

Tom Blair

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On a roll: How about those new ads for the Suzuki Samurai -- the car Consumer Reports says is dangerously prone to roll over? It seems to me Suzuki might've come up with a better billboard slogan than "CAUTION: This Vehicle May Exceed 55 Smiles Per Hour." But then after all, notes TV's Bob Lawrence, "a smile is just a frown turned upside down."

Entre news: San Diego's Rodney Belle is \$47,000 richer and 10 years older now that the City Council has agreed to pay off in a discrimination case. Belle, a black, was drummed out of the city's fire academy in 1978 -- two days before he was to have graduated -- for failing (by two points) one part of the three-part test. He filed suit in 1980, charging employment discrimination, and won a \$62,000 judgment in 1984. But a Supreme Court ruling went against Belle, and the case was about to go back to U.S. District Court for a new trial when the city settled. Belle now works as a civilian at North Island NAS. In fact, notes his attorney, Michael Crowley, Belle is almost vested.

San Diego Shuffle: Sports anchorman Al Keck gave notice yesterday after 5 years at Channel 39. He'll go to Tampa Bay -- a larger TV market -- in August. ... Paul Downey, the Mayor's press secretary, has one pressing detail settled for his Moscow trip with Her Honor O'Connor. Downey, a devoted jogger, checked with the Soviet consulate in San Francisco this week and learned there'll be no restrictions on where he may jog in Moscow or what he must wear to do it. ... KFMB Radio news director Cliff Albert, still out recovering from an intestinal disorder, goes back on the air today. He's easing back in. The station has set up a microphone line to Albert's home in Lakeside. ... In rebuttal: Colleagues of SD ConVis chief Dal Watkins say he was offered the job as head of the LA ConVis Bureau, but turned it down a week-and-a-half ago. Then Long Beach's Bill Miller took it. Watkins just lost the battle of the press releases, that's all. The LA announcement of Miller's appointment came a day ahead of the SD ConVis Bureau announcement that Watkins had bowed out. ... Red Scott, CEO of SD's Intermark securities company, is profiled in Corporate Finance as the "Wizard Acquirer. He buys and sells companies in ways that produce magical returns for shareholders ..."

Quoteworthy: Frank Mankiewicz, who was with Sen. Robert Kennedy as press secretary on that June night in 1968 when Kennedy was shot down, came to the SD City Club Friday for an RFK retrospective. "Bobby Kennedy was almost the shyest man I've ever known," said Mankiewicz. "But then he was one of the only grown-ups I've ever known who could tolerate silence. ... He felt no compulsion to make small talk. Also, he was one of the rare human beings who went through a constant educational experience as he grew older. Most of us stop learning in our mid-20s. If we have a lot in our intellectual bank at that point, we live well. If we don't, we live poorly. But Bobby Kennedy was learning up to the time of his death."

San Diego seen: The 300 Republicans gathered at the Town & Country Convention Center Monday night for the GOP Central Committee's post-election party were stunned when Mayor O'Connor strolled into their midst. Assembly candidate Gary Gahn says he thought maybe the Mayor had come to thank the Republicans for supporting her in the Mayor's race. But she hadn't, and she didn't. She'd just made a wrong turn on her way to a Hotel-Motel Assn. party. And she backed out fast. ... The Sports Medicine Center at Scripps Clinic was bustling as a limping patient was escorted to a

therapy table in the center of the giant room. "Excuse me," she bristled, "I had reservations for a window table."

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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