9.

Obituaries on B11.

and, of course, Peggy and Harriet's Pioneertown Plaza, probably the only henky-look in the middle of nowhere to regularly pop up in pictures in Rolling Stone magazine.

Rock singer Sheryl Crow shot one of her videos in Pioneertown. The alternative group Cracker is planning to use it as a location for their next video.

Cracker's platinum record hangs on the wall over the stage at Peggy and Harriet's. The group recorded it down the street at the barn-turned-stage, and the club's owner, Harriet Allen, sang backup vocals on a couple of tracks as the cooked band members danced every night.

Even as townwide struggle over whether to encourage the entertainment industry to film here, no entertainment figures regularly show up to relax and lay low. Singers Eric

Burdon, Eddie Vedder, Donavan and even Eddie Vedder, Donavan have appeared on Peggy and Harriet's well-worn stage, as well as every resident who ever had a hankering to play guitar or sing.

The funny thing is that even in every resident who ever had a hankering to play guitar or sing, said Adam Edwards, 33, a local whose chiefed features have Harriet introducing him as Pioneertown's Brad Pitt.

"With Southern California filling up so much, a person wants to hide away, far from civilization, the High Desert may be the only place left to go," he said. "Sooner or later, every-one passes through. Musicians, artists, writers. We get them all."

On a recent Sunday evening, Jim Kusler, who writes screenplays for country singers George Strait and Vince Gill and recently released

his own album, stopped by the club. Someone handed him a guitar and Laurendeau was soon on stage rocking the house in a bar 45 miles from the nearest record store.

"It's a great, come irony that this place was supposed to be history, a relic. But when you come here, it's the greatest, never!" Laurendeau said later, ordering a round of beers. "The people are real."

Harriet Allen agreed. She has been running the club alone for the past four years since 76-year-old Peggy died. (He never fully recovered from a split of a wild young two years earlier.)

She said bringing back the gita can add a little fun to a place that is as down-home as it gets. "It may have started out pre-tend, but that's not how it's the real place I know."



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Call 1-800-819-1111 to see if you qualify.

OBITUARIES/FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Funeral Announcements

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 ANGLADE, Joseph ...

Funeral Announcements

CHESSEN, Pats

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Funeral Announcements

FACTON, James

FACTON, James ...
 FELTON, Mildred ...

Funeral Announcements

GARCIA, Maria

GARCIA, Maria ...
 GARDNER, William ...

Funeral Announcements

JACOBSON, Marvin

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Funeral Announcements

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