



COMING MONDAY
Newly approved treatment for severe depression

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Junk food just too plentiful

Obesity growing

By KATHLEEN HORN
The Washington Post

It's not only in the United States that the food kids eat at school has been associated with obesity. Earlier this fall, Greenpeace activists paraded in front of Mexico's education headquarters to protest the sale of junk food in public schools. In the past decade, the number of overweight children in Mexico has risen by 8 percent, contributing to the obesity epidemic in a country where nearly half of its 110 million people are already considered too heavy.

It seems like common sense to offer kids healthy alternatives, but with the global rise in food costs, that goal is becoming more difficult to implement. The stagnant economy is forcing some U.S. school districts to re-evaluate their lunch programs, with some raising prices and offering fewer meal choices, according to the School Nutrition Association.



VALLEY VIEWS
Dave Nordstrand

A nice laugh, please!

How to put my feelings about the new film, "Role Models" so that they'll be appropriate for a family newspaper?

Maybe by borrowing this metaphor, prompted by my rural Nebraska background:

"This is a film that has all the charm of feedlot droppings and smells as sweet."

Thankfully, America remains a free country, and you can still walk out of a bad movie without penalty and even get a refund before stepping into the fresh night air.

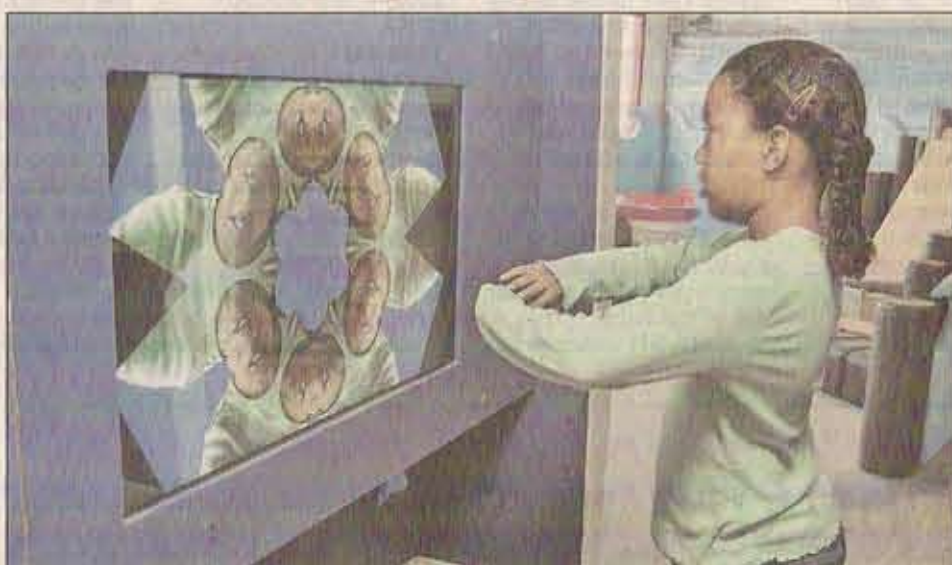
That's what I did. This, by the way, is not a movie review. Rather it's an observation brought on by seeing "Role Models."

Much as I do notice signs of hope in the current state of the nation, I'm a confirmed pessimist when it comes to the state of popular culture, with "Role Models" only a recent example of another new low.

The film stars Paul Rudd and Sean William Scott.

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people & places



MY Museum



gets elbow room



PROVIDED PHOTOS

Shariah Kamnikar, top photo, 10, of Salinas plays at MY Museum — The Monterey County Youth Museum. In the middle, Monterey County youngsters work on a contraption at MY Museum. In the bottom photo, Gavin Lepai, 3, of Salinas, Kacey Konya, 7, of Pacific Grove, Hunter Schaub, 10, of Monterey and Kylie Lemaire, 10, of Monterey get mobile.

Expanded learning facility reopens today

By DAVE NORDSTRAND
The Salinas Californian

Childhood curiosity and creativity have, beginning today, a vastly expanded range in which to roam.

Young visitors to the relocated, \$3 million MY Museum, now at 425 Washington St. in Monterey, will find it has vastly expanded its offerings. The venue is geared to children ages 12 and under.

"With over 300 children's museums throughout the country, we feel we've designed one that will stand up with the best," said Lauren Cohen, executive director.

Triple its original size, the 8,500-square-foot museum features eight galleries and 50 exhibits highlighting the Monterey Bay area.

One exhibit, for example, explores a bit about the science and nature of the Big Sur coast.

Another focuses on agriculture. Using simple con-

IF YOU GO

■ **WHAT:** The new, expanded version of MY Museum — the Monterey County Youth Museum — opens today.

■ **WHERE:** 425 Washington St., Monterey.

■ **HOURS:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. The museum is closed Wednesdays.

■ **COST:** Admission for the entire day is \$7 per person for those age 2 and older.

■ **INFORMATION:** Call 649-6444.

cepts, it shows children how broccoli, lettuce and other foods from the fields are produced.

A tractor sits in that exhibit, which contains a farmers market and a restaurant. Children can pretend to cook a pizza.

"Kids see how produce is picked and brought to market and sold to a family and how it ends up on the dinner table," Cohen said.

She calls MY Museum — an acronym for Monterey County Youth Museum — "a playground for the mind."

"The idea is to provide an environment where curiosity and creativity flourish, while children and adults learn together through experience," the Web site says.

That means employing the senses in learning, Cohen said. Lots of hands-on activity, in other words.

"As opposed to

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Comedy evening set today in Carmel

The Junior League of Monterey County is hosting an evening of comedy featuring celebrities from

ink

Entertainment. Real People. Life.

NBC's "Last Comic Standing," Comedians ANT, Kristin Key

and Dat Phan are the featured performers.

■ **What:** Evening of comedy

■ **When:** Reception, 6 p.m. Saturday, comedy at 8 p.m.

■ **Where:** Sunset Center, Carmel

■ **Cost:** \$85

■ **Information:** 831-620-2048, www.sunsetcenter.org

For more things to do, pick up Thursday's INK magazine in The Salinas Californian.

celebs

Compiled from wire reports

LOS ANGELES

Jackson gives up title to Neverland ranch

Michael Jackson has given up title to his Neverland ranch, transferring the deed to a company he partly controls.

The singer filed a grant deed on the ranch Monday that makes the new owner an entity called the Sycamore Valley Ranch Co. LLC, Tom Pearson of the Santa Barbara County clerk-recorder's office said Wednesday.

Sycamore Valley Ranch Co. is a joint venture between Jackson and an affiliate of Colony Capital LLC, according to a person with knowledge of the transaction who was not authorized to speak on the record and requested anonymity.

The person could not say what would become of the 2,500-acre property in the bucolic, oak-studded hills of Santa Barbara County's wine country, 120 miles northwest of Los Angeles.

A call to an attorney for Jackson, L. Londell McMillan, was not immediately returned Wednesday.

Jackson had gone into default on the \$24.5 million he owes on the property and had faced foreclosure before Colony Capital bailed him out earlier this year by purchasing his loan.

Pearson said the deed did not indicate who owns Sycamore.

A listing on the California secretary of state's Web site says the company filed with the state in June. It does not identify its owners, but the company has the same Century City address as Colony Capital LLC.



Michael Jackson

MUSEUM/ Opens today

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just opening a textbook," she said.

"We encompass all types of learning. We keep the kids moving, too. There's a crank, for example, and they have to move things."

MY Museum first opened in 1997 as a Junior League project.

For six years, it sat tucked away at 601 Wave St. near Cannery Row. While it drew families, it lacked many functional basics such as stroller

access or even a restroom.

Other exhibits in the new venue include "Build a House," which is a 6-foot-square framework which the children must complete.

Children approach the task in different ways.

Some organize others to fix the pipes. Others use Styrofoam bricks and other materials to complete the house.

In the museum theater, costumes, a ticket booth, sound effects and other real-life components of

production are available, and children can stage their own plays.

Whatever the exhibit, children proceed at their own pace.

Cohen expects half the visitors to the museum to be from Monterey County and half to be tourists.

"We've all been waiting a long time for this (new museum)," Cohen said. "People will think it's well worth it."

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