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Gotta Fight for Right to Property

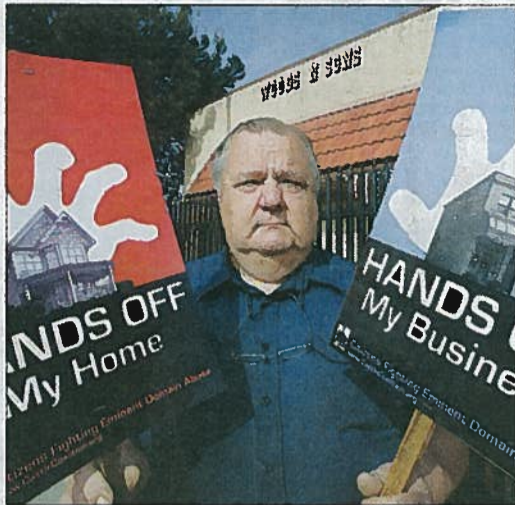
POLITICS: Proposition 98 puts restrictions on eminent domain.

By **HOWARD FINE** Staff Reporter

Ken Woods never fancied himself more than a small business owner. But these days he's become the poster child for critics trying to scale back California's redevelopment law.

The owner of a small Baldwin Park sewing-machine repair shop, Woods' business property was taken by eminent domain in 1980 when the city redeveloped a downtown commercial strip. He was forced to relocate his Woods 'N Sons a few blocks away.

"After we moved, they told us that we'll never have to worry about redevelopment again," he said.



Ken Woods: Faces second condemnation. RINGO H.W. CHIU

Please see **POLITICS** page 49

Westwood Heads in New Direction

DEVELOPMENT: Renewal is coming after years of disregard.

By **DANIEL MILLER** Staff Reporter

A walk in the heart of Westwood Village reveals storefront after storefront of vacant retail space — about a quarter of shops on one stretch of Westwood Boulevard are empty.

But the same jaunt one block east on Glendon Avenue reveals something else — construction activity.

A handful of key real estate projects are in varying stages of completion, including the \$300 million Palazzo mixed-use development, a forthcoming

retail project and a planned boutique hotel.

The bustle of construction comes after years of disregard by developers and is being seen by many business owners as a chance to revitalize the village, which has seen its retail wane since the community's heyday in the 1980s.

"Westwood as far as I'm concerned is a unique place in Los Angeles, it's a shopping and pedestrian district like none other," said Kam Hekmat, a local real estate developer who owns the village's Center West office building and the Murdock Plaza office tower, among other properties. "There is a lot of potential. (But) Westwood retail needs to come back."

Please see **DEVELOPMENT** page 49

Hawaiian Cruises Could Sail Away

TOURISM: Federal rule would force ships on lengthier detours.

By **RICHARD CLOUGH** Staff Reporter

The West Coast's largest cruise port may soon be forced to say bon voyage to most of its Hawaii-bound cruises.

And it won't be a happy parting.

A proposed federal rule change being sought by an operator of inter-island Hawaiian cruises could spell disaster for the bustling cruise industry at the Port of Los Angeles, which stands to lose nearly 15 percent of its calls and millions of dollars in annual revenue.

The pending change would amend the 122-year-old Passenger Vessel Services Act and require all foreign-flagged cruise ships departing from California and headed to Hawaii to spend at least 48 hours and a third of the trip docked at a foreign port.

Currently, foreign-flagged vessels operating California-to-Hawaii cruises are required only to make quick stop at a foreign port before sailing on to the islands. The new rules would force them to overhaul itineraries and potentially extend cruises by a week or more, which experts say would make the cruises very difficult to book.

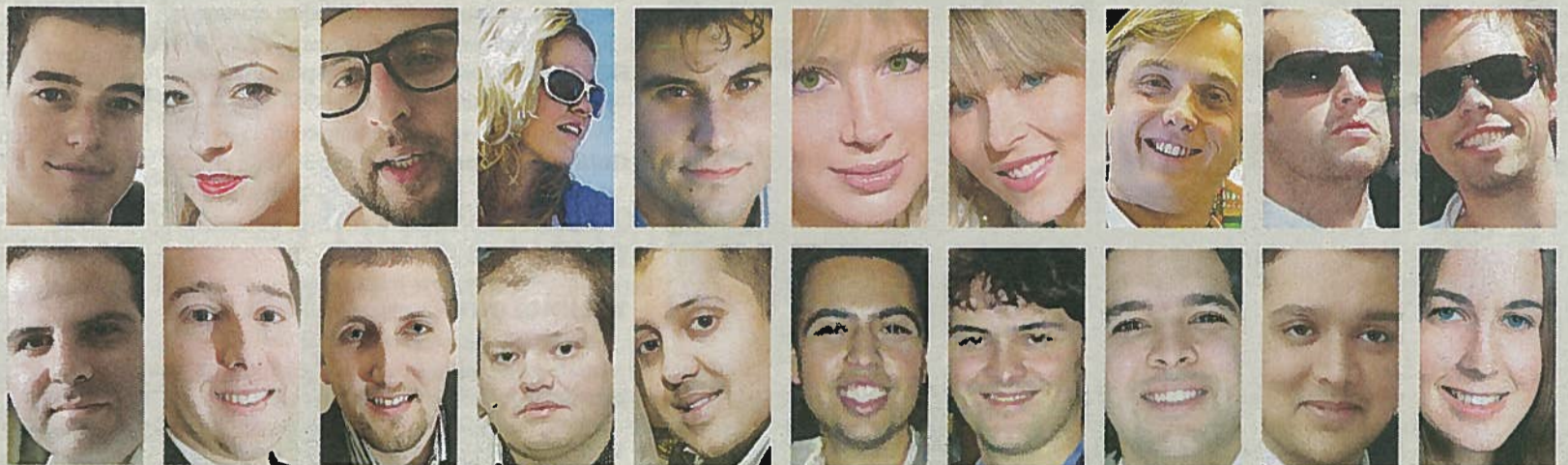
Though the change would impact all California ports, the new rule would particularly hurt Southern California since most Hawaiian cruises sail out of

\$33 million

Annual direct spending at the Port of Los Angeles related to Hawaiian cruises.

Please see **TOURISM** page 51

SPECIAL REPORT: 20 IN THEIR 20s



BABY BOSSES

It's tough to start your own business at any age, but imagine the extra problems when you're in your 20s. Landlords are skeptical. Would-be employees shake their heads. Bankers humor you. Yet it can be done. Inside are profiles of 20 Angelenos who started and are now running their own businesses. And all are in their 20s.

Special report begins on page 25

Companies on the move need real answers.

Contact Sherri Gastelum at 626.795.8590 or visit rsmmcgladrey.com

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20 in their

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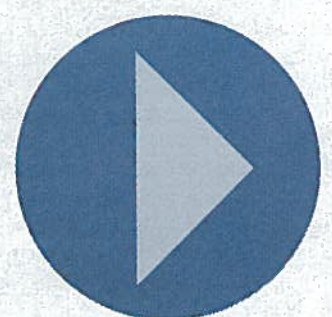
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SOME people just can't wait to be entrepreneurs. Take Michael Schneider, whose high school hobby of designing Web sites for friends evolved into a business. Now, at age 27, Schneider recently started another Santa Monica company, an online portal for mothers. Or take Andres Izquieta and Dee Murthy, who were so eager they started their clothing company before their entrepreneurship classes at USC even began. If you imagined that entrepreneurship was an outdated concept among the young, turn the page. You'll see 20 Angelenos – all still in their 20s – who have started and are now running their own unique businesses. Maybe not every business will survive, but since virtually all the young entrepreneurs said they can't imagine working for someone else, it seems likely that they would try, try again. As 29-year-old Jason Nazar put it: "I'll probably be starting companies for the rest of my life."





RODRIGO VELOSO, 29, Chief Executive, O.N.E. (One Natural Experience) World Enterprises, Los Angeles

Business: Develops and packages coconut water, acai juice, coffee berry juice and cashew juice

Employees: 14

Revenues: \$2 million

Fact: O.N.E. packages its juices in Tetra Paks, an environmentally friendly alternative to bottles and aluminum cans.

Quote: "Every year that I traveled to Brazil to visit my family, I saw coconut water becoming bigger and bigger. It became so popular that McDonald's, Pizza Hut and Wal-Mart had their own private labels."

Brazilian Flavors Juice Up Beverage Business

RODRIGO Veloso, a fifth-generation coffee grower from Brazil, knew what business to start when he attended school in Sweden: a coffee business. He imported the beans, launched his own brand and eventually started a small chain of shops. He was 19 when he began.

However, it wasn't coffee that Veloso introduced to the United States, but another Brazilian import: coconut water. Veloso's venture, O.N.E. (One Natural Experience) World Enterprises, evolved from a business plan that he entered into different competitions in Latin America and the United States. "I wrote a business plan on how to introduce exotic functional Brazilian fruit juices in the U.S.," Veloso said.

Veloso's plan didn't win the U.S. competition, but at a Texas event, Veloso found leads for investors and met his future wife, Emilie, who is O.N.E.'s president.

Veloso established O.N.E. in 2005 with profits from selling his Swedish coffee shop chain, and seed money from one California investor.

The company soon launched its first line of alternative beverages, O.N.E. Coconut Water. The liquid is filtered through the dense fibers of coconuts for nine months.

After selling the coconut water in Whole Foods stores for eight months, the Kroger Co. approached O.N.E. about distributing the product in its grocery stores nationwide.

His success with the coconut water prompted Veloso to explore another exotic Brazilian fruit, acai. O.N.E.'s Amazon Acai juice is made from the indigenous berry and cut with a splash of acerola, Amazon cherry juice.

"I knew the U.S. was the market for these products," Veloso said.

The United States also served as the perfect market for Veloso's entrepreneurial drive, but his success didn't come without challenges. He learned to speak English, but "not that great." And since Veloso didn't attend school in the United States, he faced obstacles in learning how Americans do business. But none of that slowed him much. In March, O.N.E. launched two more products: coffee berry and cashew juice.

"The U.S. is the largest importer of coffee and cashews, so I am excited to educate and to show (people) they aren't only a bean or a nut, but fruit," Veloso said.

Both products will be available in Whole Foods and Kroger stores in the coming months.

—Alexa Hyland

Canine IQ Tests Might Give Reason for Paws

Six months ago, Stacy Stubblefield was talking about her beagle, Samantha, with a friend who also owned a beagle. They were comparing stories about how smart their dogs are.

"We were talking about all sorts of things our dogs could do," Stubblefield said. "We started wondering if there's any way to measure their intelligence."

Stubblefield began researching dog intelligence and came up with a kit to test a canine's IQ. Within a month, Stubblefield, with 56-year-old Shlomo Gonen, founded Pooch IQ, a Beverly Hills-based company that manufactures and sells dog intelligence kits online at PoochIQ.com.

Gonen, Stubblefield's partner, provided funding when Stubblefield launched the company, and continues to act as a mentor.

The Pooch IQ Kit tests a dog's memory, persistence, ability to see similarities, instinctive and obedience intelligence, and problem-solving and reasoning skills. Upon completion of the test, dogs are given an intelligence score between 55 and 150, similar to the human IQ scale.

As president of Pooch IQ, 26-year-old Stubblefield oversees every aspect of the company's business, from processing orders to talking to potential buyers to deal-

ing with the media.

It's been only five months since she founded the company, but she knows what it is like to be an entrepreneur.

"One of the best things about running your own company is that you have a lot of freedom, and there are no set hours or a boss," Stubblefield said.

Keeping up with everything is her biggest challenge, she added. "There's so much going on right now. We have limited resources and expanding them has been very difficult."

Over the past few months, Stubblefield learned how to outsource. She also made a habit of writing down everything on her calendar to keep track of her schedule.

"There's not enough sleep involved at this time," Stubblefield said.

However, she cannot picture herself working for another company as an employee. After she graduated from USC's Marshall School of Business in 2004, Stubblefield worked on various business projects to get established as an entrepreneur.

STACY STUBBLEFIELD, 26, President, Pooch IQ, Beverly Hills

Business: Maker of IQ test kits for dogs

Employees: 4

2007 Revenues: \$200,000

Fact: Started her business a month after a conversation with her friend about their dogs

Quote: "There's not enough sleep involved at this time."



It's not easy to be an entrepreneur in your 20s, but it would be even harder to start a business at the age of 40, she said.

"When you are older, there are people who have faith in you. This makes it difficult to start your own business. Right now, I have a lot of freedom and energy, which means that I am allowed to take risks."

—Yoo Mi Chin