

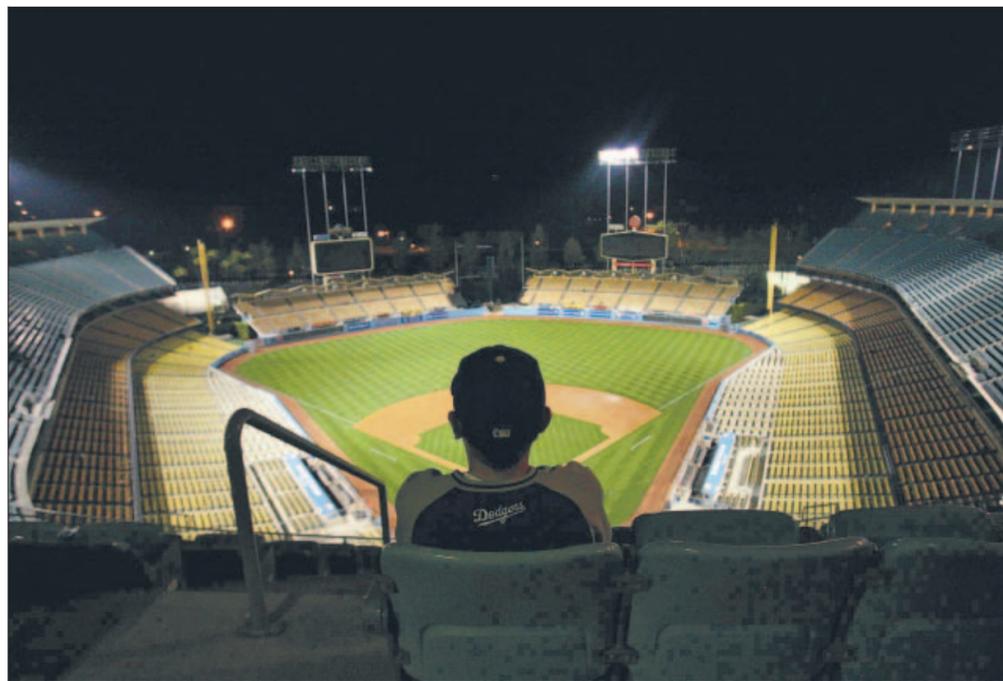
Sunday

# Los Angeles Times

\$2.00 DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER 130 PAGES © 2012 WST

SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 2012

latimes.com



Photographs by ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

**AFTER THE FREEWAY SERIES** game against the Angels, Manny Martinez Jr., 13, of Fresno stays late to soak up the experience. Workers had to get Dodger Stadium ready for a noon start the next day.

## DODGER STADIUM AT 50

# AN ALL-NIGHT GAME

That's when the action starts at Chavez Ravine, with seats to be hosed down, uniforms to be washed and a field to be groomed.

By DAVID WHARTON

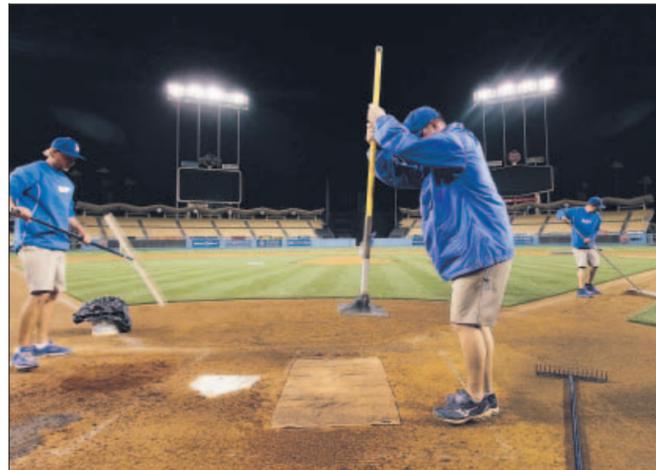
The game ran late, as night games sometimes do, so it was nearly 11 p.m. when the Dodgers finally cleared out of their locker room.

With the final players heading for home, clubhouse attendants began gathering crumpled uniforms in a cart. They started two big washing machines going in a room beside the showers.

"A lot of laundry to do," said Alex Torres, an assistant clubhouse manager. "We'll be here all night."

This is the part of Dodger Stadium that fans don't see.

After the last out is recorded on the field, after the parking lots empty and the lights dim, a new kind of competition begins. Hundreds of workers scramble around the place, racing to [See Stadium, A14]



**GROUNDKEEPERS** Scott Lutold, left, Leo Figueroa, center, and Dan Gonzales work on the area around home plate.

# Judging Obama on faith

Few presidents have spoken so eloquently, or faced such hostility, about religious issues.

By MITCHELL LANDSBERG

President Obama stood before an audience of distinguished Christian clergy and lay leaders and took on the mantle of pastor in chief.

"I have to be careful," he joked at the White House's annual Easter prayer breakfast. "I am not going to stand up here and give a sermon. It's always a bad idea to give a sermon in front of professionals."

With that, he gave a sermon, telling the story of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane and his eventual crucifixion, a sacrifice that "puts in perspective our small problems relative to the big problems he was dealing with."

Few presidents have spoken about their religious faith as often, as deeply or as eloquently as Obama. "We worship an awesome God in the blue states," he declared at the 2004 Democratic convention, and he has sought since then to rebuild ties between the Democratic Party and the world of faith.

Yet no president has faced such sustained hostility over issues of faith, including Republican charges that he is waging a "war on religion," widespread suspicion about the sincerity of his Christian faith, and the persistent legend that he is a [See Obama, A18]

# On a mission to change school district's culture

In LAUSD chief, some see a dynamo driven to help kids. Others see a taskmaster intolerant of dissent.

By TERESA WATANABE AND HOWARD BLUME

It's 7:30 a.m. and the chief of the Los Angeles Unified School District briskly launches a powwow on the sensitive topic of how to place the strongest math teachers with the weakest students.

Supt. John Deasy leads two dozen administrators through statistics showing where the district's most effective algebra instructors teach. They brainstorm incentives to get principals and teachers to buy into the plan, aimed at raising abysmal scores on state math tests. Some may believe it a waste to put their best with the worst, one administrator cautions, but Dea-

sy's response is quick and characteristically blunt:

"You really shouldn't teach in LAUSD if you believe that," he says.

He pledges to act on the issue, asks the administrators for similar commitments and reminds them of their pace: "as many things as fast as possible." He adjourns at 9:29 a.m. — one minute early. Then on to the rest of his 20-hour day.

Nearly a year after Deasy, 51, took over as head of the nation's second-largest school district, it is too soon to judge him on his own performance targets — boosting student test scores, for instance.

But Deasy is pushing to change the culture of a behemoth school system [See Deasy, A12]



BOB CHAMBERLIN Los Angeles Times

**EATING BREAKFAST** at Figueroa Elementary School, L.A. Unified Supt. John Deasy jokes with Christopher Palma-Cruz, right, and Luisa Garcia. Putting kids first requires "professional courage," Deasy says.

# A medicated military faces side effects

As more active-duty troops take stimulants, antidepressants and other drugs, experts suspect a link to aberrant behavior.

By KIM MURPHY

SEATTLE — U.S. Air Force pilot Patrick Burke's day started in the cockpit of a B-1 bomber near the Persian Gulf and proceeded across nine time zones as he ferried the aircraft home to South Dakota.

Every four hours during the 19-hour flight, Burke swallowed a tablet of Dexedrine, the prescribed amphetamine known as "go pills." After landing, he went out for dinner and drinks with a fellow crewman. They were driving back to Ellsworth Air Force Base when Burke began striking his friend in the head.

"Jack Bauer told me this was going to happen — you guys are trying to kidnap me!" he yelled, as if he were a character in the TV show "24."

When the woman giving them a lift pulled the car over, Burke leaped on her and wrestled her to the ground. "Me and my platoon are looking for terrorists," he told her before grabbing her keys, driving away and crashing into a guardrail.

Burke was charged with auto theft, drunk driving and two counts of assault. But in October, a court-martial judge found the young lieutenant not guilty "by reason of lack of mental responsibility" — the almost unprecedented equivalent, at least in modern-day military courts, of an insanity acquittal.

Four military psychiatrists concluded that Burke suffered from "polysubstance-induced delirium" brought on by alcohol, lack [See Medications, A13]

# Trees not taking hold in burn area

Pine and fir seedlings haven't fared well on land scorched clean by 2009's Station fire.

By LOUIS SAHAGUN

Federal forester Steve Bear stood on a fire-stripped slope of the San Gabriel Mountains last week, trying to find just one pine sapling, any sapling, pushing through the bright green bedspread of vegetation.

It would give him hope after a year of disappointment.

Last April, U.S. Forest Service crews planted nearly a million pine and fir trees to try to reclaim land scorched clean by the devastating Station fire. Most of them shriveled up and died within months, as skeptics had predicted.

"That's too bad," said Bear, resource officer for the service's Los Angeles River Ranger District, shaking his head in disappointment. "When we planted seedlings, conditions were ideal in terms of soil composition and temperature, rainfall and weather trends. Then the ground dried out and there just wasn't enough



ALLEN J. SCHABEN L.A. Times

**STEVE BEAR** of the U.S. Forest Service surveys where Ponderosa pine seedlings were planted at Barley Flats.

moisture after we planted."

Foresters estimate that just a quarter of the 900,000 seedlings planted across 4,300 acres are thriving. That is far below the 75% to 80% survival rate the agency wanted.

On most slopes, instead [See Reforestation, A16]

## Kinkadee 'lived life to the fullest'

The painter's reality was less serene than his art. CALIFORNIA, A25

## Mutual funds

What will happen if baby boomers bail out of stocks? BUSINESS, B1

## About 'Girls'

Lena Dunham discusses her new HBO dramedy. CALENDAR, D1

Complete Index ..... A2

## Weather:

Mostly sunny. L.A. Basin: 75/53. A32

## TODAY'S SECTIONS

California, Business, Sports, Calendar, Arts & Books, Travel, Image

Printed with soy inks on partially recycled paper.



7 85944 10200 2



## CULINARY EGG HUNT TRAVEL



## FLASH AT COACHELLA IMAGE