

## Oak trees may face wrath of grapes

Oak trees are again at risk of being eliminated from our landscapes now that the North County supervisors have succeeded in weakening the Oak Ordinance, which so many spent so much time on in 2003.

Oak trees are not weeds, they are the centerpiece for the eco-systems of this county. Their canopy provides shade for other plant species to thrive, which supports the food chain.

The acorn, which is produced by the oak tree, has fed families, with plant protein for thousands of years. The oaks need to be protected because there may come a time when this food staple will be part of the menu again.

The Oak Ordinance issue was instigated by massive clear-cutting of oak trees by Kendall-Jackson winery for the growing of wine grapes.

Wine grapes are not a food. We as a community warn our children of the hazards of drinking, but go into any major grocery store and there are at least two isles of wine and alcohol-related products; this seems so hypocritical.

Now that the Oak Ordinance has been gutted how many more acres of oak forest will be replaced by vineyards?

**Keith Zandona**  
Santa Barbara

## Skewed reasons for attending school

Teaching and learning are no longer reasons to attend school, or so one might conclude from reading the Santa Barbara School Districts ads.

The primary reason to attend is high expectations, followed by award-winning programs, creative teachers, "choice," neighborhood schools, extracurricular activities, and safe schools among other reasons.

What happened to teaching and learning? After all, if there are teaching and learning, would that not be a sign of high expectations, award winning programs and creative teachers, let alone safe schools?

Of course, the situation hardly seems confined to Santa Barbara.



## CHOICE WORDS

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**Keith Zandona**



father had been a miner, quizzed Mr. McAteer regarding solutions. The senators were amazed to find there are now a number of devices on the market that can deal with a rapid response to an emergency situation.

For instance, a good tracking system is available today. In use in China, Australia, etc., it can locate any miner, no matter his location in the mine. Incidentally, the expert said all mines should have a plan that would make each miner able to find the location of others — how to reach them, and finally get them out.

The Sago Mine is 2 miles long. A \$20 device resembling a cell phone can locate a miner. For \$100, a worker could have oxygen and a device to talk to another person, facilitating the rescue of a miner in trouble, Mr. McAteer told the panel.

Miners must demand the company provide such devices, and the government must make mine operators take action or risk stiff penalties.

Miners should be begging for a rapid response system, with all the bells and whistles.

**Hilda E. Wenner**  
Santa Barbara

## Hamas win makes world even scarier

America, the world just got a lot more dangerous. Islamic militant Hamas

There's a lot of searching going on before that contact is discovered. Do we want the government tapping huge numbers of phones as they look for those contacts?

What else do they find? Perhaps our political affiliations and discussions.

It is time for us to stop this illegal action and unless it can be stopped, it is time to proceed to impeachment.

**Sue Hawes**  
Santa Barbara

## History of violence begetting violence

Don't go to see "Munich" with the idea of light entertainment — this is no German beer garden flick.

The movie does a good job pointing out, using the tragedy of the Olympic Village murders in 1972, that violence begets violence.

What it obfuscates is the origin of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict that begat the violence. It began, not in Munich, but in 1917 Palestine, when England promised a homeland to Jews, "it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities," according to the Balfour Declaration.

At that time, Palestine had been home for over a millennium to Muslims, Christians and a small percentage of Jews. Illegal takeover of Palestinian land accelerated during World War II, the price of the Holocaust paid by Middle East peoples who were blameless in western and eastern Europe's shame.

Shortly after the war, Israel declared independence, destroying over 350 Palestinian villages, massacring many and turning more than 700,000 people into permanent refugees.

I am among those who believe that peace in the world will begin with peace in the Middle East. An important step in that process is for Westerners to understand the background and the terrorism that has plagued all sides in this conflict.

**Karen Telleen-Lawton**  
Santa Barbara