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smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

Volume 24 Issue 32 THURSDAY 1/2/25 smdp.com

Local wake-up call comes courtesy of the ocean



File Photos

PLUNGE: The annual Polar Bear Plunge is a way to wake locals up into the New Year.

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

Locals who want a strong wake-up call to the New Year won't have to make coffee or buy an energy drink to do so.

Instead, Santa Monicans can arise naturally with the cold water of the Pacific Ocean, via the Annenberg Community Beach House's annual Polar Bear Plunge, beginning Saturday at 10 a.m. Back for 2025, the plunge puts swimmers of all ages into the water in a no judgment zone, taking anyone who wants to swim 300 yards around a buoy or just stick their toes in the water.

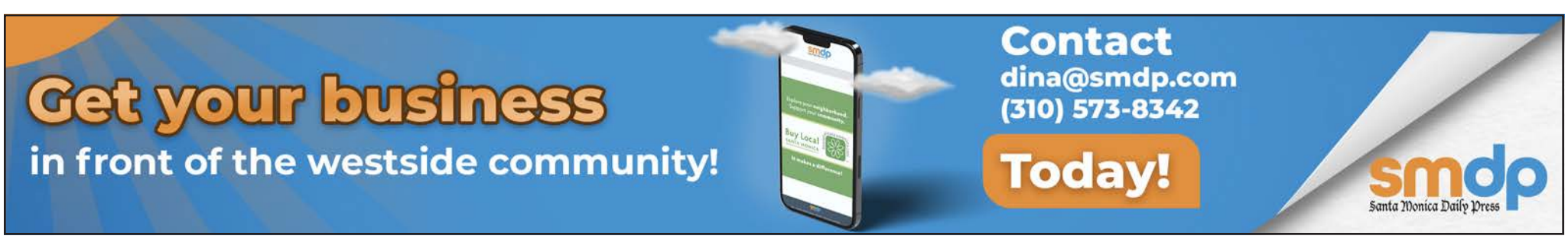
Beach Recreation Supervisor Heath Hamilton said the idea arose from similar New Year events in the northern United States, where cities would cut holes in the ice of frozen lakes for locals to dive into.

"Obviously, we're not having to cut a hole in the ice, or we're not having to worry too much about hypothermia, that type of thing," Hamilton said. "For us, it's a little bit more of showcasing our great year-round opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in Santa Monica."

Hamilton added that water and air temperatures will both be in the high 50s, and will be chilly especially if locals don't use a wetsuit. However, Hamilton likes to use the word "refreshing" instead, a nod to the mental and emotional refreshment the beginning of a year brings.

"When you hit the water like that, it's going to wake you up, it's going to get (you) awake and excited about the New Year, and then you'll head into 2025 having done something

SEE **PLUNGE** PAGE 11



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Pedestrian safety, entertainment zones among new law efforts for 2025



File Photo

LAWS: The future of the Third Street Promenade as an entertainment zone could be a possibility thanks to a new state law.

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

Transportation and entertainment will be two oft-discussed topics in 2025 when it comes to new laws across the state.

On the roads, California will be joining 43 other states with implementing "daylighting" laws, proven to succeed in reducing pedestrian injuries from motor vehicles. On Jan. 1, Assembly Bill 413 or the "California Daylighting Law" will have its warning period end for violators. The law, which took effect this year, prohibits parking within 20 feet of any crosswalk or 15 feet of a crosswalk with extended curbs. This applies only on the side where cars approach the intersection.

Through this year, violators only received warnings, with exceptions for if the curb was painted red or a sign explicitly prohibited parking. Violations will now lead to citations and increased enforcement, with tickets from $40 to more.

Proponents of the bill argue for pedestrian safety, while critics have pointed out that enforcement will remove many parking spaces and make it harder for drivers to get street parking.

"The concept is simple," the Ventura County Sheriff's Office wrote. "Pedestrian safety is vastly improved by removing vehicles that are close to intersections and crosswalks … pedestrians will no longer have to 'peek' around large SUVs before they venture out into the intersection."

Vehicle-related fatalities have been on the mind of locals this year, including from a fatality that took place on Oct. 17, when 34-year-old Sharese Allen was struck by a 2015 Infiniti sports utility vehicle on the 1400 block of Santa Monica beach. According to the California Office of Traffic Safety, California leads the nation in total pedestrian fatalities, with a rate of pedestrian deaths 25% higher than the national average.

While not a direct January impact, local travel via the Big Blue Bus will be changing in August, with a phase of the organization's Brighter Blue plan taking shape. At that time, the Rapid 7 line will consolidate trips into more frequent Route 7 service, while Route 5 will shorten alignment to operate between SMC Main Campus and Century City, improving weekday service to every 30 minutes.

One state bill that may impact the future of local outdoor entertainment is Senate Bill 969, which will allow local governments to designate "entertainment zones." There, bars and restaurants can sell alcoholic beverages that guests can drink on public streets and sidewalks. A similar bill was signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom in 2022, only limited to San Francisco.

Opponents of the bill state that entertainment zones could increase alcohol mortality rates and contribute to drunk driving accidents, while proponents are promoting the business-friendly nature of the law.

"Getting people out in the streets to enjoy themselves is critical for communities across

SEE **LAWS** PAGE 11

Tattoo studio opens on Main Street offering an elegant inking experience



Scott Snowden

INK INC: Gers Rescrepo Echeverry and Stephanie Serna (L-R) hope to share art in all its forms.

SCOTT SNOWDEN
SMDP Staff Writer

Art is in the eye of the beholder, at least that's what Margaret Wolfe Hungerford believed in 1876, but it's unquestionably subjective. And art takes many different forms and can be displayed in many different ways, including on your body. If you're so inclined.

Black Hand Co, located at 2107 Main Street, is unquestionably the nicest tattoo parlor this reporter has ever seen and is a very far cry from the outdated, clichéd image of seedy, smoke-filled backstreet outlets found in intimidating alleyways. This one features a calming rainforest decor complete with fully functional grand piano, a portrait of Vincent van Gogh and replica marble busts of the ancient Olympian deity Apollo. In fact, walking past the shop frontage, it's safe to say that you'd have no idea what this place actually was.

Gers Rescrepo Echeverry (38) and Stephanie Serna (27) both hail from Medellín in Columbia and this represents a long-held dream to take their passion and make it a reality. Both come from an arts-based background and decided that Santa Monica had the right vibe for them after first spending some time in Miami.

"It's pretty different [in Miami], Serna said, "The lifestyle over there is not like our lifestyle."

They were set to open a store at a different location, at 175 Pier Avenue, but the building was sold before they could complete their project.

"When we first Googled this place and even walked past it, we weren't too sure, but then when we saw the inside and how much space there was, we knew we wanted it," Serna said, adding that most of the renovation work, including laying the floor, painting and even actually building some of the bathroom fixtures, they did themselves.

> When we first Googled this place and even walked past it, we weren't too sure, but then when we saw the inside and how much space there was, we knew we wanted it
> - Stephanie Serna

And the space is big, but the Black Hand Co team has big plans. There are currently four work stations together with a spacious changing room, plus computers and printers so that designs can be fully finalized before the process of permanent body painting begins. There are even tentative plans to include a body piercing element and possibly even tattoo removal, but as Echeverry says, that would

SEE **INK** PAGE 8



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **56.8**

THURSDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: Knee to thigh 1-2FT

Small'ish but potentially kinda fun as a new SSW swell fills in & slowly becomes dominant source of surf. Likely lully, but could be some pretty crisp little lines at the points and maybe still just enough NW running for peaks at beachbreak

FRIDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: Knee to thigh 1-2FT

A bit more SSW and less NW than Friday is likely - so potential for fun little lines at the points with more walled up shape at the beachbreaks. Stay tuned.

Weather

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 74.
Thursday Mostly clear, with a low around 52.
Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 67.
Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 49.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted	(ft)High/Low
2024/12/31	Tue	02:18 AM	2.38	L
2024/12/31	Tue	08:40 AM	6.36	H
2024/12/31	Tue	3:59 PM	-1.15	L
2024/12/31	Tue	10:44 PM	3.60	H
2025/01/01	Wed	02:59 AM	2.31	L
2025/01/01	Wed	09:18 AM	6.35	H
2025/01/01	Wed	4:46 PM	-1.14	L
2025/01/01	Wed	11:22 PM	3.69	H
2025/01/02	Thu	03:45 AM	2.29	L
2025/01/02	Thu	09:58 AM	6.10	H
2025/01/02	Thu	5:23 PM	-0.95	L
2025/01/03	Fri	12:02 AM	3.84	H
2025/01/03	Fri	04:39 AM	2.28	L
2025/01/03	Fri	10:43 AM	5.64	H
2025/01/03	Fri	6:00 PM	-0.59	L
2025/01/04	Sat	12:44 AM	4.06	H
2025/01/04	Sat	05:42 AM	2.26	L
2025/01/04	Sat	11:34 AM	4.96	H
2025/01/04	Sat	6:38 PM	-0.10	L
2025/01/05	Sun	01:29 AM	4.34	H
2025/01/05	Sun	07:00 AM	2.16	L
2025/01/05	Sun	12:36 PM	4.15	H
2025/01/05	Sun	7:18 PM	0.50	L

Daily Lottery

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 12/28
6 31 51 54 55
Power#: 12
Jackpot: 163 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 12/27
3 7 37 49 55
Mega#: 6
Jackpot: 20 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 12/28
6 14 22 28 35
Mega#: 24
Jackpot: 12 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 12/29
2 9 14 33 39

Daily 3
Draw Date: 12/29
EVENING: 2 6 3
Draw Date: 12/29
MIDDAY: 9 3 9

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 12/29
1st: 06 - Whirl Win
2nd: 12 - Lucky Charms
3rd: 09 - Winning Spirit
Race Time: 1:44.06

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Santa Monica Daily Press

2024 was big for bitcoin. States could see a crypto policy blitz in 2025 in spite of the risks

The new year will usher in the bitcoin-friendly administration of President-elect Donald Trump and an expanding lobbying effort in statehouses that, together, could push states to become more open to crypto and for public pension funds and treasuries to buy into it.

Proponents of the uniquely volatile commodity argue it is a valuable hedge against inflation, similar to gold.

Many bitcoin enthusiasts and investors are quick to criticize government-backed currencies as prone to devaluation and say increased government buy-in will stabilize bitcoin's future price swings, give it more legitimacy and further boost an already rising price.

But the risks are significant. Critics say a crypto investment is highly speculative, with so much unknown about projecting its future returns, and warn that investors should be prepared to lose money.

Only a couple public pension funds have invested in cryptocurrency and a new U.S. Government Accountability Office study on 401(k) plan investments in crypto, issued in recent days, warned it has "uniquely high volatility" and that it found no standard approach for projecting the future returns of crypto.

It has already been a landmark year for crypto, with bitcoin hitting $100,000, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission approving the first exchange-traded funds that hold bitcoin and crypto enthusiasts being cheered by Trump's promise to make the United States the "bitcoin superpower" of the world.

MORE LEGISLATION ON CRYPTO COULD BE COMING

Lawmakers in more states can expect to see bills in 2025 to make them crypto-friendly as analysts say crypto is becoming a powerful lobby, bitcoin miners build new installations and venture capitalists underwrite a growing tech sector that caters to cryptocurrencies.

Meanwhile, a new crypto-friendly federal government under Trump and Congress could consider legislation from Sen. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyoming, to create a federal bitcoin reserve on which states can piggyback.

A bill introduced last month in Pennsylvania's House of Representatives sought to authorize the state's treasurer and public pension funds to invest in bitcoin. It went nowhere before the legislative session ended, but it caused a stir.

"I had a friend who is a rep down the road text me, 'Oh my god, I'm getting so many emails and phone calls to my office,' more than he ever did about any other bill," said the measure's sponsor, Republican Mike Cabell.

Cabell — a bitcoin enthusiast who lost his reelection bid — expects his bill to be reintroduced by a colleague. And leaders of bitcoin advocacy group Satoshi Action say they expect bills based on their model bill to be introduced in at least 10 other states next year.

BUT WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC PENSION FUNDS?

Keith Brainard, research director for the National Association of State Retirement Administrators, said he doesn't expect many public pension fund investment professionals, who oversee nearly $6 trillion in assets, to invest in crypto.

Pension fund professionals take risks they deem to be appropriate, but bitcoin investing has a short track record, might only fit into a niche asset class and may not fit the risk-to-reward profile they seek.

"There might be a bit of dabbling in bitcoin," Brainard said. "But it's difficult to envision a scenario in which pension funds right now are willing to make a commitment."

In Louisiana, Treasurer John Fleming helped make the state the first to introduce a system by which people can pay a government agency in cryptocurrencies.

> "My concern is that at some point it'll stop growing and then people will want to cash in"
> - John Fleming

Fleming said he's not trying to promote cryptocurrency, but rather sees the step as a recognition that government must innovate and be flexible in helping people make financial transactions with the state. He said he would never invest his money, or the state's, in crypto.

Fleming recalled meeting with a bitcoin lobbyist recently and came away unconvinced that bitcoin makes for a good investment.

"My concern is that at some point it'll stop growing and then people will want to cash in," Fleming said. "And when they do, it could tank the value of a bitcoin."

In Pennsylvania, Treasury Department officials said they have the authority to decide for themselves if cryptocurrencies meet the agency's investment standards under state law and don't need new legislation.

Still, a highly volatile asset is ill-suited to the agency's need for predictability, considering it writes millions of checks a year. The overwhelming majority of the roughly $60 billion it invests at any given time is in short-term, conservative investments

SEE **BITCOIN** PAGE 11

COMMUNITY NEWS

Countywide

Public Health Warns Against Feeding Pets Raw Food Following H5 Bird Flu Virus Detection

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is advising residents to not feed their pets raw food following a voluntary recall of Northwest Naturals Brand 2lb Feline Turkey Recipe Raw & Frozen Pet Food due to detection of H5 bird flu virus in product samples. The Oregon Department of Agriculture has confirmed a house cat contracted H5 bird flu and died after consuming the recalled raw frozen pet food. The recalled products are sold in California. A listing of retailers can be found on the product's website.

The recalled products are packaged 2-pound plastic bags with "Best if used by" dates of 05/21/26 B10 and 06/23/2026 B1. Pet owners are urged to immediately dispose of the product.

Residents who fed their pets the recalled raw pet food products or other raw meat or dairy products and notice their pet is experiencing symptoms should immediately contact their veterinarian.

Public Health recently confirmed H5 bird flu in four house cats that consumed recalled raw milk and became sick and died, which is part of an ongoing investigation. Cats infected with H5 bird flu can develop severe illness that may including neurologic signs, respiratory signs or liver disease that can rapidly progress to death. Public Health is also investigating additional possible cases of H5 bird flu in three house cats from a different household. One cat has tested positive for Influenza A, a rare result in cats that indicates possible H5 bird flu. Two other cats, which have died after worsening respiratory illness, are presumed to have also been positive for Influenza A. Public Health is awaiting confirmatory testing. These cats were not known to be exposed to raw milk, however public health is investigating other possible sources of infection, including raw meat.

Residents should avoid consumption of all raw milk and raw meat products and not feed these to their pets. Raw dairy, meat and poultry products, can harbor harmful bacteria and viruses, including H5 bird flu, which can pose serious risks to your health and the health of your pets. While consuming raw milk and meat products is never advised from a public health standpoint, the risk is especially concerning at this time, given the ongoing spread of bird flu virus among dairy cattle and following recent multiple detections of the virus in raw milk products.

ABOUT H5 BIRD FLU

H5 bird flu refers to various strains of influenza A viruses that typically infect birds. While these viruses mainly affect wild birds, sometimes they also infect other animals, including wild and domestic animals (including seals, foxes, cats, and cows). H5N1 is one type of avian influenza that has been spreading among birds and mammals, leading to a nationwide outbreak. This is the first time these bird flu viruses have been found to be spreading in cows. The overall risk of H5 bird flu to the public remains low. There is currently no evidence of person to person spread of this virus.

Public Health has been working with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the local LA County agricultural community to ensure key risk groups, including farm workers, workers at dairy, egg, and meat processing facilities and backyard flock owners receive information and resources to help identify and protect against this infection; this includes access to gloves, face masks and eye protection along with access to testing and flu vaccines.

Public Health confirmed the first case of H5 bird flu in a human in Los Angeles County who was exposed to livestock infected with H5 Bird flu at a worksite.

Symptoms of H5 bird flu virus infection in humans may include:
Eye redness or discharge
Cough
Sore throat
runny or stuffy nose
Diarrhea
Vomiting
muscle or body aches
Headaches
Fatigue
trouble breathing
Fever

Symptoms in cats infected with H5 bird flu may vary and include:
Loss of appetite
Tiredness
Respiratory and/or neurological signs

For questions or to find a nearby clinic or doctor, residents can call the Public Health InfoLine at 833-540-0473. Open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For more information, visit:
Avian flu in animals: publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/HPAI.htm
Avian flu in humans: ph.lacounty.gov/acd/diseases/h5n1.htm

SUBMITTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH

GET IT DAILY...

Americans are exhausted by political news. TV ratings and a new AP-NORC poll show they're tuning out

As a Democrat who immersed himself in political news during the presidential campaign, Ziad Aunallah has much in common with many Americans since the election. He's tuned out.

"People are mentally exhausted," said Aunallah, 45, of San Diego. "Everyone knows what is coming and we are just taking some time off."

Television ratings — and now a new poll — clearly illustrate the phenomenon. About two-thirds of American adults say they have recently felt the need to limit media consumption about politics and government because of overload, according to the survey from the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Smaller percentages of Americans are limiting their intake of news about overseas conflicts, the economy or climate change, the poll says. Politics stand out.

Election news on CNN and MSNBC was taking up too much of Sam Gude's time before the election, said the 47-year-old electrician from Lincoln, Nebraska. "The last thing I want to watch right now is the interregnum," said Gude, a Democrat and no fan of President-elect Donald Trump.

Poll finds more Democrats than Republicans stepping away from news

The poll, conducted in early December, found that about 7 in 10 Democrats say they are stepping back from political news. The percentage isn't as high for Republicans, who have reason to celebrate Trump's victory. Still, about 6 in 10 Republicans say they've felt the need to take some time off too, and the share for independents is similar.

The differences are far starker for the TV networks that have been consumed by political news.

After election night through Dec. 13, the prime-time viewership of MSNBC was an average of 620,000, down 54% from the pre-election audience this year, the Nielsen company said. For the same time comparison, CNN's average of 405,000 viewers was down 45%.

At Fox News Channel, a favorite news network for Trump fans, the post-election average of 2.68 million viewers is up 13%, Nielsen said. Since the election, 72% of the people watching one of those three cable networks in the evening were watching Fox News, compared to 53% prior to election day.

A post-election slump for fans of the losing candidate is not a new trend for networks that have become heavily identified for a partisan audience. MSNBC had similar issues after Trump was elected in 2016. Same for Fox in 2020, although that was complicated by anger: many of its viewers were outraged then by the network's crucial election night call of Arizona for the Democratic presidential candidate, Joe Biden, and sought alternatives.

MSNBC had its own anger issues after several "Morning Joe" viewers became upset that hosts Joe Scarborough and Mika Brzezinski visited Trump shortly after his victory last month. Yet while the show's ratings are down 35% since Election Day, that's a smaller drop than the network's prime-time ratings.

CNN points out that while it has been suffering in the television ratings, its streaming and digital ratings have been consistent.

Will political interest rebound when Trump takes office?

MSNBC can take some solace in history. In previous years, network ratings bounce back when the depression after an election loss lifts. When a new administration takes office, people who oppose it are frequently looking for a gathering place.

"I'll be tuning back in once the clown show starts," Aunallah said. "You have no choice. Whether or not you want to hear it, it's happening. If you care about your country, you have no choice but to pay attention."

But the ride may not be smooth. MSNBC's slide is steeper than it was in 2016; and there's some question about whether Trump opponents will want to be as engaged as they were during his first term. People are also unplugging from cable television in rates that are only getting more rapid, although MSNBC believes it has bucked this trend eating away at audiences before.

The poll indicates that Americans want less talk about politics from public figures in general. After an election season where endorsements from celebrities like Taylor Swift made headlines, the survey found that Americans are more likely to disapprove than approve of celebrities, large companies and professional athletes speaking out about politics.

Still, Gude is among those discovering other ways to get news to which he does want to pay attention, including on YouTube.

MSNBC is also in the middle of some corporate upheaval that raises questions about potential changes. Parent company Comcast announced last month that the cable network is among some properties that will spin off into a new company, which will give MSNBC new corporate leadership and cut its ties to NBC News.

Advice for networks who want to see the viewers return

Some of the Americans who have turned away from political news lately also had some advice for getting them engaged again.

Gude said, for example, that MSNBC will always have a hard-core audience of Trump haters. But if the network wants to expand its audience, "then you have to talk about issues, and you have to stop talking about Trump."

Kathleen Kendrick, a 36-year-old sales rep from Grand Junction, Colorado, who's a registered independent voter, said she hears plenty of people loudly spouting off about their political opinions on the job. She wants more depth when she watches the news. Much of what she sees is one-sided and shallow, she said.

"You get a story but only part of a story," Kendrick said. "It would be nice if you could get both sides, and more research."

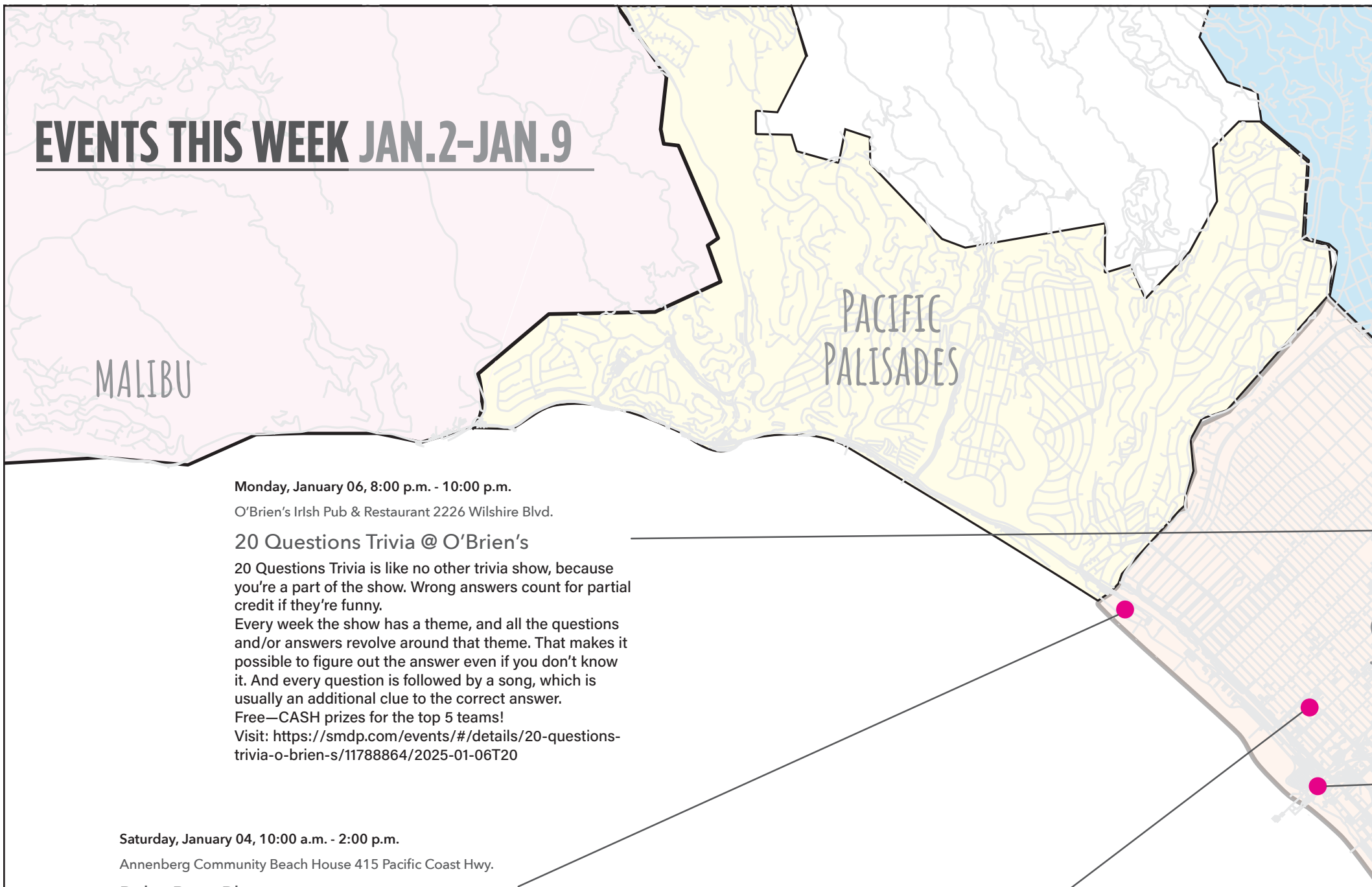
Aunallah, similarly, is looking for more

SEE **NEWS** PAGE 8

FINDING A NEW DENTIST IS TOUGH!!!
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If you don't like what we have to say we will give you a copy of your x-rays at no charge
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EVENTS THIS WEEK JAN.2-JAN.9



Monday, January 06, 8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

O'Brien's Irlsh Pub & Restaurant 2226 Wilshire Blvd.

20 Questions Trivia @ O'Brien's

20 Questions Trivia is like no other trivia show, because you're a part of the show. Wrong answers count for partial credit if they're funny.
Every week the show has a theme, and all the questions and/or answers revolve around that theme. That makes it possible to figure out the answer even if you don't know it. And every question is followed by a song, which is usually an additional clue to the correct answer.
Free—CASH prizes for the top 5 teams!
Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/20-questions-trivia-o-brien-s/11788864/2025-01-06T20

Saturday, January 04, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Annenberg Community Beach House 415 Pacific Coast Hwy.

Polar Bear Plunge

Looking for a bold way to kick off 2024? The Annual Polar Bear Plunge is a great way to refresh, reset, and have some fun. If you have never been part of a Polar Bear Swim, it's time to see what you're missing.
Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/polar-bear-plunge/14544559/2025-01-04T10

Sunday, January 05, 9:30 p.m.

Harvelle's Santa Monica 1432 4th St, Santa Monica.

The Toledo Show

Doors open at 8 PM. Show starts at 9:30PM. Online ticket sales end at 7 PM, tics available at the door after 8 PM. 2 drink minimum. Please note, we are 21 and over only! As quoted by the Los Angeles Times, Toledo is "The coolest Cat working in Hollywood". Add to that, "Toledo has learned from the best and it shows in his performance," "The show is top notch and really must be experienced" and "...it's apparent where he is: establishing himself as one of the hottest acts in modern music." Toledo. Soul singer, Jazz man, poet, dancer, choreographer, connoisseur of haberdashery and probably one of the most dramatic and entertaining performers you will ever see.
Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/the-toledo-show/14058065/2025-01-05T21

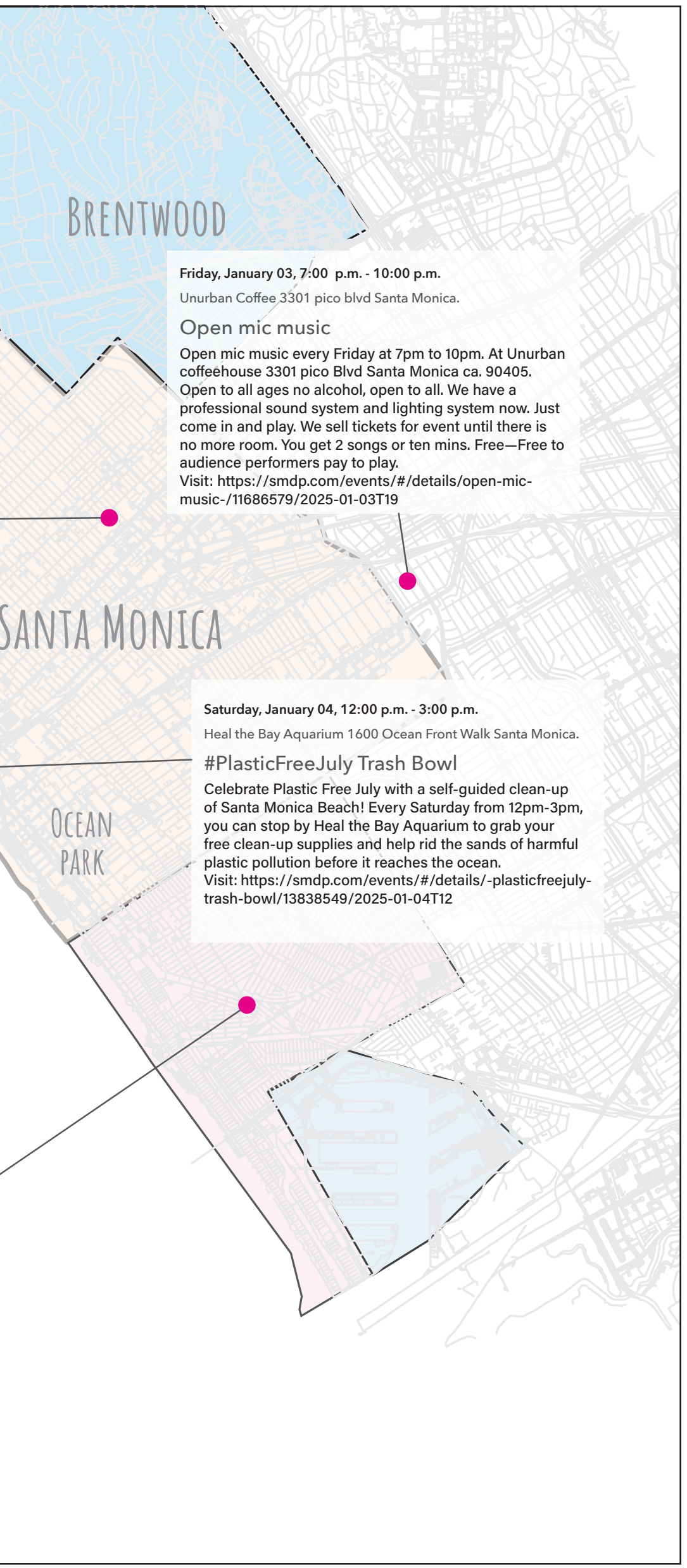
Friday, January 03, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Venice Branch Library 501 S Venice Blvd. Venice.

Friends of Venice Library: Pilates - Core Work

Develop strength, flexibility and balance through the fusion of Pilates mat movement. All levels welcome. Please be EARLY. Class starts on-time at 11am. No entry after the first ten minutes. No class the day before the Friends' Book Sales. For ADA accommodations, call (213) 228-7430 at least 72 hours prior to the event. Para ajustes razonables según la ley de ADA, llama al (213) 228-7430 al menos 72 horas antes del evento.
Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/friends-of-venice-library-pilates-core-work/14548475/2025-01-03T11

Check out more events at: smdp.com/events



Friday, January 03, 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Unurban Coffee 3301 pico blvd Santa Monica.

Open mic music

Open mic music every Friday at 7pm to 10pm. At Unurban coffeehouse 3301 pico Blvd Santa Monica ca. 90405. Open to all ages no alcohol, open to all. We have a professional sound system and lighting system now. Just come in and play. We sell tickets for event until there is no more room. You get 2 songs or ten mins. Free—Free to audience performers pay to play.
Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/open-mic-music-/11686579/2025-01-03T19

Saturday, January 04, 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Heal the Bay Aquarium 1600 Ocean Front Walk Santa Monica.

#PlasticFreeJuly Trash Bowl

Celebrate Plastic Free July with a self-guided clean-up of Santa Monica Beach! Every Saturday from 12pm-3pm, you can stop by Heal the Bay Aquarium to grab your free clean-up supplies and help rid the sands of harmful plastic pollution before it reaches the ocean.
Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/-plasticfreejuly-trash-bowl/13838549/2025-01-04T12



THURSDAY | JANUARY 2:

HOUSING COMMISSION

6:15 p.m. City council Chambers, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main St. The Santa Monica Housing Commission is a city advisory body whose mission is to protect and improve the quality of life of all Santa Monicans by listening to input from city residents and staff, publicly deliberating, and providing recommendations to both the Santa Monica City Council and Santa Monica Housing Authority Board on issues related to housing in Santa Monica.

FRIDAY | JANUARY 3

SHEFAYOGA 2025 KICK OFF

7:30 - 9 a.m. Shefayoga, 245 Main St., Venice. Start the new year with a complimentary free yoga class hosted by Leah Zaccaria. This special event is the perfect way to align your body and mind while connecting with fellow members. To register, visit: https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/tu7vpbz.

BRUNCH FRIDAYS

11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tiato Kitchen & Venue, 2700 Colorado Ave. Every week, enjoy great eats, libations and a featured musical artist on the beautiful garden patio. To reserve, visit http://www.tiato.com.

SATURDAY | JANUARY 4

POLAR BEAR PLUNGE

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Hwy. The annual Polar Bear Plunge is a great way to refresh, reset and have some fun. Whether you stick your toes in the ocean, take a quick dip or round the buoy, the experience gets the blood pumping and skin tingling. After the ocean plunge, warm up in the heated Beach House pool, enjoy a cup of hot chocolate and grab a photo with Pat the Polar Bear. To register, visit: https://www.santamonica.gov/events/4gx2ef8mk208qwzb-80ntc47wc2/202501041000.

FUNNY HOW MARRIAGE WORKS

7:30 - 9:30 p.m. The Eli and Edythe Broad Stage, 1310 11th St. Get ready for a night of laughs for you and your significant other. This is a chance to laugh and be inspired as a couple, and also a great experience for someone thinking about getting married or dating to get married someday. Tickets $78-$155, to purchase visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/michael-jrs-funny-how-marriage-works-tour-santa-monica-ca-tickets-1084066485039.

SUNDAY | JANUARY 5

EXPLORING METAPHORS

Durón Gallery at SPARC, 685 Venice Blvd., Venice. "Exploring Metaphors: The Creative Process of the Great Wall of LA" presents an exclusive behind-the-scenes view of the collaborative process that is extending the iconic Great Wall of Los Angeles mural from the 1960s to the present. Artistic Director Judy Baca leads a diverse team of researchers, muralists, digital artists, and technical specialists to expand on this monumental work, blending teamwork, metaphors, and innovative design.

MONDAY | JANUARY 6

DISABILITIES COMMISSION

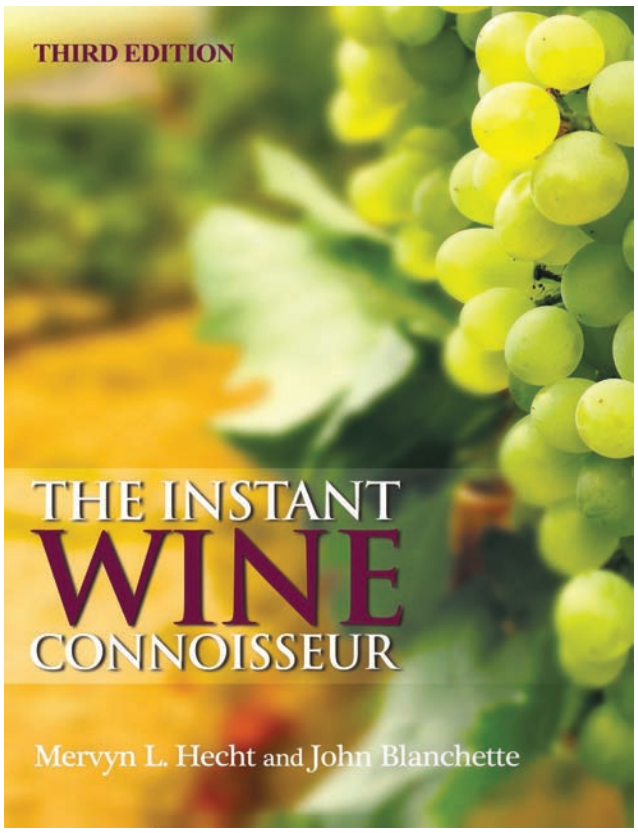
6:30 p.m. SMi Room, Civic Center Parking Structure, 333 Civic Center Dr. The Disabilities Commission helps improve the quality of life for people with disabilities in Santa Monica by prioritizing issues of concern and advising the city Council and City Staff on those issues. The Commission recommends ways to maximize participation of people with disabilities in all facets of City life and increase awareness of the abilities, rights and issues of people with disabilities throughout the community.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

7 p.m. City Council Chambers, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main St. The Architectural Review Board established in 1974, acts "to preserve existing areas of natural beauty, cultural importance and assure that buildings, structures, signs or other developments are in good taste, good design, harmonious with surrounding developments, and in general contribute to the preservation of Santa Monica's reputation as a place of beauty, spaciousness and quality."



★★★★★ A light-hearted fun read.
★★★★★ Well written, particularly useful, instantly accessible.
★★★★★ ...Hecht has a joyful eye and fabulous taste



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Pacific Palisades

Chamber Music Palisades Opens the Year with the Acclaimed Pacific Trio

On January 15, at 8:00 p.m., in the sanctuary of St. Matthew's Parish, Chamber Music Palisades (CMP) will present a concert featuring the renowned Pacific Trio — Roger Willkie, violin, John Waltz, cello, and Edith Orloff, piano.

Orloff, pianist extraordinaire, is acclaimed as recitalist, chamber musician, and concert soloist whose music-making is praised at home and abroad for interpretive vitality and perceptive musicianship. Walz, principal cellist of Los Angeles Opera, is a celebrated soloist and chamber music artist, known for dazzling virtuosity and elegant musicianship. Wilkie is the concertmaster of the Long Beach Symphony and also for John Williams.

The Pacific Trio will be joined by Jonah Sirota to play the Brahms Piano Quartet. Sirota, violist and composer who writes and performs music for film and television, as well as being a Grammy-nominated chamber musician, is also presenting a World Premiere of his work "Spin" for flute, oboe, viola, and piano, joined by Pierre Long-Tao Tang, collaborative pianist at UCLA and lecturer of music at University of San Diego. Gigi Brady, who performs with MUSE/IQUE and is a guest artist at the LA Opera will play oboe for two works. Susan Greenberg, former flutist with LA Chamber Orchestra and presently first flute with Santa Monica Symphony and Artistic Director of Chamber Music Palisades, will be the flutist at the concert. Alan Chapman, KUSC host and long-time Chamber Music Palisades associate, will provide his informative in-person program notes.

Tickets will be available for $35 online at cmpalisades.org or at the door the evening of the concert at Saint Matthew's Parish, 1031 Bienveneda Avenue, Pacific Palisades. CMP offers free admission for full-time students with an ID. This concert is sponsored in part by the Los Angeles Count Department of Arts and Culture.

SUBMITTED BY NANCY VARAT

Citywide

Jing Yeo appointed acting director of Community Development

City Manager David White announced that Planning Manager Jing Yeo will step in as the acting director of the Community Development Department effective Dec. 31.

Yeo will serve in the role while the recruitment for a permanent director wraps up. The city launched a nationwide recruitment for the post following

Director David Martin's retirement announcement in September.

"Jing is a tremendous asset to the department, and I am grateful for her willingness to step up and lead the team as we finalize the recruitment process," White said. "Her extensive experience and vast knowledge will be critical in this time of transition."

Yeo has worked in Santa Monica's Planning Division since 2006, starting as a senior planner and ultimately leading the division as planning manager since 2016. Before coming to Santa Monica, she served as a principal planner for the city of Palm Springs.

She holds a bachelor's degree in urban and economic geography from the University of British Columbia and a master's degree in planning and urban design from the University of Toronto.

SUBMITTED BY TATI SIMONIAN

INK

FROM PAGE 3

more than likely be in a different location. Both are also hoping to build relations with other artists in Santa Monica and to use the generous wall space to promote and sell works by other artists.

He moved to the US during the pandemic and had to find work, consequently he ended up working in construction and by sheer good fortune, learned along the way how to do things like laying a floor, painting and welding. "You dream something and [if] you have discipline and you have attitude, then you can make it work. I come during Covid and I had to work two years in construction, something I've never done before, but because of that, I build all of this [sic]."

Tattoos are disconnected from fashion and according to Echeverry, trends change. That whole period about 10 years ago of Williamsburg-influenced gentrification when everyone wanted to sport circus strongmen–style moustaches and wear tweed, significantly affected the style and design of tattoos that many were going for.

"I think right now it's more about fine lines that people want, almost like dainty, and more realism and [what's called] traditional Japanese art ... Before that it was more traditional American, with bigger, thicker lines, full color blocks and single colors," Echeverry said, adding, "When I first started, there were only three or four different styles, but now [for example] there's traditional, neo-traditional, Japanese, neo-traditional Japanese, traditional Japanese and so many more."

A website hasn't been set up yet as the business has only been open for a couple of weeks. However, both Serna and Echeverry say that the best idea is to pop in and have a chat about what it is that you're after.

scott.snowden@smdp.com

NEWS

FROM PAGE 5

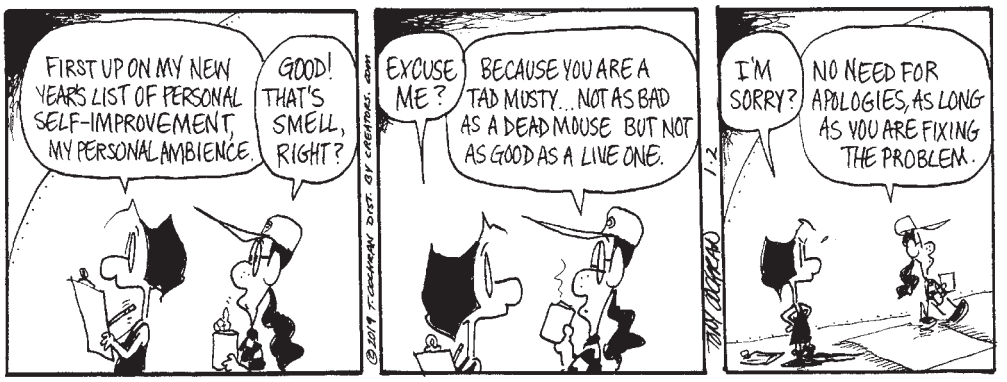
depth and variety. He's not interested "in watching the angry man on the corner yelling at me anymore," he said.

"It's kind of their own fault that I'm not watching," he said. "I felt they spent all this time talking about the election. They made it so much of their focus that when the main event ends, why would people want to keep watching?"

By DAVID BAUDER and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press Sanders reported from Washington.

Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



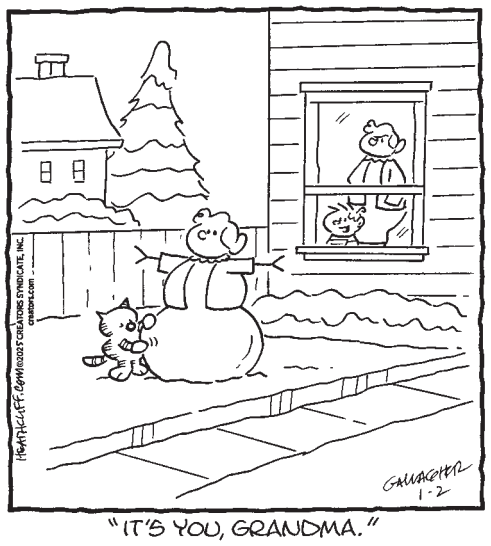
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"IT'S YOU, GRANDMA."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 24 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 6443

Sea life

A R O B M O B I V A L V E A B
S E V A W O B B E G O N G C U
N W H I T E P O I N T E R D A
A N H T E R S T P M S A R I P
B P O T E D N E E A B P T K C
Y M T E P M I L E L O S S I A
S S F H E E F T D C U A S N S
S A Y S S E D S S R M H C L K
S M N A E I T T G D I H A R C
A I H D R H F U I P O E S S O
L N I C G I L W I R S S L Q R
T N V I R L E P O P A H E U D
G O E D A E H T A L F A E I A
R W H A L E P S G E B R I D R
T P O L L A C S Y K O K A M T

Abyss	Eels	Orca	Shark
Anchor	Feeding	Perch	Ship
Bivalve	Fins	Pipi	Sole
Blowfish	Flathead	Rays	Squid
Bombora	Glass	Reef	Tide
Bottom	Gull	Rip	Waves
Clam	Kelp	Rocks	Weights
Crab	Limpet	Rust	Whale
Dart	Mako	Salt	White pointer
Deep	Mask	Sand	Wobbegong
Depth	Minnow	Scallop	
Drifts	Neap	Seals	

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 2)

Your charms are augmented, and the year is abundant with encounters, sweet, enchanting, lucrative and lucky. Clarity of vision makes you tenacious, and your ability to paint the picture for others makes you a respected leader. More highlights: Lively reunions, daring excursions and multiple kinds of delciousness - psychological, gastronomical and aesthetic. Taurus and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 30, 33, 13 and 36.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). A paradox: the ones who need the most tenderness are unlikely to have the capacity to return tenderness right away, if ever. However, time transforms in unpredictable ways. And luckily, giving tenderness is its own reward.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Though you'd gladly sacrifice for another, it would be a waste of resources to do so unnecessarily. Find out what the actual problem is, and don't take other people's word for it either. Step back for the wide view. What is it that everyone is not yet seeing?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The complexity lies in the fact that what you owe and what you are owed may come in two different currencies. You'll be listening to others with your whole being, opening yourself to connection and any understanding to help you even the balance.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Compromise and collaboration will be necessary. Even more necessary? Making sure that everyone feels heard. Invite all concerned parties into a creative huddle and set the tone for maximum empathetic listening.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Victory isn't always about winning the battle; it's about playing with purpose and handling the struggle with grace. In the end, you may not even remember who won or what the prize was because how you navigate the fight is what shines in the mind.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There are answerable questions; then there are questions akin to opening Pandora's box and unleashing chaos upon the world that cannot be put back. If you wish to know more, start with understanding all the answers that exist outside the box.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). What causes your mental and emotional vitality to surge is not at all what you might expect. Interactions get interesting. You're catching messages and meanings you weren't before, and that's part of the fun, too.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Pace yourself. Go easy on yourself! Be satisfied that whatever you're doing at any given time, you have your reasons. What you give is enough. What you are is more than enough.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Routines, locations, time frames, cost - all logistics that may seem to have nothing to do with love but actually have everything to do with love. While emotions and connections often feel intangible, love is deeply intertwined with the tangible aspects of life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Go ahead and assume a higher level of responsibility than is comfortable. It's a hermit-crab situation. The new shell will be roomy and clunky and rub in all the wrong places until it doesn't. You'll grow to fit it perfectly.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You might be surprised at the difference you make doing the regular old routine. But when you're not showing up with your smile and your style, people notice. In short, it wouldn't be the same without you. Let that information energize your journey.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You give your all to the work that matters. That which is done in the name of love, loyalty or friendship will top your list of priorities. Service has a way of energizing you, turning up your personal power and your mood.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

B	A	S	S	■	O	W	L	S	■	A	L	A	R	M
U	H	O	K	■	B	E	E	T	■	R	E	C	U	R
D	E	L	I	■	E	D	G	E	■	G	A	I	N	S
■	M	E	R	R	Y	G	O	R	O	U	N	D	S	■
■	■	■	M	E	M	E	■	■	P	E	T	■	■	■
■	P	O	I	S	E	■	A	P	T	■	O	D	O	R
S	L	A	S	H	■	A	C	E	I	T	■	E	M	U
W	A	S	H	I	N	G	M	A	C	H	I	N	E	S
I	C	E	■	P	O	R	E	S	■	R	H	I	N	E
M	E	S	H	■	S	A	S	■	R	O	O	M	S	■
■	■	■	A	M	I	■	■	S	O	A	P	■	■	■
■	F	I	G	U	R	E	S	K	A	T	E	R	S	■
R	I	N	G	S	■	T	H	U	S	■	N	E	A	R
A	D	D	L	E	■	D	E	N	T	■	O	N	L	Y
T	O	Y	E	D	■	S	A	K	S	■	T	O	T	E

Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

5	1	7	4	6	8	2	3	9
9	4	6	3	2	1	7	5	8
8	3	2	7	5	9	6	4	1
2	6	8	1	3	4	5	9	7
1	5	4	2	9	7	8	6	3
7	9	3	5	8	6	1	2	4
6	7	1	9	4	2	3	8	5
4	8	5	6	7	3	9	1	2
3	2	9	8	1	5	4	7	6

	4	1		8	6		5	
		5				6		1
		2	1				8	
8	1	9	4		7			3
		3				4		
2			5		8	1	7	9
	5				1	2		
1		7				3		
	3		2	9		8	1	

Newsday Crossword

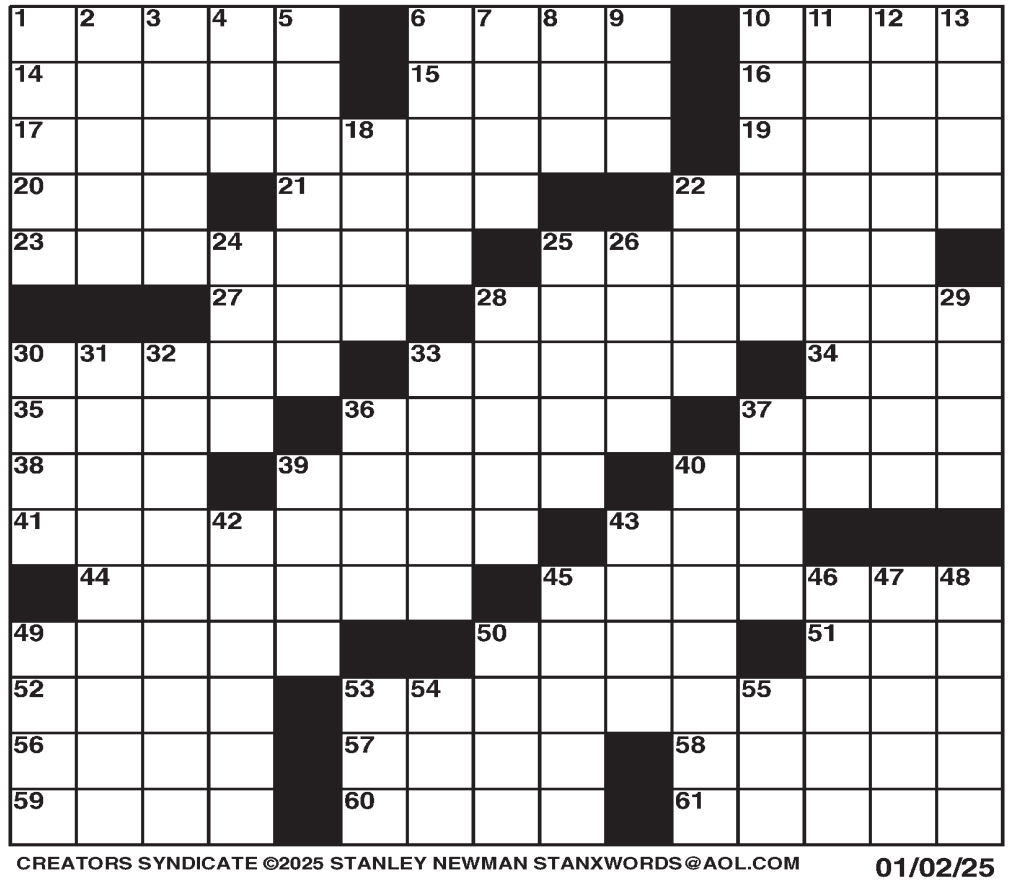
SHORT LETTERS by Jerry Clarkson
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Go along
6 Gravy flaw
10 "Mamma Mia!" group
14 Raise, as rabbits
15 Vertical transportation giant
16 Home for brothers
17 Common cab in many cities
19 Sow and hoe for dough
20 Coral habitat
21 "Forget it"
22 Light sprays
23 Bridges between buildings
25 Vocally scratchy
27 MGM motto starter
28 Family restaurant offering
30 Part of an Uncle Sam costume
33 Is unresolved
34 Tpks., for instance
35 Narrow beams
36 Rugged rocks
37 Song from Schubert
38 Loop segment
39 Uniquely
40 "Grand" music
41 Bygone Aussie bird
43 Auto sticker no.
44 Childish shout
45 As you prefer it
49 Burrito cousins
50 Subcompact
51 Self-identifier
52 Paintballs and snowballs
53 Parts of the brain
56 Insurgents, slangily
57 Sch. on the Rio Grande
58 Honey color
59 "Darn it!"
60 Easily upset
61 They're not true

DOWN

1 Deep cavity
2 The short letters that the four longest Across answers end with
3 Send on
4 Sushi staple
5 Painter Manet
6 Aquatic plant
7 Six-sided state
8 Blender product
9 Letter ineligible for the theme
10 Ratify
11 Informal restaurant
12 Person making the rounds
13 Cash conveniences
18 Motivations
22 Large accumulation
24 Hostilities
25 Depend (on)
26 Half a potpourri pair
28 Neo in *The Matrix*
29 __ ORGANIC seal
30 Slender nail
31 Type of knitted headband
32 Bart Simpson catchphrase
33 Program preview
36 Nile queen nickname
37 US Women's Open org.
39 PMs
40 Visual effect, in film slang
42 Share on social media
43 One-track
45 Apt to topple
46 *Lion King* hero
47 Thin gradually
48 Sultans' peers
49 Urban district
50 Video file format
53 Ruby, opal, or emerald
54 "__ be my pleasure"
55 Opposite of *ennemi*



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01/02/25

MORE OF STAN'S CROSSWORDS! Play FREE from Stan's archives of Easy, Hard and Sunday puzzles at: tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords

PLUNGE

FROM PAGE 1

fun to get it started and … wash off whatever was still left in 2024," he said.

After the plunge, swimmers can gather at the Beach House, where the heated pool will be going and the hot chocolate will be flowing. While lounging at the Beach House, families can take a photo with the day's mascot, Pat the Polar Bear.

The event acts as a preview for year-round activities at both the Beach House and Santa Monica beaches, with 70 different beach volleyball courts open to the public for play and instruction from coaches. The city's beaches and surrounding parks are also used for fitness instructors, something Hamilton said is different from being "stuck in a stuffy, sweaty gym."

Even for more low-impact activities, the Beach House remains a desirable venue for locals all year long.

"We encourage people if you just want a spot to come and sit and visit with your friends, or come out and play a game of Mahjong or Bridge or whatever it is that you'd like to play, we've got those spots available to you," Hamilton said. "Sometimes, maybe you need to wear your sweatshirt in January, February, but you're still outside and (able to) enjoy the sunshine and enjoy a very nice environment to do those things in."

To register for the Polar Bear Plunge, visit https://www.santamonica.gov/events/4gx-2ef8mk208qwzb80ntc47wc2/202501041000.

thomas@smdp.com



File Photos

POLAR: While its called a Polar Plunge, Santa Monica temperatures are fairly mild.

LAWS

FROM PAGE 2

our state to bounce back from the pandemic," State Senator Scott Weiner, author of the bill, said in a statement.

Something to watch for is the potential for the Third Street Promenade to reap the entertainment zone rewards, after the Santa Monica City Council recently approved updates to city zoning rules to provide more flexibility on the Promenade. This includes allowing for game arcades and arcade bars on the Promenade, as well as simplifying review for larger restaurants and eliminating restrictions on business size for the Promenade.

"Encouraging a thriving business community is a key priority for our city and especially in our downtown and Third Street Promenade," Community Development Director David Martin said of the zoning changes. "We will continue to listen and look at holistic approaches to how best to continue to support our city's economic recovery."

Cannabis legislation will also advance in 2025 on a state level, with AB 1775 legalizing cannabis cafes, allowing lounges to sell food and drink items that are not pre-packaged. After a veto of a similar bill in 2022, AB 1775 includes additional protections for workers against secondhand smoke, leading to its passage.

"Lots of people want to enjoy legal cannabis in the company of others," bill author and Assemblymember Matt Haney said. "And many people want to do that while sipping coffee, eating a sandwich, or listening to music. There's no doubt that cannabis cafes will bring massive economic, cultural and creative opportunities and benefits to our state."

Currently, there are no spaces in Santa Monica that would be able to take advantage of this, with the only recreational cannabis spots in town being Local Cannabis Company and Harvest Of Santa Monica on Wilshire Blvd. Several cannabis lounges can be found in West Hollywood, such as The Studio Cannabis Smoking Lounge and The Woods.

The city is currently seeking input on its cannabis social equity program, which aims to address the disproportionate impact of past cannabis criminalization on marginalized communities via participation in the legal cannabis industry.

thomas@smdp.com

BITCOIN

FROM PAGE 4

designed for an investment period of months, officials there said.

Pension boards, which invest on a 30-year time horizon, may already hold small investments in companies involved in mining, trading and storing cryptocurrencies. But they have been slow to embrace bitcoin.

That could change, said Mark Palmer, managing director and a senior research analyst at The Benchmark Company in New York.

Pension boards got investment tools they like this year when the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission approved the first exchange-traded funds that hold bitcoin and, in October, approved listings of options on those funds, Palmer said.

Many "are likely in the process of getting up to speed on what it means to invest in bitcoin and kicking the tires, so to speak, and that's a process that typically takes a while at the institutional level," Palmer said.

Several major asset managers like BlackRock, Invesco and Fidelity have bitcoin ETFs.

SOME STATES ALREADY ARE INVESTING IN CRYPTO

In May, the State of Wisconsin Investment Board became the first state to invest when it bought $160 million worth of shares in two ETFs, or about 0.1% of its assets. It later scaled back that investment to $104 million in one ETF, as of Sept. 30. A spokesperson declined to discuss it.

Michigan's state investment board later reported about $18 million in bitcoin ETF purchases while a candidate for New Jersey governor, Steven Fulop, said that if elected he would push the state's pension fund to invest in crypto.

Fulop, the Democratic mayor of Jersey City, just across the Hudson River from Manhattan, has been preparing for months to buy bitcoin ETF shares for up to 2% of the city's $250 million employee pension fund.

"We were ahead of the curve," Fulop said. "And I think that's what you're eventually going to see is this is widely accepted, with regard to exposure in all pension funds, some sort of exposure."

By MARC LEVY Associated Press

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[1] "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2020

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