

YESTERDAY'S CLOSING: DOW 12,263.58 ▼117.53 NASDAQ 2,744.79 ▼26.72 S&P 500 1,314.16 ▼10.30 OIL 106.25 ▼3.67 GOLD 1,452.90 ▼14.50

HOT OFF THE TICKER

Franchisee's IPO could near \$1 billion

McDonald Corp.'s biggest franchisee, Argentina-based Arcos Dorados Holdings Inc., is expected to go public this week in an offering whose value could approach \$1 billion, the latest sign that the market for IPOs is heating up. It's the latest piece of expansion news for Arcos, which operates 1,755 McDonald's restaurants in 19 countries and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Derivative traders to dodge requirements

Companies that trade derivatives solely to guard against volatile price swings won't have to meet new federal collateral requirements. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission advanced the exemption Tuesday for derivatives, investments whose value depends on the future price of some other investment. The rules require banks and businesses that trade them to put up millions of dollars to cover their losses.

Cisco to jettison Flip camcorder business

Cisco Systems Inc. said Tuesday it is killing the Flip Video, the most popular video camera in the U.S., just two years after it bought the startup that created it. Cisco didn't explain why it's shutting down the Flip Video unit rather than selling it. After several quarters of weak results and challenges in its core business, Cisco is reversing years of efforts at diversifying into consumer products.

MONEY WISE

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GOT NEWS? WE WANT IT

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ONLINE FROM WALL STREET TO MAIN STREET, KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST ECONOMIC HEADLINES

Spending cuts not likely to dent \$1.5T deficit

By Martin Crutsinger
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The \$38 billion in spending cuts agreed to last week won't prevent this year's budget deficit from setting another record high, estimated at \$1.5 trillion.

Most of the agreed-to spending cuts either affect future budgets or amount to accounting gimmicks that won't reduce actual spending.

The Treasury Department reported Tuesday that the deficit already totals \$829.4 billion through the first six months of the budget year — a figure that until 2009 would have been the biggest ever for an entire year. For March alone, the government ran a deficit of \$188 billion. President Barack Obama and congressional Republicans averted a government shutdown last week by agreeing to the largest-ever

spending cuts for a single year. But David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York, said those cuts amount to a "rounding error" in this year's deficit.

The cuts include unspent money from the 2010 census, which is completed, and \$2.5 billion from the most recent repeal of highway programs that can't be spent because of restrictions set by other legislation. They also include \$3.5 billion in

unused bonuses for states that enroll more children in a health care program for lower-income families.

Wyss expects the deficit will surpass the record of \$1.41 trillion hit in 2009. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office raised its estimate earlier this year from \$1.1 trillion to \$1.5 trillion. A tax-cut package negotiated in December by Obama and Republicans, which includes a one-year reduction in

the Social Security payroll tax, prompted the CBO to raise its estimate.

The ballooning deficit is certain to give Republicans leverage in future spending debates, starting with the upcoming vote to raise the government's borrowing authority above \$14.3 trillion.

The Treasury has told Congress that it must vote to raise the debt limit by summer.

Without an increase, the gov-

ernment would not be able to meet its current debt payments, resulting in an unprecedented default on its debt.

Republicans hope to use vote on the debt limit to force Obama to accept long-term deficit-reduction measures. A big fight looms over the 2012 budget, which will center on House Republicans' plan to cut \$5.8 trillion over 10 years by making sweeping changes to Medicare and Medicaid.

THE LOCAL BUZZ

PASADENA Jacobs building earns LEED status

Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. announced Tuesday that the 6.5-megawatt cogeneration facility it designed and built for Oregon State University has been awarded the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification.

This rating is the highest achievable level of LEED certification by the U.S. Green Building Council, making the OSU Energy Center the nation's first LEED Platinum power plant, as well as the first on-campus LEED Platinum building.

INDUSTRY Economic outlook event to be held

An Economic Outlook Breakfast will be held from 8 to 10:30 a.m. April 28 at Pacific Palms Resort, at One Industry Hills Parkway, Industry.

The event will feature Ed Roski, chairman and CEO of Majestic Realty Co.; Nancy Sidhu, chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.; and Chris Thornberg, a founding principal with Beacon Economics.

The event, sponsored by the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, is designed to give local business and community leaders a resource to gauge current and future economic trends.

The cost is \$75 for partnership members and \$85 for non-members. For more information, call Mike Shay at 626-856-3400 or e-mail MShay@valleyconnect.com.

NATION Oil prices tumble on Tuesday

Oil dropped to the lowest level this month on Tuesday as energy experts said the world will remain flush with surplus oil this year despite the loss of Libya's exports and increased demand from Japan.

Benchmark West Texas Intermediate crude for May delivery gave up \$3.67, or 3 percent, to settle at \$106.25 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

From staff and wire reports

LOCAL STOCKS

Company Name	Price	Change(%)
AEROVIRONMENT	28.53	+0.22 (0.78%)
AMERICAN STATES	34.33	-0.92 (2.61%)
AMERIGON	13.32	-0.16 (1.19%)
AMERON INT	66.48	-1.14 (1.69%)
AVERY DENNISON	41.30	-0.64 (1.53%)
BREITBURN ENERGY	20.82	-0.23 (1.09%)
CON-WAY, Inc.	37.83	+0.17 (0.45%)
EAST-WEST BANK	22.34	-0.12 (0.56%)
EDISON INT	37.92	+1.13 (3.07%)
FRIENDLY HILLS BANK	4.05	0.00 (0.00%)
HOT TOPIC	6.01	+0.01 (0.17%)
JACOBS ENGINEERING	48.32	-1.36 (2.74%)
SPORT CHALET-B	2.25	0.00 (0.00%)
STAAR SURGICAL	5.05	-0.03 (0.59%)
TETRA TECH	23.78	-0.56 (2.30%)
WESCO FINANCIAL	390.49	-1.51 (0.39%)

Clean and green Pasadena franchise offers non-toxic service

By Erick Galindo Staff Writer

PASADENA — Los Angeles County residents want more than a clean house from a maid service — they want a clean, healthy and green home, said Peter Lowin.

"Maid Brigade is the first and only maid service to make a system-wide commitment to green cleaning for the health of our customers and our maids," Lowin said.

He owns and operates a Maid Brigade (pasadena.maidbrigade.com) franchise in Pasadena, covering homeowners there and in Glendale, Burbank, La Cañada Flintridge, Altadena, Arcadia, South Pasadena, Sierra Madre, Monrovia, Eagle Rock, San Marino and La Crescenta.

According to Lowin, the company is very committed to green cleaning by putting money and manpower into more efficient technology and education for franchise owners.

"This not something we just use as advertising," he said. "We take the commitment seriously and are constantly developing our system."

It's all part of the company's dedication to its customers, he said. In fact, it was that commitment that got Lowin to purchase a Maid Brigade Franchise five years ago.

"I was looking for another business endeavor when I started to research the company," Lowin said. "The more I met people with the company and the more I researched, it fit more with what I wanted to do."

Maid Brigade switched to green cleaning three years ago and customers began to notice right away, Lowin said.

"Lots of clients have small children, and they like the fact that our cleaning solutions are not toxic," he said.

Maid Brigade franchises use non-toxic, green-certified chemicals and microfiber cloths and mops to remove more dust, dirt and germs with fewer cleaning products.

Most chemicals in traditional



Courtesy photo

Peter Lowin owns the Pasadena franchise of Maid Brigade, a company that is committed to green cleaning using non-toxic, green-certified chemicals.

housecleaning products are not only hazardous to the environment, but have also been linked to various health problems, according to Lowin.

Lowin's company uses a green-clean certified service to protect customers from cleaning chemicals that are known or suspected asthma and allergy triggers.

"Even my own workers, when we switched to green products, stopped complaining about allergies," he said. "We used to think it was the dust, but it appears to have been the chemicals."

All Maid Brigade products are approved by Green Seal "to be safer for humans, pets and the environment while still being effective." Green Seal-certified products contain no carcinogens or toxins and are formulated and

packaged for reduced environmental impact.

"We thoroughly test our green maid service products and procedures to ensure we provide the healthiest, most effective green housecleaning service available," Lowin said.

The company also uses vacuums, approved through the Carpet & Rug Institute's Green Label program, that are proven to leave three times fewer particles in the air compared with other maid services. Lowin's own commitment to the environment extends to his other Pasadena Laundry business at 2585 E. Colorado Ave.

"It's also a green facility," he said. "It's a very water-efficient and energy-efficient business that I built from the ground up."

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Test drives to benefit high school

By Kevin Smith Staff Writer

SAN GABRIEL — Shopping for a new Ford? If you go to San Gabriel High School this Saturday you'll have plenty of models to try out.

And for every person who test-drives a Ford Explorer, Fiesta, Edge, F-150, Flex, Fusion, Mustang or other model, Ford Motor Co. will donate \$20 to San Gabriel High School to help support student activities impacted by recent budget cuts.

Bob Wondries Ford in Alhambra and San Gabriel High School have partnered to help raise up to \$6,000 as part of Ford's "Drive One 4 UR School" program. To date, the program has contributed more than \$5 million to support high school extracurricular activities nationwide.

"We did this six months ago at Alhambra High School and they used the money to put up a new scoreboard for their athletic division," said Charles Ma, Wondries' sales manager. "Our intention is to help the local community but it's also a little outside prospecting for us. It lets people know we're around and we get to show our products."

Ma said the dealership will have about 20 vehicles on hand for Saturday's event, which runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

San Gabriel High School is located at 801 S. Ramona St., in San Gabriel, and the event will take place in the school's south parking lot.

Beda Ramirez, a guidance technician with the Alhambra Unified School District, said the PTSA (Parent Teacher Student Association) is helping to coordinate the event. And the money, she said, will be put to good use.

"The money could be used in a lot of places — you'd be surprised," Ramirez said. "Some of it could go to the band for uniforms, and sometimes they take the instruments in for fine-tuning."

Other portions of the funds will likely go to the drama club and choir and for computers and laptops in some of the school's classrooms, she said.

"Some of the money could also be used for buses for field trips because that can be \$400 to \$500," Ramirez said. "I think what Wondries is doing is awesome, and I want to talk to them when they get here to see if Ford could give us a scholarship. We would only want about \$300 to \$400."

To take a test drive, participants must be 18 or older and have a valid driver's license.

For more information about Saturday's test-drive event, call 866-377-1824.

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Organizations work to divert batteries from landfills

IT is seemingly impossible to hear a news report these days that doesn't include a story about people not working together to solve problems.

The Democrats and the Republicans aren't working together, labor unions and conservatives aren't speaking and Nevada apparently is trying to steal all of California's businesses.

Here in the San Gabriel Valley things are different. Bucking the trend, the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) brought together local governments, San Gabriel Valley businesses and battery producers to solve an environmental problem.

Too much stuff goes into our landfills that should not be put there. Some of the most damaging items are household batteries. Everyone knows batteries harm our groundwater if landfilled, but there has been no clear answer as to who



CYNTHIA KURTZ

should be responsible for providing the recycling services — government, the producers ... retailers? However, they worked together and developed a solution that works for everyone. And in this case, the big winner is the customer.

Businesses from El Monte to Claremont and La Cañada Flintridge to Baldwin Park are launching a battery-recycling program. To date, 34 businesses have signed on as free collection sites. You just drop off your battery and the battery producers will cover the cost for shipping and disposal.

I am not trying to cast any blame

on you, dear readers, but if you are like me, there is a box of old batteries in your garage waiting for a convenient roundup event so you can properly dispose of them. There aren't that many roundups and, unfortunately, I always find out about them the day after they conclude.

But now there is no excuse. These 34 businesses are open almost every day and we all live or work near many of them.

A kickoff celebration is planned for April 21 at 10 a.m. at one of the participating businesses, DigiTech Camera Repair at 447 W. Foothill Blvd. in Monrovia. Everyone is invited and it's no coincidence that the program begins the day before Earth Day, 2011.

To find a participating business near you, log on to www.sgvco.org/batteryrecycling.

Congratulations and thanks to Nick Conway, SGVCOG's executive

director, and Heidi Sanborn, executive director for the California Products Stewardship Council, for bringing everyone together.

Another April 21 event you won't want to miss is the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership's Legislative Networking Reception, which will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Huntington Library in San Marino. Come and talk with the Valley's elected officials and visit the new exhibit, "Taxing Visions — Financial Episodes in Late Nineteenth-Century American Art."

The Huntington is one of our Valley treasures, and the exhibit just may provide some perspective on the harsh economic times we find ourselves in today. For more details and to register, visit <http://2011NR.eventbrite.com>.

Cynthia Kurtz is the president and CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership. She can be reached at www.facebook.com/SGVEP.