Comics D7
Bobo makes its debut

Business C8
SP tuxedo shop is leader in style

Sports C1
Sampras wraps up Mercedes

Life/Arts B8
New 'Supergals' pack a wallop

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They DARE say: Study rips anti-drug plan

By Gillian Murray
staff writer

The nation's most popular anti-drug program is under the microscope again — this time as the subject of a study that finds the nationwide DARE has no long-term effect on drug use.

In a report published today in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, researchers found that students who participated in Project DARE — Drug Abuse Resistance Education — a decade ago are no better off now than students who didn't receive the 17-week course.

In 1996, researchers tracked sixth-graders attending schools in Lexington, Ky. Some received DARE classes, others did not. As 20-year-olds, a sampling of students were surveyed about their use of alcohol, marijuana and cigarettes. The same percentage of students who attended DARE classes were users as those who did not receive classes, the study found.

DARE America officials called the study bogus.

"It's academic fraud and that's being kind," said Ralph Lethridge, a spokesman for Inglewood-based DARE America.

Lethridge said the DARE program that was taught 10 years ago regularly reexamines today's curriculum. In addition, in 1998 DARE also targeted sixth-graders. Now it's available at all grade levels.

"They're looking at a program that's 10 years old," he said. "It's not the program we're teaching today. It's like comparing apples and oranges. ... Our lessons back then [in pages back then. It's 78 pages today. It has been revised nine times."

The study's authors said expanded curriculum may have an impact on drug use, but let's not re-learn.

"It would have an effect, but in a couple of ways it has problems," said Donald Lynam, a professor with the University of Kentucky who headed up the study. "But all kids are at the same risk [for drug abuse]. It may work better to use that same resources to target high-risk students."

DARE was introduced in 1983 to the Los Angeles Unified School District. Today the $13 million nonprofit organization has expanded to 300,000 classrooms in every state in the nation, Lethridge said.

DARE is known for its anti-drug rallies in its trademark tee activities —

SHARE BACK PAGE

Dolphins "base-ride" in front of the L.A. Dolphin Project boat during a research trip in the Santa Monica Bay.

Following their (bottle) noses

Scientists tracking dolphins in Santa Monica Bay to map behavior patterns

By Lisa Peterson
staff writer

On an eye-watering sunny morning in Santa Monica Bay with a huge school of dolphins all around, Brigitte Steinmetz climbs an orange L.A. Dolphin Project jacket over her head and her laptop computer.

From beneath her makeshift canopy, she calls out sightings to the crew of the small boat.

"Behavior!"

"Travel!" replies Madeleine Beard.

And as quickly as researcher Steinmetz can type, narrator Madeleine Beard and her crew relay every bit of information they observe about the schooling dolphins, some of which are almost close enough to touch.

The volunteers and researchers also snap photos and take videos, which will serve as a record along with the data being shared on computer.

More than 45 minutes later, the chase is complete, and Charlie Seyfan guides the Dolphin Project's 23-foot powerboat toward Malibu, in search of more of the marine mammals.

It's one more batch of data for the Los Angeles Dolphin Project, a research arm of the nonprofit Ocean Conservancy Society that is taking the most in-depth look ever at the dolphins of Santa Monica Bay.

"One of the first goals is to figure out what is going on in this area, considering that nobody knows anything. How many species? How many dolphins? And if they are residents or not," Beard said.

The school of dolphins encountered on that sunny morning some 6 miles offshore were common dolphins, a species that spends most of its time far away from the beach, in large groups.

But another species in the bay gets even closer attention from the Dolphin Project: the largest shore-hugging Pacific bottlenose dolphins, which can be seen regularly

DOLPHINS A2

Researchers Andrea Bachman, left, and Madeleine Beard take photos and video footage of dolphins.

L.A. is making its move

Area from downtown to mountains in danger of big quakes, study says

By Matthew Fairbank
staff writer

Forces deep in the Earth's crust are warming downtown Los Angeles toward the San Gabriel Mountains, making a densely populated area to northeast more susceptible to large earthquakes, according to a study published Monday.

Using precise satellite surveying techniques, researchers found that downtown is edging toward the mountain range by about one-fifth of an inch annually. The crunched area or "shortening belt" responds by thickening, or slowly building up mountains.

"This probably means there's a greater likelihood of a quake inside this shortening belt than other places outside of it — with the caveat that this is over the next several hundred years," said the study's lead author, geophysicist Donald Argus of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena.

The study published in the August issue of the journal Geology, sought to characterize the stress that might be released by large and dangerous earthquakes beneath metropolitan Los Angeles, home to about 12 million people.

Such quakes would not be the "Big One" predicted on the San Andreas fault, which runs the east of the metropolitan area. Instead, the quakes would originate on smaller faults responsible for building mountains.

Such quakes would be slightly smaller than the predicted San Andreas shaker, but they could be just as deadly and damaging because of their proximity to urban areas.

The magnitude-6.7 Northridge

MOVING A2

Death count rises, but heat subsides

Cooling trend felt in Midwest

By Dennis M. Curtis
staff writer

CHICAGO — Though temperatures began to drop Sunday across the Midwest, the death toll from last week's record-breaking heat rose even higher, with another 30 deaths been blamed on the heat and humidity.

In much of the country, the worst heat passed, with Sunday's temperatures in 10 to 20 degrees cooler across the Great Lakes and much of the upper Midwest. Chicago warmed to its 79 early of 70s on Friday.

But 30 more bodies were brought to the Cook County morgue from Friday to Sunday, said city Health Commissioner John Wiletta, and officials attributed the death toll to date. A refrigerated trailer was brought in to store bodies until autopsies could be done.

The new deaths added Sunday brought the Illinois total to 80 and the nationwide number to at least 180 since July 14.

But for parts of the country

HEAT WAVE A2