

LATEXTRA

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GINA FERRAZZI Los Angeles Times

OUTRAGE: Carmen Bella, 76, a Bell resident for 33 years, yells in anger at city leaders after a scheduled council meeting Thursday was canceled because of a lack of a quorum. Residents had packed the chambers.

Bell on brink of insolvency

City administrator's report paints an even more dire financial picture than expected.

JEFF GOTTLIEB
AND RUBEN VIVES

As the Bell City Council prepared to debate drastic budget cuts Thursday night to stave off bankruptcy, the city's top administrator said its finances were even more desperate than suspected and were worsening because of extraordinary legal bills

and other costs facing the scandal-scarred city.

"The city has reached a financial crossroad," wrote Pedro Carrillo, Bell's interim chief administrative officer. "While the recommendations set forth in this report require difficult decisions to be made, without these actions, the city will likely be forced into insolvency."

A county audit released earlier this month said the city would face a \$2.16-million deficit at the end of the fiscal year in June. Carrillo's report, however, said the figure could more than double because of one-time costs,

including legal bills stemming from the salary scandal that has enveloped the city.

Residents said they found it maddening that the tough financial choices might be left to council members who are facing felony misappropriation charges that essentially blame them for Bell's financial mess.

But the council meeting was abruptly canceled when Mayor Oscar Hernandez and Councilwoman Teresa Jacobo failed to appear. Jacobo had been taken to a hospital and Hernandez

called in sick, according to Councilman Lorenzo Velez.

"It's disgusting," said Ulisses Bella, one of dozens of residents who had filled the council chambers to capacity in anticipation of the meeting. "Maybe they're scared to make tough decisions."

In effect, the city has not had a City Council meeting since November. Jacobo and Hernandez walked out of December's meeting amid jeers from angry residents.

In his report, Carrillo outlined drastic options that include reducing retire- [See Finances, AA7]

School cop faked story, LAPD says

Report of officer shot by an attacker forced massive lockdown of Valley campuses.

JOEL RUBIN
AND ANDREW BLANKSTEIN

A Los Angeles school police officer who said he was shot by an attacker last week, prompting a manhunt that shut down a large swath of Woodland Hills, has been arrested on suspicion of concocting the story, authorities said Thursday night.

The startling revelation came at a hastily called news conference by Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck, who said detectives became suspicious about the officer's story as they investigated the case.

A terse Beck said Los Angeles School Police Department Officer Jeff Stenroos had been booked on a felony charge of filing a false police report. He declined to elaborate further on the case, which the head of the Los Angeles Police Protective League called an "embarrassment to law enforcement."

Police had said Stenroos was shot in the chest Jan. 19 after he confronted a man who was attempting to break into vehicles near the eastern boundary of the El Camino Real High School

campus. Stenroos' bullet-proof vest absorbed the impact of a single gunshot, which Los Angeles Police Department officials said could easily have killed the officer.

The incident sparked a massive police response that inconvenienced thousands of people for the day as officers blocked roads, locked down schools and refused to let people in or out [See Officer, AA5]

EMANUEL STAYS ON CHICAGO BALLOT

Illinois justices say he meets residency requirements for his mayoral candidacy.

JEFF COEN
AND BOB SECTER
REPORTING FROM CHICAGO

Rahm Emanuel can run for Chicago mayor, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled Thursday, deeming him a city resident even though he spent 2009 and much of 2010 in Washington as White House chief of staff.

The court's emphatic and unanimous decision came with little time to spare; early voting begins Monday for the Feb. 22 city election.

Within minutes of the ruling, Emanuel was shaking hands with voters, taking a congratulatory call from President Obama, and striving to recapture the aura of invincibility he had worked hard to project until an appellate court ruling Monday threatened to boot him off the ballot.

"The voters deserved the right to make the choice of who should be mayor," Emanuel said after slapping backs and shaking hands with commuters at an elevated train stop near his downtown headquarters.

"The nice part was to be able to tell the news to [See Emanuel, AA5]

Caretaker denies abusing survivor of Pearl Harbor

Arnold Bauer was found disoriented, living in filth. Aide's bail set at \$1 million.

TONY PERRY
REPORTING FROM SAN DIEGO

A 93-year-old Pearl Harbor survivor and suspected victim of elder abuse was found disoriented, dehydrated and living in filth at his home near El Cajon this week, clutching his prized possession: a picture of the ship that he was serving on the day of the Japanese attack.

Arnold V. Bauer, suffering from dementia and pros-



PARKS STEPHENSON

VETERAN: Arnold V. Bauer was found holding a photo of the ship he served on at Pearl Harbor.

tate cancer, was taken to the Veterans Affairs hospital in San Diego, authorities said.

Bauer's caretaker for the last three years, Milagros Angeles, 63, pleaded not

guilty Thursday to four felony counts of elder abuse, theft, forgery and false imprisonment. A judge set her bail at \$1 million. The prose- [See Abuse, AA7]



JAMES KRIEGSMANN Michael Ochs Archives

SINGER WITH SOUL

Gladys Horton, left, known for her gritty, soulful vocals as part of the Motown group the Marvelettes, has died at 65. **AA6**

Alcala charges

N.Y. grand jury indicts killer in deaths of two women in the 1970s. **AA4**

Rail board probe

A state commission clears members of ethics violations. **AA3**

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L.A. Catholic schools to extend their year

MITCHELL LANDSBERG

As public school students in Los Angeles adjust to a shorter academic year, Catholic school pupils face a different sort of transition. Beginning this fall, most elementary schools in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles will add 20

days to their schedules, making their school year one of the longest in the United States.

In announcing the expansion to a 200-day calendar, Cardinal Roger Mahony insisted Thursday that the archdiocese was not trying to gain a competitive advantage over the Los Angeles Unified School District,

which has cut its school year to 175 days this year. He said the Catholic schools, which serve 52,000 elementary and middle school children in three counties, were simply trying to step up their performance to ensure that students would become globally competitive.

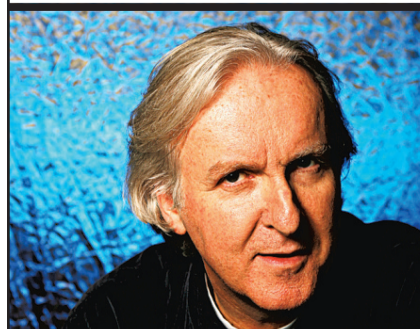
"We're not in competition with LAUSD, nor is this

aimed at LAUSD," the cardinal said during a news conference at Nativity School in South Los Angeles. "What we're trying to do is focus on the group that we're entrusted with, and we believe that more time in the classroom is beneficial to the students."

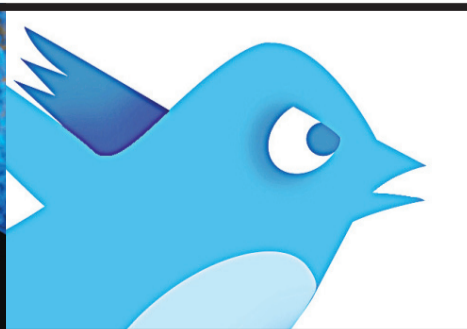
National studies have [See Calendar, AA5]

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James Cameron's 'small' 3-D movie.



BUSINESS
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TRAVEL
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\$550 in coupon savings.

Sunday
Los Angeles Times