

YESTERDAY'S CLOSING: DOW 12,505.99 ▲52.45 NASDAQ 2,820.16 ▲17.65 S&P 500 1,337.38 ▲7.02 OIL 112.29 ▲0.84 GOLD 1,503.80 ▲4.90

## HOT OFF THE TICKER

### Jury rejects Mattel's Bratz claim

A federal court jury on Thursday rejected Mattel Inc.'s claims that it owns the copyright to the blockbuster, billion-dollar Bratz dolls and instead awarded upstart rival MGA Entertainment Inc. more than \$88 million in damages for misappropriation of trade secrets. The verdict came as a staggering blow to the toy giant, which has long claimed the smaller company stole the idea for the provocative, pouty-lipped toys.

### Amazon failure takes down Internet sites

Major websites including Foursquare and Reddit crashed or suffered slowdowns Thursday after technical problems rattled Amazon.com's widely used Web servers, frustrating millions of people who couldn't access their favorite sites. Though better known for selling books, DVDs and other consumer goods, Amazon also rents out space on huge computer servers that run many websites and other online services.

### GE Q1 earnings rise 77 percent

Earnings at General Electric Co. rose 77 percent in the first quarter as its financial services business continued to rebound. But Wall Street was expecting stronger revenue from GE's industrial side and shares fell. GE, which makes everything from light bulbs to wind turbines and health care equipment, reported net income of \$3.43 billion, or 31 cents per share, for the three months ended March 31.

# MONEY WISE

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

## THE LOCAL BUZZ

### MONROVIA

### AV snags contract for \$11.5 million

AeroVironment Inc. has received a contract delivery order valued at \$11.5 million for its Puma All Environment unmanned aircraft systems, initial spares packages and training services.

The items were purchased under the United States Special Operations Command All Environment Capable Variant indefinite quantity contract. Deliveries are scheduled to be completed over the next several months.

"Puma is already making a difference in the field. Our customers cite the quality of its imagery and its overall usefulness, which they say make Puma instrumental in saving lives," said Tom Herring, AeroVironment's senior vice president and general manager of its Unmanned Aircraft Systems business segment. "We see more opportunities ahead for Puma to help our customers where and when they need it."

AV designs, produces and supports unmanned surveillance aircraft systems and quick-charge systems for electric vehicles.

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### P.F. Chang's to offer discount

On Thursday, TV-watchers will say goodbye to Michael Scott, manager of the fictitious Dunder Mifflin Scranton paper company on "The Office."

To help audiences settle in for TV night, P.F. Chang's will offer a 20 percent discount on all online orders scheduled for pickup on Thursday. The discount can be obtained by entering "SCRANTON" in the promotion code field during checkout.

### MONROVIA

### STAAR to release financial results

STAAR Surgical Co. announced Thursday that it will release financial results for the first quarter, which ended April 1, after markets close on May 3.

The company will host a conference call and webcast at 1:30 p.m. May 3 to discuss the company's first-quarter results and recent corporate developments. The dial-in number for the conference call is 877-941-2930.

From staff and wire reports

## LOCAL STOCKS

Company Name	Price	Change(%)
AEROVIRONMENT	27.61	+0.47 (2.22%)
AMERICAN STATES	34.39	-0.11 (0.32%)
AMERIGON	14.18	+0.03 (0.25%)
AMERON INT	69.85	+0.61 (0.88%)
AVERY DENNISON	41.59	-0.11 (0.26%)
BREITBURN ENERGY	21.61	+0.47 (2.22%)
CON-WAY, Inc.	38.41	+0.65 (1.72%)
EAST-WEST BANK	21.68	-0.11 (0.50%)
EDISON INT	38.62	-0.12 (0.31%)
FRIENDLY HILLS BANK	4.10	0.00 (0.00%)
HOT TOPIC	6.50	-0.06 (0.91%)
JACOBS ENGINEERING	51.35	+1.09 (2.17%)
SPORT CHALET-B	2.15	+0.07 (3.37%)
STAAR SURGICAL	4.83	+0.05 (1.05%)
TETRA TECH	23.33	+0.01 (0.04%)
WESCO FINANCIAL	390.39	+0.04 (0.01%)

# Demand continues to grow

## Leading indicators point to strengthening economy

By **Tali Arbel**  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A private research group said U.S. economic growth should strengthen by summer, but cautioned that consumer concerns over rising gas and food prices could drag on the expansion.

The Conference Board said Thursday that its index of leading economic indicators

rose 0.4 percent in March. The index, which is a measure of future economic activity, has increased for nine straight months.

Growing demand for U.S. manufactured goods and a rebound in requests for building permits helped drive last month's gains. Six of the index's 10 components rose. The index rose 1.0 percent in February, revised higher from

the initial estimate of 0.8 percent.

The leading indicators began moving sharply higher last fall, coinciding with a decline in the unemployment rate and a stock market rally.

Still, the trade group said one of the components of its index — a consumer confidence survey — tumbled to a two-year low last month. The primary reason for the decline is that many people are increasingly worried about inflation.

Consumers are spending more, but the rise in costs for basic necessities could force

them to spend less on discretionary goods. That could slow economic growth. Consumer spending accounts for 70 percent of economic activity.

Gasoline jumped 5.6 percent last month and has risen nearly 28 percent in the past year, the government reported last week. Consumers paid an average price of \$3.84 a gallon nationwide on Thursday, according to the travel group AAA. That's up \$0.30 from March and nearly \$1 from a year ago.

The government also said that retail food prices rose 0.8

percent in March, the largest increase in almost three years. Consumers paid more for fruits and vegetables, dairy products, chicken and beef.

The Conference Board, a private research group based in New York, compiles data that has mostly already been released about real estate, manufacturing, employment, consumer confidence and financial markets. It uses that data to calculate the leading indicator index. The Conference Board also includes its own estimates about manufacturers' new orders and the country's money supply.



Staff file photos

Shipping containers are loaded onto ships in the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro. A technology forum was held this week in Diamond Bar to address efforts to reduce polluting emissions that occur with the movement of goods.

# A green future

## Zero emissions envisioned in L.A., Long Beach ports

By **Wesley G. Hughes** Staff Writer

DIAMOND BAR — Within 10 to 15 years, the 17-mile 710 Freeway corridor will achieve zero emissions for freight transportation at the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports, said Bill Van Amburg, senior vice president of CALSTART.

He was one of half-dozen members of a panel on freight transportation at a zero-emission technology forum Wednesday at the Southern California Air Quality Management District. The forum brought together technology, transportation and energy experts to help define a path for meeting federal air quality standards.

Van Amburg envisioned freight that can be moved on dual-mode hybrids, which would run on battery power in the ports and on a hybrid engine outside the port area.

It's feasible with the current battery technology, he said.

But public funding for such a goal is "unlikely," said Mark Pisano, a senior fellow at USC on the panel. He said that planning decisions need to be made among the technologies. "We don't have rules," he said.

There were almost as many ways of achieving zero emissions as members of the panel.

Frank Guzzo of Siemens Mobility, a division of Siemens, which is based in Germany, wondered, "Why don't we electrify the Alameda Corridor and run all the way?" He remarked about flying into LA/Ontario Airport and seeing nothing but bare rooftops instead of the solar generating systems that could be there. Guzzo admitted solar generation is still expensive.

"(The Siemens Sacramento) plant generates 80 percent of the power it needs and on weekends it sells it back to SMUD (Sacramento Muni-



Experts envision freight that can be moved on dual-mode hybrids and run on battery power in the ports and on a hybrid engine outside the port area.

pal Utilities District)," he said. "The company has been awarded a \$466 million contract to build 70 electric locomotives for Amtrak's Northeast and Keystone Corridor lines. The locomotives will be built in Sacramento and the first will be delivered in 2013."

There are safety risks in third-rail systems, making them risky in the harbor areas and there are service risks in catenary systems that use overhead wires for support.

"A breakdown on the 710 (in a catenary system) would create chaos pretty quickly," Guzzo said.

Sam Gurol of General Atomics — who has been working for years on a maglev train from Las Vegas to Anaheim, which is now on the shelf — said maglev is not appropriate for

use in ports. But his company's new technology called Magnerail would be safe and versatile. It encases the power in concrete using a linear motor and permanent magnets to move rail bogies. It can power both railcars and rubber-tired trucks in the port area.

There is no danger of high voltage on the vehicle and it can move freight up a 10 percent grade or more, he said.

The technology is being used to power 700-ton mining trucks. The new U.S. aircraft carrier, The Gerald L. Ford, will also use Magnerail technology to launch planes, moving them "from zero to 200 miles an hour in a few seconds," Gurol said.

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# Battery recycling program under way

By **Erick Galindo** Staff Writer

MONROVIA — Most households in the San Gabriel Valley trash their batteries, despite knowing that it's not only illegal but also the wrong thing to do.

On Thursday, a day before Earth Day, a coalition of community, private and public sector leaders gathered at Digitech Camera Repair in Monrovia to kick off a valley-wide battery recycling program to combat the growing problem.

Since 2006, the State of California has banned disposal of household batteries in the trash. According to CalRecycle, more than 500 million batteries are sold in California annually, but only 0.5 percent are recycled.

Most people in the Valley would adhere to the law if recycling were more convenient, according to a 2010 study by the the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments.

A study conducted of homes here showed that 59 percent of people know that that the garbage is an improper way of disposing of batteries, which contain metals that have the potential to leak from landfills into drinking water. Despite that, only 3 percent of those surveyed properly recycled batteries.

"We found that most people would recycle if they had more information and if it were more convenient," said Heidi Sanborn, executive director of the California Product Stewardship Council. "Most people threw them in the trash because they didn't know where to recycle."

The battery recycling program will do just that, she said. Through a grant funded by the council, CalRecycle and SGVCOG, households will now be able to drop off used batteries at more than 30 local businesses.

"You just drop off your battery and the battery producers will cover the cost for shipping and disposal," said Cynthia Kurtz, president and CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership.

Residents can log on to [www.sgvocog.org/batteryrecycling](http://www.sgvocog.org/batteryrecycling) to find the nearest drop-off location. Participating businesses will also display an identifying sticker in their window and place a collection box, provided by SGVCOG, in their store where consumers can properly dispose of non-working batteries.

Proper disposal of batteries is important for many reasons, according to Sanborn.

"After a certain period of time things are going to dissolve," she said. "And these batteries contain metals, heavy metals. Landfills can leak and lead to water contamination."

She also noted that these were metals that were mined out of the ground.

"Mining not only has huge environmental impacts, but people risked their lives to get them," Sanborn said. "Why would we just throw them out?"

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