



TOP HONORS

All-area girls swimming team named / C1

NoCal ablaze

Hundreds of fires sparked by lightning / B6

PASADENA STAR-NEWS

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50¢
plus tax



WEATHER



TODAY
Partly sunny
High 83
Low 60

THURSDAY
Partly sunny
High 82
Low 63

SAN GABRIEL

Bill seeks cargo fees

Elected officials from across the San Gabriel Valley gather in a visual display of support for SB 974, a state Senate bill that would generate \$400 million a year by establishing a \$30 fee on each cargo container coming from the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. The money could be used to improve air quality and ease traffic congestion, officials say. A3

LOCAL

Bills target copper thieves

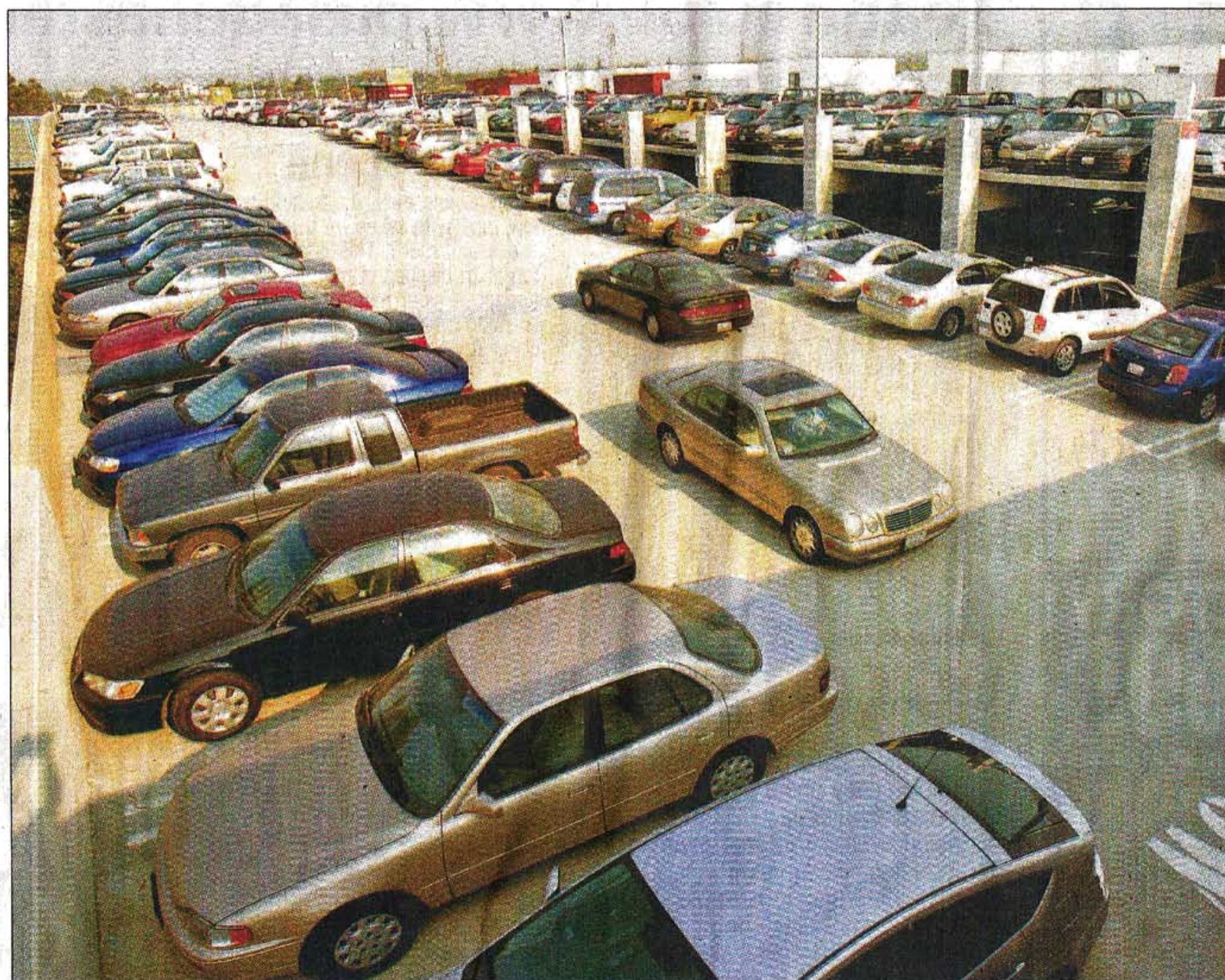
Legislative bills, including one by state Sen. Ron Calderon, D-Montebello, that targets metal thieves moved forward on Tuesday. Calderon's bill requires thumbprints of those selling copper, copper alloys, aluminum and stainless steel. Sellers must show government ID and proof of their current address. Recyclers who break the law face suspension or revocation of their business license, as well as increased fines and jail time. A4

NATION

Wireless dangers cited

Wireless microchip systems used by hospitals to keep track of equipment can cause potentially

Going for Gold



FILLED UP: Drivers search for a parking space on the fifth floor of the Sierra Madre Villa Station parking structure, the end terminus for the Gold Line. The structure is typically full by 8 a.m. on workdays, as ridership has increase by 19 percent, MTA officials said..

PHOTOS BY LEO JARZOMB / STAFF

Rail use up 19%; extension vote set

Council OKs 2009 budget

\$230 million plan increases spending

By Dan Abendschein
Staff Writer

PASADENA — Pasadena City Council members have approved a \$230 million budget that overspends general fund revenues by about \$4.2 million.

The 2009 fiscal year budget increases spending by about \$14 million over last fiscal year. Most of the increases went toward increased employee salary and benefit costs, according to acting city manager Bernard Melekian.

The budget also includes extra costs for seven new employees from last year, Melekian said.

The increased cost of fuel also contributed to the higher spending, he added.

Melekian said that he anticipated that the city would actually come close to balancing its budget over the next year.

"Our revenues usually end up being higher than we estimate and our costs usually end up being

The parties aren't over



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PARTY GODDESS

STILL KICKING: Marley Majcher's party/event planning business, The Party Goddess, is still getting lots of calls, despite a slowdown in the economy.

Pasadena event planner says business is still strong

By Kevin Smith
Staff Writer

Fuel prices are hitting record highs, homes are in foreclosure and automakers and airlines are laying off thousands of workers.

But apparently, people still want to party.

Marley Majcher, who owns an event planning business called **The Party Goddess**, says her enterprise is going strong, despite the problems many other businesses are grappling with in today's economy.

"We're doing great," said Majcher, 38, who lives in Pasadena. "The funny thing is the only place I can find where people are not doing great is on the news. But I do realize certain segments of the economy are not doing well — if you're in the home industry, you're toast."

Majcher said her clients are continuing to book parties and other events.

"We're seeing a lot of Halloween parties on the books and you'd think that would be the first thing to go," she said. "It's been the same thing with weddings — I'm amazed. For one wedding the client wanted a four-course meal with wine

tasting. Well, that's two times the rental, three times as much for the glasses and way more manpower ... but she didn't bat an eyelash."

Not everyone would agree that things are so good.

Linda Vogel, who owns another event planning business in Pasadena called **Dream Makers**, said she's experienced a slowdown during the past couple months.

"A lot of it is the gas prices," she said. "We do charge more if we're going all over. But the people I deal with — the food cart people, ride operators and performers and magicians — they all say it's down across the board."

Majcher set her sights on an event planning/catering business in 1995 and launched her company in 2000.

The Party Goddess works primarily on large events such as weddings and holiday and anniversary parties, handling everything from the food and centerpieces to the band and photographer.

In January, the business catered a gathering for rapper/record producer Snoop Dogg.

Majcher recently moved out of her 1,400-square-foot south Fair Oaks Avenue location in Pasadena to a bigger building

in Los Angeles with 4,500 square feet of space.

"The building we bought actually has 6,000 square feet," she said. "I figure with the economy the way it is, a lot of businesses like florists that used to have production space don't anymore. So were going to rent our extra space out on a daily basis for \$350 a day. That includes a parking space."

Majcher is also thinking ahead in case the economy worsens.

"My girlfriend has a business that offers an affordable way to do a Web site," she said. "She's creating a mini Web site for me for free. And in exchange she's taking photos of my space, which we'll use for training classes for the Web site business."

That Web site can be found at tpgrental.hutdogs.com. Majcher's business can be found online at www.thepartygoddess.com

Majcher also gives tips for smaller parties and can answer such questions as "How much ice per person?" or "How much wine do I need for a guest list of 50?" Her secrets, tips and tricks can be found on her blog, www.thepartygoddess.com/blog

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