



Henin-Hardenne wins her third Grand Slam title

BLAZING BELGIAN

◀ SPORTS ILLUSTRATED SALUTES GAUCHO LOCOS



Local businessmen awarded \$130 M apiece

THEIR DAY IN COURT

BUSINESS / B6

SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS



OUR 148TH YEAR

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2004

50¢

UCSB scientist awarded \$189 M

Professor wins Japan patent case

By SCOTT HADLY
NEWS-PRESS SENIOR WRITER

UCSB scientist Shuji Nakamura, known as the "Japanese Thomas Edison," won a stunning legal victory Friday when a Tokyo district court ordered his former employer to pay him \$189 million in exchange for the patent rights to his innovative and highly profitable inventions with blue light-emitting diodes.

Front page news in Japan, the judgment against his former employer Nichia Corp. is the largest ever in Japan in a patent rights transfer case.

Even more significantly, Mr. Nakamura's three-year legal battle is seen as an opening salvo in a revolution among so-called Japanese "salarymen" — workers who identify a presumably lifelong employer's interests as synonymous with their own.

"This is a case that gives children a dream toward science," Mr. Nakamura told The Associated Press in Japan.

Often mentioned as a contender for the Nobel Prize for his work developing blue LEDs — which are used in everything from the common light bulb to computer disc drives and high-tech military devices — Mr. Nakamura had argued that during his 20 years working for Nichia, he was never fairly compensated for the inventions that helped boost the company's sales to more than \$1.4 billion annually.

The company filed an appeal shortly after Friday's decision.

"We immediately appeal this unjust ruling that overvalues one patent and fails to correctly assess the contributions of the many other researchers as well as the company," Nichia, based in southwestern Japan, said in a statement.

Mr. Nakamura, who left Nichia in 1999 and joined the faculty at UCSB College of Engineering in 2000, was in Japan on Friday and could not be reached for comment.

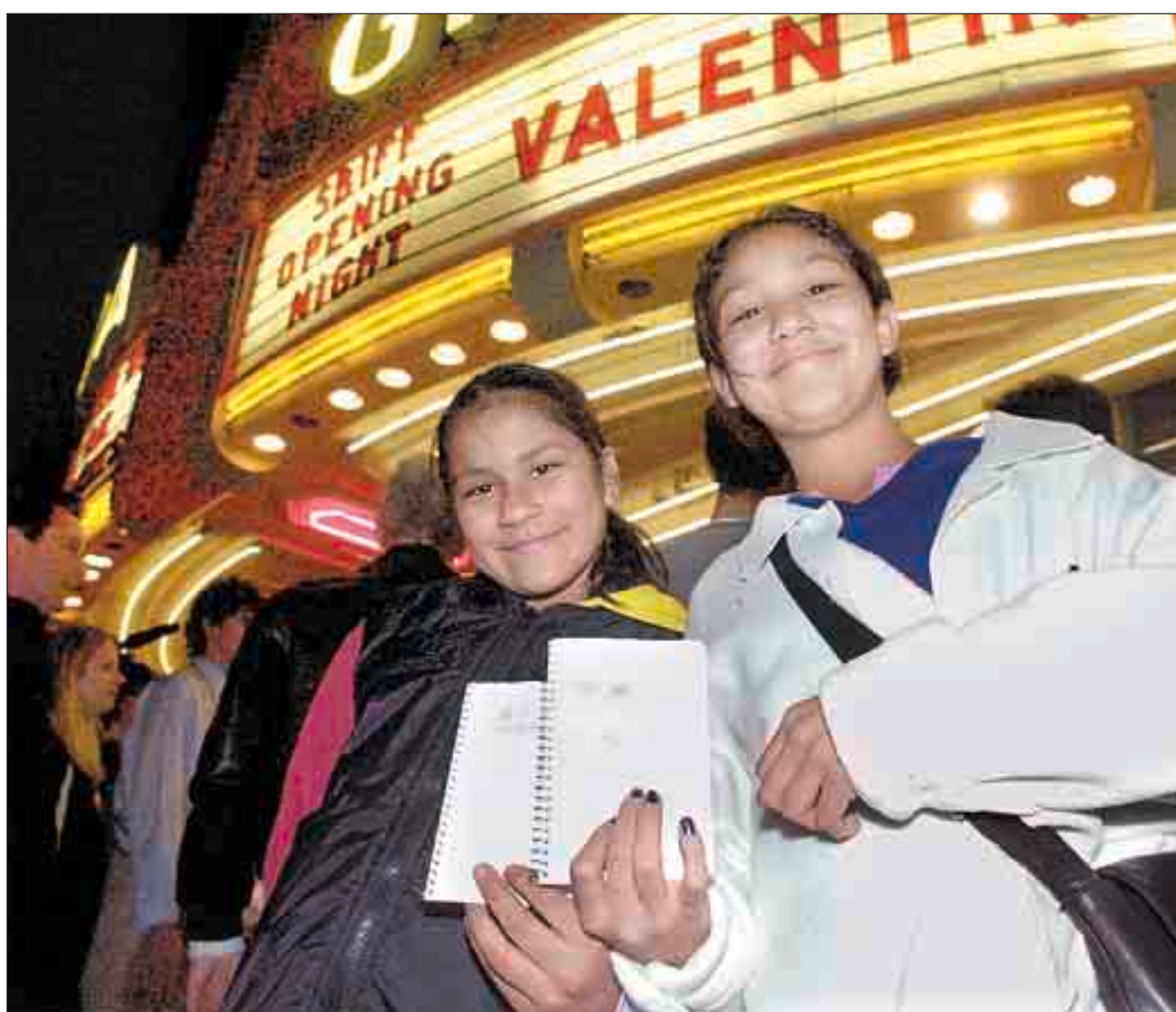
Two years ago, he told the Asahi Weekly that his legal action would change the business culture of Japan.

"If I win and get either a patent right or a payment of hundreds of millions of yen, then the relationship between salaryman and company will change

Please see **PATENT** on **A12**

FILM FESTIVAL'S GALA OPENING

CURTAIN RISES ON SANTA BARBARA'S 10-DAY CELEBRATION



Young film fans Rosa Medina, left, and Wendy Castro snagged autographs from Rodrigo Noya, the star of "Valentin."

STEVE MALONE / NEWS-PRESS



Film locally, screen globally

This year's festival turns spotlight on local talent

By TED MILLS
NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

From environmental artists to family dramas that span generations, this year the Santa Barbara International Film Festival is more home-grown than ever, with many films and many more of its filmmakers sporting Santa Barbara addresses. And the festival's new artistic director, Roger Durling, said it's about time.

"This year we've put much more thought into (the Santa Barbara filmmakers) section," said Mr. Durling. "I've been banging the drum about this since we started. We should be more community-focused." To attach Santa Barbara to the name and not show our own artists, he said, "would be hypocritical."

Please see **FESTIVAL** on **A12**



Local filmmakers, from left, Justin Rowe, Tonia Shimin (seated), Jennifer Rienish, Russ Spencer and Peck Euwer.

JEFF CLARK / NEWS-PRESS

Lockyer to sue grocery chains

Attorney general says pact violates antitrust laws

By MARK VAN DE KAMP
NEWS-PRESS BUSINESS EDITOR

California Attorney General Bill Lockyer said Friday he will sue three supermarket chains involved in the 113-day-old labor dispute with Southern California grocery workers, charging that their economic mutual aid pact violates antitrust laws.

"This action is about protecting shoppers against unlawful, anticompetitive conduct that keeps prices artificially high," Mr. Lockyer said in a statement.

"The grocers' agreement to share costs and revenue hurts consumers by discouraging competitive pricing. The antitrust law exists to prevent that, and I intend to enforce the law."

MORE INSIDE

Local church group supports striking supermarket workers. **A3**

In a joint statement, the grocery chains said the lawsuit is "without merit." They said similar agreements are proper under federal labor policy.

However, grocery union representatives cheered Mr. Lockyer's decision, saying it gives striking and locked-out workers a big boost in morale.

The lawsuit is expected to be filed Monday in federal court in Los Angeles against Albertsons Inc., Safeway Inc., which owns Vons, and Kroger Co., which owns Ralphs Grocery Co.

Mr. Lockyer's office initially said it had already filed the lawsuit Friday, but a "last-minute glitch" in the paperwork caused it to miss the filing deadline, spokesman Tom Dresslar said.

Please see **GROCERY** on **A8**

Board of Education gains local voice

By CHUCK SCHULTZ
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

Santa Barbara school trustee Ruth E. Green, lauded for her role in improving reading and special education programs, is among six members appointed to the state Board of Education by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Elected to the local school board in November 2000, Ms. Green's first term would have expired in another 10 months. The other four board members now have the choice of appointing someone to replace her until the November election or holding a special election to fill her seat, an option that could cost \$500,000 and may prove too expensive at a time

Please see **SCHOOLS** on **A10**

According to feng shui principles, says Santa Barbara architect Vadim Hsu, the mirror placed high on the wall above his desk reflects negative energy out the door.



STEVE MALONE / NEWS-PRESS

What's next? State-mandated chi?

Lawmaker proposes feng shui standards

By MARIA ZATE
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

Just when developers thought they had mastered the tricky art of construction in Santa Barbara — think Spanish architecture with red-tile roofs and a long list of other must-dos — the game may grow even more complicated if a state lawmaker succeeds in requiring new buildings to have good feng shui.

Feng shui (pronounced fung-shway) is the ancient Chinese practice of designing buildings and organizing rooms in a way that promotes positive energy.

Leland Yee, a Democratic assemblyman from San Francisco, wants the state to include feng shui principles in its Building Standards Code. He introduced a resolution this month that would make feng shui a guideline rather than a

hard-and-fast law when designing new buildings. The resolution has not yet been approved.

"The concept of feng shui is a simple one: to improve your life by improving your relationship to the environment around you," Mr. Yee said in a statement.

For example, if a family wants to move the front door of their house to a different wall to follow feng shui principles and take better advantage of the breeze, and the local building

Please see **DESIGN** on **A12**

CLEMENCY DENIED



Governor turns down request for clemency for mass murderer Kevin Cooper, apprehended off the Santa Barbara coast in 1983.

STORY ON B5

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