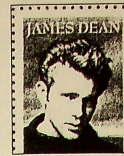




## Eye on Atlanta

Champion gymnast keeps balance through surgery, coaching wars  
Sports



Stamp gives collectors a new cause  
L.A. Life

Today's weather:  
**Fair**  
High 74-82/ Low 54-60  
Details, Page 2



# Daily News

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1996

25 CENTS  
DESIGNED BY ANDREW HORN

## Religion, politics gap closing

By Gustav Niebuhr  
*The New York Times*

### Rising approval seen for churches' new role

In evidence of a striking change in Americans' attitudes about religion and politics, a majority of the public now believes that churches should be allowed to express political opinions, a reversal from what a majority believed a generation ago, according to a new nationwide survey of religious identity and political opinion.

Support for churches' expressing political opinions runs highest among white evangelical, or born-again, Protestants, a group that has grown enough over the past decade that it accounts for a quarter of the American electorate, roughly on a par with white Roman Catholics and members of mainline

Protestant churches, like Episcopalians and Presbyterians. The survey also shows that with the growth in their numbers, white evangelicals have emerged as a cohesive force shaping American political debate and holding more conservative views than other groups on issues including gay marriage, immigration policy

and gun control, as well as abortion. They are the group least enthusiastic about President Clinton, but they are divided about the Republicans' record in Congress, making it difficult to predict how they will behave at the ballot box this fall. But, the survey also found that although Americans say they regularly hear clergy members

speaking out on a wide variety of political and social issues — especially hunger, poverty, abortion and school prayer — only about one of every 15 churchgoers reported being told how to vote. About twice that many, or one in seven, reported finding candidates' campaign literature in church before the 1994 midterm elections. The survey will be made public today by the Pew Research Center.

See RELIGION / Page 13

## Dogs maul Canoga Park man

### 2 pit bulls quarantined after attack

By Steve Getzug  
*Daily News Staff Writer*

CANOGA PARK — Gene Chen knows now what it means to have good neighbors after they helped chase off a pair of pit bulls that had attacked Chen, leaving behind 67 bite marks and cuts from head to toe.

"I thought I would die," the 45-year-old printer said from his hospital bed. "Every time I tried to stand, I was pulled down."

Neighbor Raymond Reveles recalls feeling helpless as the two dogs mauled Chen, whose cries broke the summer night's calm and emptied the houses on Lull Street.

And Reveles had an oak ax handle in his fist.

"It was one of the worst things I'd ever seen in my life," Reveles said. "It seemed like I was standing there for an eternity. You can only do so much. You take a swing at the dog and you could hit the guy."

For two to three horrifying minutes Sunday evening, Reveles and about a dozen others drawn into the cul-de-sac by Chen's pleas for help yelled, screamed and wielded



Animal control Officers Wendell Bowers, left, and Frederick Galdi cage one of the pit bulls.

See ATTACK / Page 18

## Rumble erupts over quake fund

Lawmakers angry



## City agency backs plan to tear down cathedral

By Rick Orlov  
*Daily News Staff Writer*

A city agency called Monday for removing St. Vibiana's Cathedral from the list of historic monuments and issuing a

period. The CRA, acting at the request of the City Council, issued a "negative declaration" stating that a more complete environmental review, which would include a study of the

See COURT / Page 18

## Anti-drug approach upheld

Justices say seizure of property is legal

By Linda Greenhouse  
*The New York Times*

WASHINGTON — In a major victory for federal prosecutors, the Supreme Court ruled Monday that the government can both prosecute someone for a crime and seize his property through civil forfeiture without violating the constitutional bar against double jeopardy.

The double-barreled prosecution and forfeiture strategy, a cornerstone of the government's approach to narcotics crimes, had been meeting increasing resistance in the lower courts. Two federal appeals courts, in rulings the court overturned in a single decision Monday, had found the approach a violation of the Fifth Amendment, which the court has interpreted as prohibiting multiple punishments for the same offense.

But ordinary civil forfeiture is not a punishment, Chief Justice William Rehnquist said in his majority opinion Monday. He said the federal forfeiture statutes the government uses in drug cases, "while perhaps having certain punitive aspects, serve important nonpunitive goals," like encouraging property owners to make sure their property is not used for illegal purposes.

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# Neighbors help fend off pit bulls

ATTACK / From Page 1

sticks and poles in a panicked bid to stop the attack.

Chen, who tumbled over sidewalk and curb as he was pulled by the dogs, was saved only when the two dogs, named Chopper and Rocky, were surrounded by screaming neighbors and gave up the attack.

On Monday, Chen was hospitalized at Northridge Hospital Medical Center where he was being treated for 67 tooth marks and cuts. Painkillers and whirlpool treatments barely dimmed his ordeal.

A city animal control officer also was bitten in the wrist as he took the two dogs in custody inside the garage of a home in the 20500 block of Lull Street. Officer Frederick Galdi was treated for his injury and released, officials said.

Peter Persik, a spokesman for the city Animal Regulation Department, said an investigation is under way to determine the exact circumstances of the attack and to identify the dogs' owner or owners.

Debbie Potts, who identified herself to reporters as the dog's owner, apologized for the attack and said she wouldn't try to prevent the dogs from being destroyed if authorities decided they must die.

"I feel so bad, because if it was my husband or my child, I would be very hurt," Potts said.

The dogs, an 85-pound male and a 50-pound female, were placed in a rabies quarantine at the West Valley Animal Care and Control Center, where they will be observed for 10 days.

None at the scene could explain why the dogs had gone after Chen. Police and neighbors say the two pit bulls, who emerged through an open garage door, bolted at the 135-pound man as he went outside about 9 p.m. to throw out garbage — a chore, Chen said, he had put off all day.

Children riding bikes on the street saw the dogs tear toward Chen. Other neighbors peeked through windows or left their homes to investigate when they heard barking and loud yells.

Cleaning up the front yard of his home after a family barbecue, Lonnie Van Cott, his left arm in a sling from elbow surgery, sprinted over to Chen's aid but could do little to deter the attack.

"As I ran I started yelling for all neighbors to get their attention," he said. "The dogs were



Gene Stevins/Special to the Daily News

Chopper was one of the dogs involved in the attack.

biting him from head to toe. He was down trying to cover himself . . . and that dog was just pulling him, pulling him."

From his view down the street, Reveles initially thought Chen was engaged in a tug of war with one of the dogs — until he realized it was Chen's arm, and not a towel, in the mouth of one of the dogs.

"The guy let out a scream that you just knew this was not play," he said.

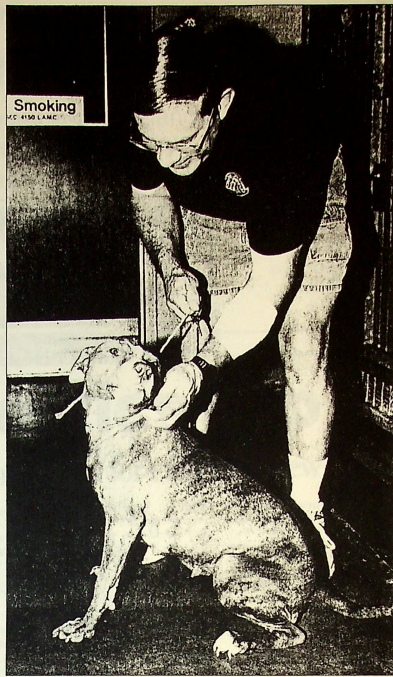
Reveles grabbed the ax handle, leaped a backyard wall, and sprinted to Chen as other neighbors began circling the dogs. With sticks and poles the neighbors tried to keep the dogs off of the downed man.

"We finally scared the damned dogs off," Van Cott said. "So many wounds," said neighbor Sanz Vuong, 47. "All over the body."

Reveles said Chen sat down and was comforted by neighbors as the dogs ran back into the garage and the garage door was shut behind them. Chen appeared to go into shock as paramedics arrived, neighbors said.

At noon Monday some of the people who tried to help Chen stood outside their homes watching television news reporters provide live feeds about the previous night's activities.

Van Cott lit a cigarette and



Animal control Officer Frederick Galdi, who suffered a bite, pets dog.

shook his head. "I'm so angry about what happened," he said. "Nobody with responsibility (for the dogs) was home to stop this. . . . That was the worst thing I've ever seen in my life."

Noting the presence of children on the street, Reveles and Van Cott said the tragedy could have been compounded.

"It's very unfortunate that this guy got hurt," Reveles said. "But if this had happened to one of those kids you'd be writing about a death right now."

As it was, Chen's physician, Dr. Mehran Okhovat, said the victim was lucky.

Okhovat said Chen's lacerations — most extensive on his hands and forearms — ranged from a quarter-inch to 1 inch. Chen had cuts on the back of his head and neck, and a sweeping superficial laceration on his right eye, he

said. Dena Mangiamle, chief veterinarian for the department of animal regulation, said the squat, heavy-set dogs — formally known as Staffordshire terriers — are cousins to the American pit bull terrier and similarly endowed with a very strong jaw.

She said the breed is very loyal and compassionate, but like any large dog, can be dangerous if not trained or quartered by responsible owners.

"A lot of it has to do with how you handle the animals," she said. For 1994, the last full calendar year for which statistics are kept by the Los Angeles County Health Department, more than 16,200 people were bitten by domestic or wild animals, officials said.

Hundreds more probably aren't counted because most bites statistically occur to family members within the home and go unreported, Persik said.

# Justices not doubt

COURT / From Page 1

All nine justices agreed that the hundreds of thousands of dollars cash, proceeds of a major marijuana operation — did not amount to double jeopardy. The proceeds of illegal activity, the money was not property that the two defendants had "any right to retain," Justice John Paul Stevens said in a separate opinion.

But in the second case, in which a Michigan man forfeited the value of his house because he had processed marijuana there, Stevens cast a lone dissenting vote. He said the forfeiture was plainly punitive because "there is no evidence that the house had been purchased with the proceeds of unlawful activity and the house itself was surely not contraband."

Stevens said that under the majority's theory, Congress during Prohibition could have authorized the forfeiture of every home in which alcoholic beverages were consumed. He accused the majority of repudiating a series of recent court decisions that limit the government's discretion in using civil forfeiture in various contexts.

Those decisions, including one only three years ago that found civil forfeiture to be a form of punishment for purposes of applying the Eighth Amendment protection against "excessive fines," were an inconvenience for the majority, but Rehnquist dispensed with them quickly.

Referring to Austin vs. United States, the 1993 case holding that a forfeiture could be an excessive fine, the chief justice said the court had never treated the excessive fines prohibition of the Eighth Amendment "as parallel to, or even related to, the Double Jeopardy Clause of the Fifth Amendment."

"We decline to import the analysis of Austin into our double jeopardy jurisprudence," he added.

In his dissenting opinion Stevens objected that the court "today stands Austin on its head. He said it was 'difficult to imagine why the Framers of the two amendments would have required a particular sanction not to be excessive, but would have allowed it to be imposed multiple times for the same offense.'"

The chief justice dealt in similar fashion with two of the court's other recent forfeiture decisions, saying the lower courts had misunderstood them as creating "radical jurisprudential shifts." Instead, he said, nothing in those rulings "purported to replace our traditional understanding that civil forfeiture does not constitute punishment for the purpose of the Double Jeopardy Clause."

In his opinion, United States vs. Ursery, No. 95-345, Rehnquist left open the possibility that a civil forfeiture might be so clearly punitive as to be "equivalent to a criminal proceeding" and therefore subject to the double jeopardy clause. But his analysis of the two laws the government uses in narcotics cases made it highly unlikely that forfeitures under those statutes would meet that test.

One of the laws, known as Section 881, provides for the forfeiture of "all real property" that is "used or intended to be used in any manner or part, to commit, or to facilitate the commission of," a federal drug offense. The government relied on this section in the forfeiture of the rural Michigan house where Guy Jerome Ursery was processing marijuana.

The second law, known as Section 981, provides for the forfeiture of all "things of value" used or intended for use in a drug transaction, as well as "all proceeds traceable to such an exchange." The government used this section

# Northridge center still feeling temblor's blow

BLOCK / From Page 1

the 8900 block of Reseda Boulevard is still trying to regroup. There are 11 vacant storefronts in the half-block north of Rayen Street, just a few blocks from Cal State Northridge.

Moore and his wife, Carol, a longtime Northridge real estate broker, can't stand to see what's happened to their community.

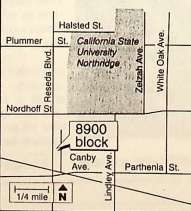
"Everyone can see it's a bad part of town," Carol Moore said, walking along the row of vacant storefronts. "We've got to bring Northridge up. Somebody should do something about this."

Suspecting that vagrants were living in the shuttered storefronts, Carol Moore called Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson to complain. The councilman's staff dispatched building inspectors to ensure that the properties were locked up, but it couldn't do what the Moores really want — turn the dead shops into thriving businesses again.

"It's very frustrating, but it's private property," said Francine Oschin, Bernson's assistant chief of staff.

## BLIGHTED BLOCK

The 8900 block of Reseda Boulevard has been plagued by vacant storefronts since the 1994 Northridge Earthquake.



There are many earthquake-damaged properties throughout the entire city.

"People forget that this is something that is going to be with us a long time," she added. "We're going to have scars on our landscape."

The storefronts where the India Market and neighboring shops were once located is owned by Standard

payments following the quake, said Trond Ingvaldsen, the company's assistant vice president for real estate.

The 9,576-square-foot property is in escrow and Ingvaldsen said he has his fingers crossed that the sale will go through.

"We were actually in escrow twice last year, but it never closed," he said.

As an institutional owner, we want to be proud of our property," Ingvaldsen said. "Our objective is to sell this property to someone local who can clean it up and redevelop it. It's no question it's an eyesore."

Across the street, there is a large For Rent sign up at what used to be Buz's Used Appliances.

Jon Paley, a real estate broker who is working to lease the site, says the stretch of Reseda south of Nordhoff Street had been struggling for years but that the Northridge Earthquake "kind of put it over the edge."

"The area's difficult," Paley said. "It's an area in transition. It's suffered a lot."

Richard Benbow, deputy administrator for community development, said the agency could work with merchants, residents and community leaders to devise a strategy for improving the area and identifying grants and loans to help business rebuild.

He acknowledged that redevelopment efforts are "just now picking up steam" but noted that they will be \$4.7 million for Valley quake-related redevelopment efforts in the fiscal year beginning July 1.

"We're concentrating on the commercial areas," Benbow said. The Moores say any help from the city would be welcome — before more businesses close.

What the problem is, the answer is, "We're not doing it right."