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Volume 25 Issue 34 MONDAY 1/5/26 smdp.com

Malibu to mark one year since devastating Palisades Fire with community commemoration

MAAZ ALIN
SMDP Staff Writer

With the anniversary of the Palisades fire approaching, Malibu residents will gather to remember those lost and reflect on a year of painful recovery and unexpected resilience.

The City of Malibu will host "Palisades Fire Commemoration: Finding Strength in Community" on Jan. 7 from 4 to 6 p.m. at City Hall, marking the anniversary of the disaster that destroyed more than 6,800 structures and claimed 12 lives across the region.

"The one-year mark reminds us of both the pain we experienced and the strength we discovered in one another," Mayor Marianne Riggins said. "Through loss, uncertainty, and recovery, our community has shown extraordinary resilience. As we look ahead, we remain focused on supporting every resident, honoring what we've overcome, and building a future rooted in hope and long-term restoration."

The Palisades Fire erupted on Jan. 7, 2025, amid powerful Santa Ana winds and drought conditions, spreading rapidly through Pacific Palisades, Topanga and Malibu. Driven by wind gusts exceeding

SEE **MALIBU** PAGE 8



SMDP Photo

MALIBU: The City of Malibu will host 'Palisades Fire Commemoration: Finding Strength in Community' on Jan. 7 from 4 to 6 p.m. at City Hall.

Palisades businesses one year later: community, challenges, and hopes for the future

One year after the Palisades Fire destroyed homes, restaurants, landmarks, and neighborhoods, many businesses from the area have settled into new communities. However, some have already returned, while still others are in the process of rebuilding.

Over the course of the past year, we spoke to business owners affected by the fire, all of whom had overlapping yet varied experiences. From residents who lost homes to commuters who felt like it was home, they all discussed the overwhelming feeling of community, the close-knit, small-town feel of the Palisades.

A Sense of Community

In the midst of enormous loss, business owners found strength in their communities. Displaced people and non-locals alike offered their support, which they sustained even after donation drives and volunteer efforts began to die down.

Cinque Terre West, an Italian restaurant that relocated to Rose Ave., was welcomed into Venice with open arms. "Since day one, even while we were getting things together, people would stop and say, 'Welcome to the neighborhood,'" says co-owner Marlo Vinzoni. "Our Palisades community will come and see us, and now we're a part of the Venice community as well."

Beloved neighborhood staple Flour Pizzeria is also frequented

SEE **BUSINESS** PAGE 11

One year after the Palisades fire, the community learned how to rebuild itself

On a quiet street in Pacific Palisades, recovery does not announce itself. There are no banners or ribbon cuttings, no grand markers signaling resolution. Instead, there are empty lots where homes once stood, flanked by houses already under construction. Temporary fencing hums in the coastal wind. Contractors' trucks idle beside families still weighing whether they can afford to rebuild.

One year after the January wildfire fractured the Palisades, recovery no longer looks like emergency response. It looks like planning fatigue. Insurance spreadsheets. Community meetings that stretch late into the night. It looks like people who did not set out to lead, but did anyway - building systems where none existed, simply so the work could continue.

The story of the Palisades' first year of recovery is not a story of a single hero or a single plan. It is the story of neighbors who realized, often uncomfortably early, that recovery would not arrive fully formed. It would have to be built collectively, imperfectly, and in real time.

In the days immediately

SEE **PALISADES** PAGE 7

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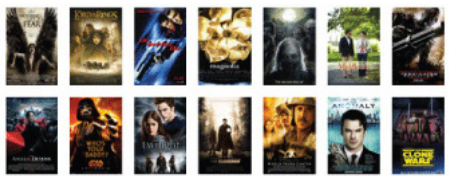

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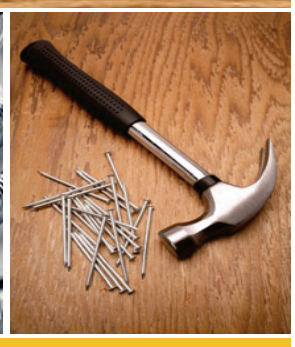


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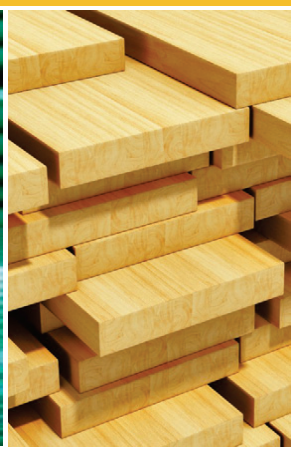

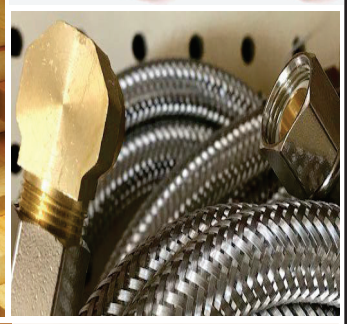

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'A Developing Story' tops national charts showcasing the power of local journalism

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

The Santa Monica Daily Press's narrative podcast "A Developing Story" surged to the top of local news podcast rankings at the end of the year, demonstrating how community journalism can resonate far beyond city limits in the digital age.

The six-episode series was the No. 1 position for Local News podcasts on the Goodpods platform and also ranked first among Los Angeles-based podcasts in monthly listener charts. The show has broken into broader national categories, placing in the top 40 on Goodpods' national Daily News chart and top 60 in News Commentary — a remarkable achievement for a local outlet.

According to podcast index Listen Notes, "A Developing Story" ranks in the top 5% of podcasts worldwide, reflecting an audience that extends well beyond Santa Monica.

Launched in late 2025, the limited-run series tackles one of Santa Monica's most contentious issues: housing development. While the podcast's focus on the city's housing element, density debates and affordability struggles is firmly local, the themes strike a broader chord across California and the nation.

The show uses Santa Monica's experience to explore challenges relevant to communities nationwide, helping attract listeners outside its home city while staying rooted in local reporting. Each episode leverages the Daily Press's reporting to make complex topics like zoning laws and the "builder's remedy" loophole accessible and engaging to the public.

SMDP Publisher Ross Furukawa said that by tackling the regional housing crisis, the Santa Monica Daily Press has demonstrated the value of local news in providing context and clarity on issues that might otherwise seem distant or opaque, He said the podcast format allows for nuance and narrative depth, turning municipal matters into relatable stories.

Producing a high-quality podcast while running a daily newspaper requires significant professionalism and dedication. "A Developing Story" was developed and produced by the Daily Press's small team — including Publisher Furukawa and Editor Matthew Hall — in addition to their regular news duties. Producer and host Brian Peter Falk also devoted significant time to the project.

The series represents the paper's first venture into narrative podcasting, marking an innovative expansion of its journalism.

> "In this increasingly diverse media landscape, it's important to reach as many people as we can, especially on important issues
> - Ross Furukawa, Publisher

"In this increasingly diverse media landscape, it's important to reach as many people as we can, especially on important issues," Furukawa said. "Producing a podcast series is a natural evolution of that idea. Plus, it's storytelling at its best."

The podcast explores topics including the controversial housing element, the builder's remedy rules, density, gentrification and affordability. Local Santa Monicans interviewed for the series include Mayor Lana Negrete, former city councilmembers Gleam Davis and Phil Brock, Santa Monica Development Corporation Executive Director Tara Barauskas, and architect and slow growth advocate Mario Fonda-Bonardi.

Falk is an award-winning local filmmaker and journalist whose producing credits include the Robert Redford film "The Conspirator" and last year's Emmy-nominated PBS original series "Hope in the Water."

"A Developing Story" marks Falk's first narrative podcast series.

Falk said he was eager to expand his storytelling repertoire and had always been interested in podcasting.

SEE **PODCAST** PAGE 6

SMMUSD
SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BID NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT SMMUSD invites sealed proposals for: BID #26.07 – Will Rogers Learning Community Roofing Retrofit. All proposals must be electronically submitted via Secure Bids at https://www.colbisecurebids.com/o/smmusd/BID2607 on or before: Thursday, February 19, 2026 2:00 P.M. BID forms and specifications may be obtained in the link provided within this notice.

Trump says he's dropping push for National Guard in Chicago, LA and Portland, Oregon, for now

President Donald Trump said he's dropping — for now — his push to deploy National Guard troops in Chicago, Los Angeles and Portland, Oregon, a move that comes after legal roadblocks held up the effort.

"We will come back, perhaps in a much different and stronger form, when crime begins to soar again - Only a question of time!" he said in a social media post Wednesday.

Governors typically control states' National Guardsmen, and Trump had deployed troops to all three cities against the wishes of state and local Democratic leaders. He said it was necessary as part of a broader crackdown on immigration, crime and protests.

The president has made a crackdown on crime in cities a centerpiece of his second term — and has toyed with the idea of invoking the Insurrection Act to stop his opponents from using the courts to block his plans. He has said he sees his tough-on-crime approach as a winning political issue ahead of next year's midterm elections.

Troops had already left Los Angeles after the president deployed them earlier this year as part of a broader crackdown on crime and immigration.

In his post, Trump said the troops' presence was responsible for a drop in crime in the three cities, though they were never on the streets in Chicago and Portland as legal challenges played out. When the Chicago deployment was challenged in court, a Justice Department lawyer said the Guard's mission would be to protect federal properties and government agents in the field, not "solving all of crime in Chicago."

Portland Mayor Keith Wilson's office in a statement said the city's reduction in crime was due to the efforts of local police and public safety programs. Chicago officials echoed the sentiment, saying in a release Tuesday that the city had 416 homicides in 2025 — the fewest since 2014.

Trump's push to deploy the troops in Democrat-led cities has been met with legal challenges at nearly every turn.

GOVERNORS REACT

The Supreme Court in December refused to allow the Trump administration to deploy National Guard troops in the Chicago area. The order was not a final ruling but was a significant and rare setback by the high court for the president's efforts.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker wrote on X Wednesday that Trump "lost in court when Illinois stood up against his attempt to militarize American cities with the National Guard. Now Trump is forced to stand down."

Hundreds of troops from California and Oregon were deployed to Portland, but a federal judge barred them from going on the streets. A judge permanently blocked the deployment of National Guard troops there in November after a three-day trial.

Oregon Gov. Tina Kotek said in a statement Wednesday that her office had not yet received "official notification that the remaining federalized Oregon National Guard troops can return home. They were never lawfully deployed to Portland and there was no need for their presence. If President Trump has finally chosen to follow court orders and demobilize our troops, that's a big win for Oregonians and for the rule of law."

Trump's decision to federalize National Guard troops began in Los Angeles in June, when protesters took to the streets in response to a blitz of immigration arrests in the area. He deployed about 4,000 troops and 700 Marines to guard federal buildings and, later, to protect federal agents as they carried out immigration arrests.

The number of troops slowly dwindled until just several hundred were left. They were removed from the streets by Dec. 15 after a lower court ruling that also ordered control to be returned to Gov. Gavin Newsom. But an appeals court had paused the second part of the order, meaning control remained with Trump. In a Tuesday court filing, the Trump administration said it was no longer seeking a pause in that part of the order.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit on Wednesday ordered the Trump administration to return control of the National Guard to Newsom.

"About time (Trump) admitted defeat," Newsom said in a social media post. "We've said it from day one: the federal takeover of California's National Guard is illegal."

Troops will remain on the ground in several other cities. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in December paused a lower court ruling that had called for an end to the deployment of National Guard troops in Washington, D.C., where they've been deployed since August after Trump declared a "crime emergency."

Trump also ordered the deployment of the Tennessee National Guard to Memphis

SEE **TRUMP** PAGE 6

SMMUSD
SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BID NOTICE

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Surf report

WATER TEMP: **64.4**

MONDAY — ***FAIR*** | **SURF:** 1-2ft Knee to thigh

Fading but still fun surf off easing swell. Winds looking to stay on the lighter side. Easing WNW swell is still good for waist to chest high waves in the early morning before the deep mid morning high tide bogs down the surf. Slow fade during the day as the swell tapers off.
Light/variable to S winds expected through the day for fair conditions.

TUESDAY — ***POOR TO FAIR*** | **SURF:** 1-2ft Knee to thigh

Lingering WNW swell levels off for fun waves.
Offshores due in the morning. Decent size WNW swell sticks around for thigh to waist high surf outside the mid day high tide.
Light+ offshores due in the morning, followed by manageable afternoon side shore flow.

Weather

Monday: A 20 percent chance of rain. Partly sunny, with a high near 59.
Monday Night: A chance of rain, mainly after 10pm. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 51.
Tuesday: A chance of rain, mainly before 4pm. Partly sunny, with a high near 60.
Tuesday Night: A slight chance of rain before 10pm. Partly cloudy, with a low around 49.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted	(ft)High/Low
2026/01/05	Mon	03:45 AM	1.91	L
2026/01/05	Mon	09:53 AM	6.47	H
2026/01/05	Mon	5:07 PM	-1.27	L
2026/01/05	Mon	11:42 PM	4.18	H
2026/01/06	Tue	04:39 AM	1.95	L
2026/01/06	Tue	10:39 AM	5.82	H
2026/01/06	Tue	5:45 PM	-0.73	L
2026/01/07	Wed	12:25 AM	4.27	H
2026/01/07	Wed	05:37 AM	2.02	L
2026/01/07	Wed	11:27 AM	5.01	H
2026/01/07	Wed	6:22 PM	-0.09	L
2026/01/08	Thu	01:10 AM	4.36	H
2026/01/08	Thu	06:44 AM	2.09	L
2026/01/08	Thu	12:19 PM	4.14	H
2026/01/08	Thu	6:57 PM	0.60	L
2026/01/09	Fri	01:58 AM	4.44	H

Daily Lottery

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POWERBALL
Draw Date: 12/31
11 18 21 24 38
Power#: 26
Jackpot: 64 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 12/30
18 43 49 63 69
Mega#: 6
Jackpot: 157 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 12/31
5 10 13 22 33
Mega#: 25
Jackpot: 16 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 1/1
13 14 24 25 35

Daily 3
Draw Date: 1/1
EVENING: 2 1 5
Draw Date: 1/1
MIDDAY: 0 0 6

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 1/1
1st: 10 - Solid Gold
2nd: 02 - Lucky Star
3rd: 11 - Money Bags
Race Time: 1:45.51

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2025272313 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: CALIBRA ADVISORY, 21485 COLINA DRIVE, TOPANGA, CA 90290, LOS ANGELES COUNTY. Registered Owner(s): MEK PROPERTIES INC., 21485 COLINA DRIVE, TOPANGA, CA 90290. This business is conducted by: a Corporation. The date registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 12/2025. s/ MARK KITCHING, PRESIDENT. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 12/8/2025. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish on: December 15, 22, 29, 2025 and January 5, 2026.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2025 280752. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: BMW OF SANTA MONICA, 1127 SANTA MONICA BLVD., SANTA MONICA, CA 90401, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): JONES SM ACQUISITION, LLC, 7300 W SAHARA AVE., LAS VEGAS, NV 89117. This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars ($1,000)). /s/ FLETCHER JONES, JR., MANAGER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 12/19/2025. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 01/05/2025, 01/12/2026, 01/19/2026, 01/26/2026

Summons

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL) Case No. 25STCV30883. NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: RONALD S. BARAK, an individual; and DOES 1-100, inclusive. YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: SPECIALIST ROOFING AND REPAIR, LLC, a California limited liability company, doing business as ROOF REPAIR SPECIALIST. NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. ¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación. Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia. Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso. The name and address of the court is: Stanley Mosk Courthouse, 111 N. Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney is: Hee J. Kim, LITIGATION, P.C., 527 W. 7th Street, Suite 935, Los Angeles, CA 90014. Tel: (424) 284-2401. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/29/2025, 01/05/2026, 01/12/2026, 01/19/2026

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

New year may entertain political junkies, but California's sluggish economy deserves the spotlight



Photo by Fred Greaves for CalMatters

NEWSOM: Gov. Gavin Newsom discusses the state's economic conditions during a press conference on the 2025-26 budget in Sacramento on May 14, 2025.

As the new year begins, there's no shortage of political trends to keep Californians preoccupied, entertained or perhaps appalled — particularly the state's transcontinental feud with President Donald Trump.

There is Gov. Gavin Newsom's all-but-announced campaign for president, centered on his self-appointed role of resistor-in-chief to Trump. As Newsom continues to troll Trump this year we may learn whether it continues to advance Newsom as a White House frontrunner or becomes tiresome and off-putting.

As 2025 ended Axios, a news website, reported that Newsom's potential rivals are ratcheting up efforts to undermine his bid, arguing that, as a California progressive, he's unelectable.

Another point of political fixation is Newsom's successful effort to gerrymander California's 52 congressional seats to help Democrats recapture control of the House in 2026. Whether it works is a question hanging over his presidential ambitions.

Still another is the campaign to choose a successor to Newsom. It so far has attracted a large contingent of Democrats without, as yet, a clear leader. There's a theoretical possibility that with as many as a dozen Democrats in the field, the two Republicans could finish first and second in the June 2 primary and face each other for the governorship in November, despite the GOP's very weak standing among voters.

This year's election cycle also promises to be another showdown of moneyed interests via dueling ballot measures, with those either increasing or decreasing taxes at the top of the heap.

While political junkies can feed their habits this year, the more profound issue that faces California will be its moribund economy.

Newsom often brags that California's $4 trillion economy, were it a nation, would rank fourth in the world. However, it has seen zero net job growth since the COVID-19 pandemic ended and recently has experienced employment shrinkage.

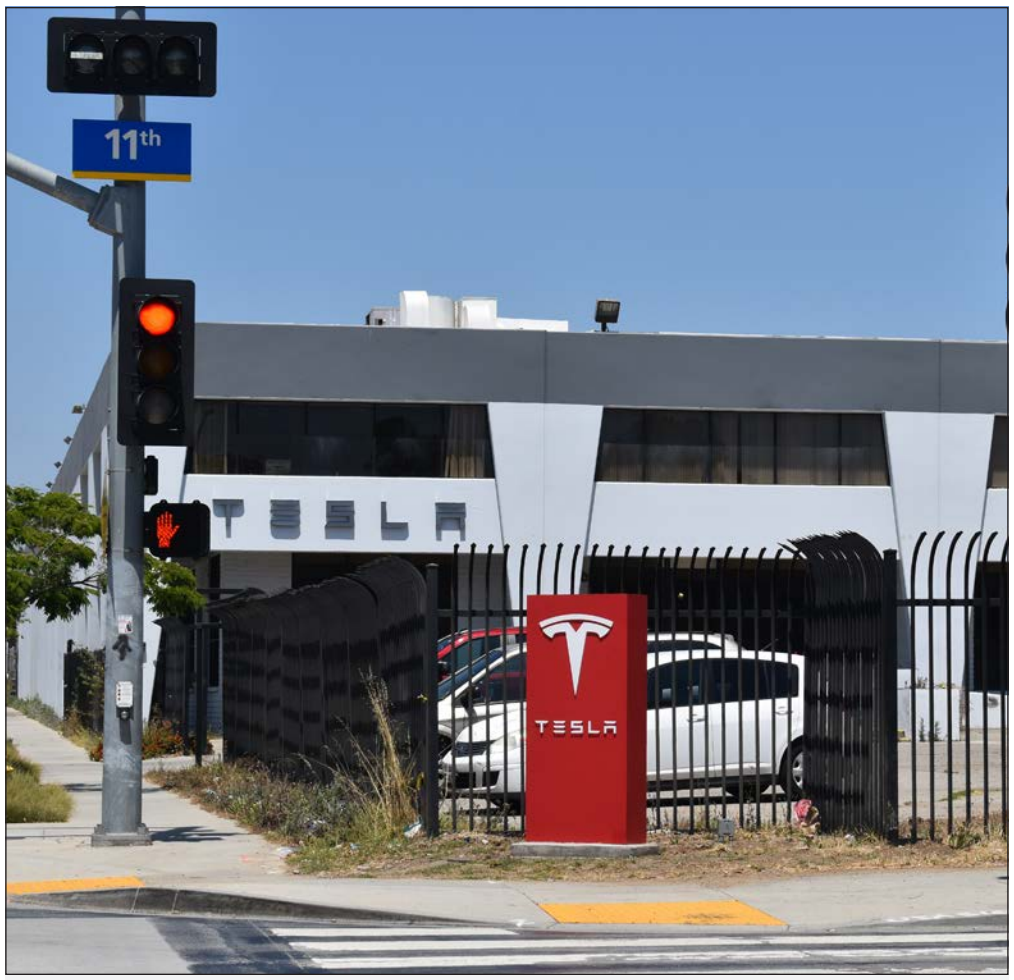
More than a million Californians in the labor force are jobless and the state's unemployment rate, currently 5.6%, has been the highest or near the highest of any state for several years.

Employment doldrums have affected even the state's hallmark sectors, most obviously Southern California's withering film and TV production industry and the Bay Area's high technology concentration.

The latter has almost single-handedly propped up the state's economy and generated a huge portion of tax revenues, but layoffs have proliferated as artificial intelligence is increasingly employed — a syndrome that also affects Hollywood.

SEE **GUEST COMMENTARY** PAGE 8

Tesla loses title as world's biggest electric vehicle maker as sales fall for second year in a row



SMDP Photo

TESLA: Sales are dropping at the once popular brand.

Tesla lost its crown as the world's bestselling electric vehicle maker on Friday as a customer revolt over Elon Musk's right-wing politics, expiring U.S. tax breaks for buyers and stiff overseas competition pushed sales down for a second year in a row.

Tesla said that it delivered 1.64 million vehicles in 2025, down 9% from a year earlier.

Chinese rival BYD, which sold 2.26 million vehicles last year, is now the biggest EV maker.

It's a stunning reversal for Musk who once dismissed BYD as a threat as Tesla's rise seemed unstoppable, crushing traditional automakers with far more resources and helping make him the world's richest man.

For the fourth quarter, sales totaled 418,227, falling short of the 440,000 that analysts polled by FactSet expected. The sales total was impacted by the expiration of a $7,500 tax credit that was phased out by the Trump administration at the end of September.

Tesla stock was up 0.5% at $451.60 in early trading Friday.

Even with multiple issues buffeting the company, investors are betting that Tesla CEO Musk can deliver on his ambitions to make Tesla a leader in robotaxi service and get consumers to embrace humanoid robots that can perform basic tasks in homes and offices. Reflecting that optimism, the stock finished 2025 with a gain of approximately 11%.

The latest quarter was the first with sales of stripped-down versions of the Model Y and Model 3 that Musk unveiled in early October as part of an effort to revive sales. The new Model Y costs just under $40,000 while customers can buy the cheaper Model 3 for under $37,000. Those versions are expected to help Tesla compete with Chinese models in Europe and Asia.

For fourth-quarter earnings coming out in late January, analysts are expecting the company to post a 3% drop in sales and a nearly 40% drop in earnings per share, according to FactSet. Analysts expect the downward trend in sales and profits to eventually reverse itself as 2026 rolls along.

Investors have largely shrugged off the falling numbers, choosing to focus on Musk's pivot to different parts of business.

He has been saying that plunging car sales don't matter as much now because the future of the company lies more with his new driverless robotaxis service, the company's energy storage business and building robots for the home and factory. To make his task worthwhile, Tesla's directors awarded Musk a potentially enormous new pay package that shareholders backed at the annual meeting in November.

Musk scored another huge windfall two weeks ago when the Delaware Supreme Court reversed a decision that deprived him of a $55 billion pay package that Tesla doled out in 2018.

Musk could become the world's first trillionaire later this year when he sells shares of his rocket company SpaceX to public for the first time in what analysts expect would be a blockbuster initial public offering.

Associated Press

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MONDAY | JANUARY 5

PIZZA PARTY AT BODEGA WINE BAR

6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. 814 Broadway Santa Monica. Every Monday Night at Bodega, every bottle of wine you purchase gets you a pizza half off! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/pizza-party-at-bodega-wine-bar/11526040/2025-12-22T18. The Gordons Improv Residency 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Westside Comedy Theater 1323-A 3rd St Santa Monica. Welcome to The Gordons Improv Show at Westside Comedy Theater! IMPROV RESIDENT TEAM NIGHT! Check out our current lineup of Resident Improv Teams! These teams perform Long-Form Improv all inspired by a suggestion from the audience. Think of it as a sitcom made up on the spot. Catch them before they are gone! These teams rotate every three months!Get ready for a night filled with laughter, spontaneity, and hilarious moments. Join us for an evening of unscripted comedy where every joke is made up on the spot. Our talented improv performers will have you in stitches as they create scenes, characters, and stories based on your suggestions. Don't miss out on this one-of-a-kind experience! Grab your friends and come on down to Westside Comedy Theater for a night you won't forget. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/the-gordons-improv-residency/14863274/2025-12-22T19

THE GORDONS IMPROV RESIDENCY

7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Westside Comedy Theater 1323-A 3rd St Santa Monica. Welcome to The Gordons Improv Show at Westside Comedy Theater! IMPROV RESIDENT TEAM NIGHT! Check out our current lineup of Resident Improv Teams! These teams perform Long-Form Improv all inspired by a suggestion from the audience. Think of it as a sitcom made up on the spot. Catch them before they are gone! These teams rotate every three months!Get ready for a night filled with laughter, spontaneity, and hilarious moments. Join us for an evening of unscripted comedy where every joke is made up on the spot. Our talented improv performers will have you in stitches as they create scenes, characters, and stories based on your suggestions. Don't miss out on this one-of-a-kind experience! Grab your friends and come on down to Westside Comedy Theater for a night you won't forget. Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/the-gordons-improv-residency/14863274/2026-01-05T19

TUESDAY | JANUARY 6

MEMORIES & MOVEMENT SENIOR CLUB

10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Come, learn, and have fun every 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM in The Patio room at Virginia Avenue Park. Each week there will be something new: Exercise, Talking with Friends, Learning, Guest Presenters, Health & Wellness! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/memories-movement-senior-club/14853634/2025-12-02T10

ICE AT SANTA MONICA PRESENTED BY DISNEY+ AND HULU

12:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Santa Monica Pier 200 Santa Monica Pier, Ste A Santa Monica. Get ready to experience The Ice Rink at Santa Monica Presented by Disney+ and Hulu, a winter adventure that combines the magic of the holiday season with the beauty of California's coastline. This seasonal ice rink fulfills dreams of gliding across a smooth-as-glass surface within four blocks of the Pacific Ocean. As the sun sets and paints the sky in breathtaking hues, the rink comes alive with sparkling lights and festive decorations, creating an atmosphere filled with enchantment and wonder. Whether you're a seasoned skater or just starting out, the sheer joy of Santa Monica ice skating in this paradise setting is an experience you won't want to miss. Season Dates: November 7, 2025 - January 19, 2026 Hours: Daily from noon to 10 p.m. Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/ice-at-santa-monica-presented-by-disney-and-hulu/17758168/2026-01-06T12

TUESDAY OPEN MIC

10:00 p.m. Westside Comedy Theater 1323-A 3rd St Santa Monica. The best open mic in Los Angeles! The Tuesday Open Mic is a weekly open mic. Hop onstage and perform your best 3 minutes! Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/tuesday-open-mic/16004734/2026-01-06T22

WEDNESDAY | JANUARY 7

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET - WEDNESDAY MARKET

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Downtown Santa Monica Arizona Avenue (Between 4th & Ocean) Santa Monica. One of the largest grower-only Certified Farmers Market in Southern California and a favorite for local chefs! Enjoy one of Santa Monica's farmers markets, widely considered to be among the best on the west coast and featuring field-fresh produce, hundreds of kinds of vegetables, brilliant cut flowers, breads, cheeses, and more. Downtown Farmers Market Locations: Wednesdays at Arizona Ave & 2nd St and Saturdays at Arizona & 3rd St. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/downtown-farmers-market-wednesday-market/12382446/2025-12-17T08

STAR STORIES WITH PAM

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. West Los Angeles Regional Library 11360 Santa Monica Boulevard Los Angeles. STAR Stories With Pam Children are invited to share the joy of storytelling and reading with our special STAR volunteer, Pam. Come three times and take home a free book. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/star-stories-with-pam/15607289/2025-12-17T12

VINO & VINYL - WEDNESDAY HAPPY HOUR

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. The Venice West 1717 Lincoln Blvd, Venice. Unwind and set the vibe with Vino & Vinyl, our laid-back happy hour at The Venice West. Enjoy half-off bottles of wine, food and bar specials, and a rotating selection of classic vinyl spinning from 6–7:30 PM. Perfect for music lovers, wine drinkers, and anyone looking to ease into the evening, Venice style. Happy Hour Join us weeknights from 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM for our restaurant's Happy Hour, featuring great deals including $5 beers & snacks, $10 craft cocktails, and more! Age Requirement All shows at The Venice West are 21+ only, unless otherwise stated. Valid government-issued photo ID is required for entry. Guests who cannot provide proof of age will not be admitted and no refunds will be issued. Parking Please note that residential/street parking is the only parking available near the venue. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/vino-vinyl-wednesday-happy-hour/17651745/2025-12-24T18

THURSDAY | JANUARY 8

RENT CONTROL BOARD MEETING

7:00 p.m. Santa Monica City Hall 1685 Main Street Santa Monica. The Rent Control Board meets to conduct business associated with the Rent Control Charter Amendment and Regulations. Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/rent-control-board-meeting/13406661/2026-01-08T19

California homeowners could qualify for grants for new roofs and fire safety

Some homeowners in areas of California with high wildfire risk could eventually get money for new roofs or to build fire-resistant zones around their properties under a new state law that goes into effect today.

The Safe Homes grant program is designed to help low- and middle-income homeowners with fire mitigation. People who qualify could use grants to create 5-foot ember-resistant zones around properties, also known as Zone Zero, as required by law in some areas. The program will also contribute toward costs for fire-safe roofs.

The state's Insurance Department, which is responsible for implementing the program, is working out the details around eligibility, the amount of and the distribution of grants. It is now developing an application portal that it hopes to have ready by March, said Michael Soller, spokesperson for the department.

The insurance department will be handling all the details of the grants, said Mike Dayton, chief of staff of Assemblymember Lisa Calderon, the Los Angeles-area Democrat and chair of the Assembly Insurance Committee who wrote the law, and has so far secured $3 million in the state budget to get the program started.

Soller said homeowners who have policies with admitted insurance carriers or the last-resort FAIR Plan and who live in high-risk areas will have to meet income limits set by the state housing department to be eligible for the grants, whose amounts have not been determined. Communities, cities and counties with mitigation projects could also apply for grants.

He also said the insurance department plans to advocate for additional and ongoing funding for the program.

Another source of funding could be the federal government, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Soller said. But Gov. Gavin Newsom recently tried to meet with FEMA to talk about disaster aid related to the Los Angeles County fires and was unsuccessful.

Also, two Californians in Congress have proposed legislation that would establish a federal grant program and tax credits for mitigation. U.S. Reps. Mike Thompson, a Napa Democrat, and Doug LaMalfa, an Oroville Republican, have introduced their bill for the past two sessions, but it has not made it to a floor vote.

The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection recently extended the finalization of rules regarding Zone Zero buffers around properties to the first half of next year. The rules are expected to take effect for existing homes in 2029.

by Levi Sumagaysay

PODCAST

FROM PAGE 2

He said development was an obvious choice for the series as it's hard to argue that there's a more contentious topic in California than housing development and the specifics felt like a perfect space for a long-form narrative podcast.

Falk, Furukawa and Hall produced the series, which Falk described as making "a complex issue accessible, personal, and deeply affecting."

The series is available on all major podcast platforms, including Apple, and can be accessed at www.adevelopingstory.com and https://www.smdp.com/tag/podcast.

editor@smdp.com

TRUMP

FROM PAGE 3

in September as part of a larger federal task force to combat crime, a move supported by the state's Republican Gov. Bill Lee and senators. A Tennessee judge blocked the use of the Guard, siding with Democratic state and local officials who sued. However, the judge stayed the decision to block the Guard as the state appeals, allowing the deployment to continue.

In New Orleans, about 350 National Guard troops deployed by Trump arrived in the city's historic French Quarter on Tuesday and are set to stay through Mardi Gras to help with safety. The state's Republican governor and the city's Democratic mayor support the deployment.

By MICHELLE L. PRICE and JAIMIE DING Associated Press. Ding reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press reporters John O'Connor in Springfield, Illinois, Becky Bohrer in Juneau, Alaska, Jack Brook in New Orleans and Adrian Sanz in Memphis contributed.

GET IT DAILY...

PALISADES

FROM PAGE 1

following the fire, as residents grappled with shock and displacement, Maryam Zar began doing what she does instinctively: convening people. Before she ever carried the title of CEO of the Malibu Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce, Zar helped organize one of the first community-level recovery conversations at the Riviera Country Club. Residents, civic leaders, and agency representatives gathered not because there was a clear plan, but because there wasn't one.

"There was so much uncertainty," Zar said. "People didn't just need information. They needed a place to be heard—and a way to participate in rebuilding, not just be told what was happening to them."

That early convening helped catalyze what would become the Palisades Recovery Coalition, setting a tone that recovery would be participatory rather than prescriptive. By November, when Zar stepped into her Chamber role, her responsibilities expanded overnight. Business advocacy quickly gave way to something larger: recovery architecture. Neighborhood visioning sessions followed. Recovery labs. Partnerships with architects, engineers, and researchers translating urgency into action. At the same time, Zar focused on stabilizing local businesses still standing but economically strained, pursuing recovery grants and new platforms to keep the local economy alive.

For many residents, the realization that recovery would be self-directed arrived abruptly. In the early days after the fire, people waited for formal emergency systems to mobilize. Instead, there was silence—unclear permitting guidance, stretched insurance timelines, fragmented communication. Into that vacuum stepped neighbors themselves.

Tony Hocking never intended to be the face of recovery. In fact, he designed Team Palisades so no one ever would be. What began as WhatsApp threads and block-level check-ins evolved into a flat, distributed network built on one principle: the rejection of the hero model.

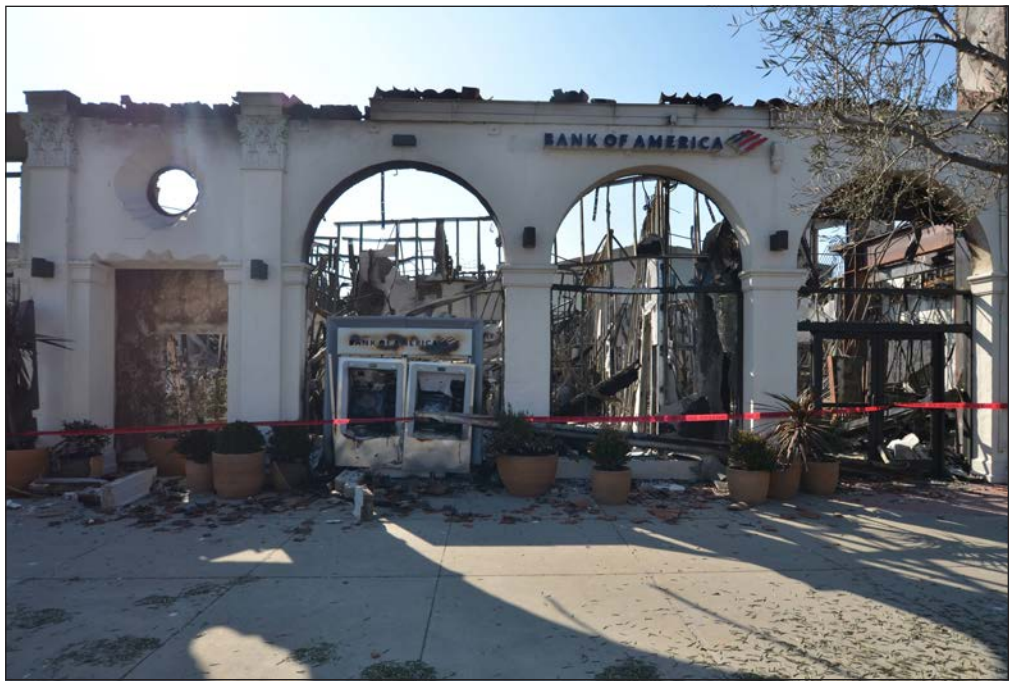
"When you see the emergency up close and realize help isn't coming right away, people step in," Hocking said. "The opposite of the hero model was the point. Everyone becomes their own rescuer."

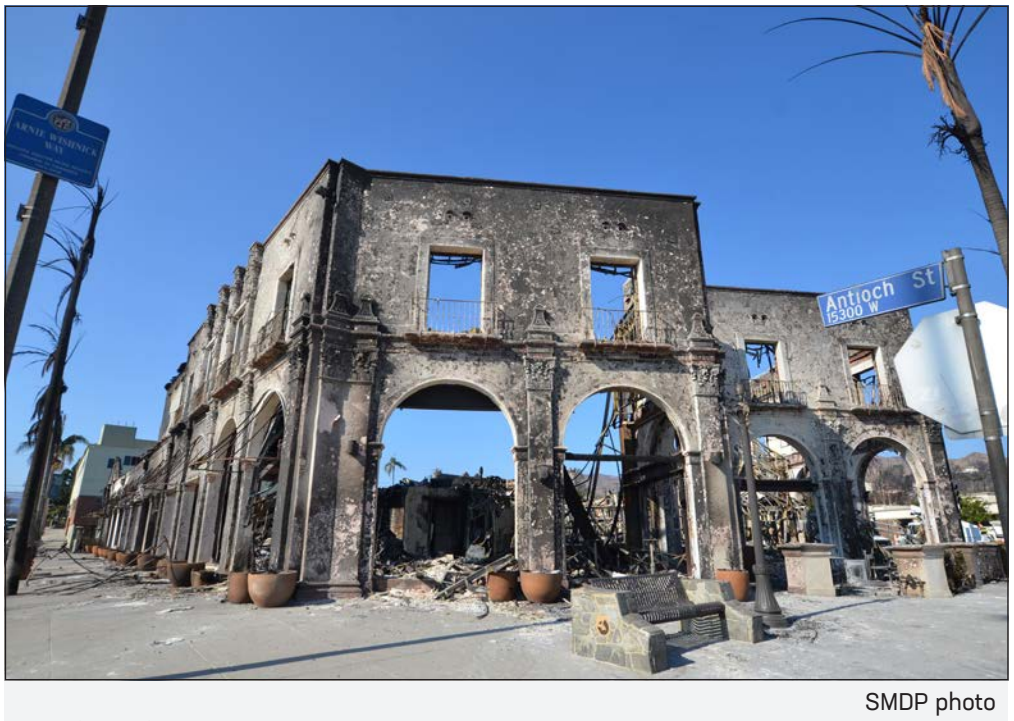
With a background spanning aerospace engineering, manufacturing, and mountain rescue, Hocking approached chaos as a systems problem—how to organize without burnout, how to allow leadership to rotate as energy shifts, how to build something that does not depend on any one person remaining upright forever. As frustration mounted over delayed planning and insurance uncertainty, his focus remained on clarity, transparency, and the infrastructure beneath leadership itself.

While much of the community focused on debris removal and immediate housing needs, others were already thinking about what could not be undone later. Justin Skaggs was one of them. In the weeks following the fire, Skaggs—founder of Decision Construction—began advocating for converting overhead power and communications lines into underground infrastructure as rebuilding commenced.

"If you don't organize early, the opportunity disappears," Skaggs said. "Once rebuilding starts, it's almost impossible to go back and fix what should have been done together."







SMDP photo

PALISADES: Destruction caused by the January wildfire.

Drawing on deep experience in utility design, permitting, and construction management, Skaggs mobilized early—working with Dry Utility Experts, serving as a technical consultant with AIA Los Angeles, and coordinating with Team Palisades, the Palisades Recovery Coalition, Altadena Village, and neighborhood block captains. His work focused on navigating unglamorous hurdles—cost concerns, construction disruption, LADWP capacity limits, evolving technical standards—before momentum stalled. The aim was not perfection, but alignment.

For decades, PaliSkates was more than a skate shop. Founded 26 years ago by Erica Simpson, PaliSkates functioned as a first job, a second home, and a proving ground for confidence and responsibility. When the fire destroyed the store and everything inside it, Simpson lost the physical space—but not the mission.

She kept PaliSkates alive online, then reopened through a pop-up in Santa Monica, where support poured in from across the Westside. "PaliSkates has always been about hope," Simpson said. "Giving kids a place to belong, especially when everything around them feels uncertain."

Unexpected lifelines followed, including a nationally aired commercial produced by the Grammy Awards and a collaboration backed by Avril Lavigne. Looking ahead, Simpson plans to deepen partnerships with Palisades Charter High School, expanding internships and pathways as PaliSkates works toward an eventual return home.

As debris cleared and rebuilding decisions dragged on, a quieter phase of recovery took hold—the long middle. Jessica Rogers, president of the Pacific Palisades Residents Association, has long served as a steady civic presence. After the fire, that work became more urgent. PPRA became a vital channel for collective action, organizing letter-writing campaigns pressing officials on permit fee waivers, rebuilding timelines, traffic safety, and development decisions.

"Our role is to stay on the pulse of what the community wants," Rogers said, "and to make sure decision-makers hear it directly from the people who live here."

Rogers also helped lead the Pacific Palisades Long Term Recovery Group, a coalition grounded in national VOAD models that brings together dozens of committees and service organizations to bridge gaps between assets and unmet needs. As insurance runs out and savings stretch thin, Rogers believes the most urgent need now is mental health support. In a recent NORC survey asking residents to name the word that best captured where they are now, the answer was unanimous: hope.

Opacity has fueled much of the frustration around rebuilding, and Frank Renfro set out to change that. As co-founder of Pali Builds, Renfro helped make the invisible visible—tracking permits, construction activity, property purchases, and developer intent so residents could understand what was happening, where, and by whom.

That transparency soon expanded into insurance advocacy. Using industry-standard Xactimate software, Pali Builds began generating locally grounded rebuild estimates, often revealing multimillion-dollar gaps between insurance payouts and real rebuilding costs. From there, the platform evolved into a two-sided marketplace, helping homeowners solicit bids while enabling contractors to find and organize work more efficiently. With a background in software, Renfro sees disaster recovery as a proving ground for better systems—tools that could one day prevent communities from facing the same failures again.

Back on that quiet Palisades street, the work remains unfinished. Some homes are rising. Others exist only as plans. Some families have returned. Others are still deciding whether they can. What has changed, however, is capacity. The first year of recovery taught this community how to convene, how to advocate, how to build systems that outlast individuals.

Recovery here is not a moment. It is a network. And one year later, Pacific Palisades is still here—not because the process has been easy, but because its people learned how to carry it forward together.

Michelle Edgar, Special to the Daily Press

Santa Monica Daily Press
Classifieds

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or email legal@smdp.com

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Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25SMCP00612 Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main St., Santa Monica CA 90401. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Gustavo Aminadab Barreno filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present name: Gustavo Aminadab Barreno to Proposed name: Gustavo Guevara Ramos. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing. NOTICE OF HEARING: Date: 01/16/2026, Time: 8:30a, Dept.: K. The address of the court is same as noted above. Date: 12/01/2025. s/ Lawrence H. Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/09/2025, 12/16/2025, 12/23/2025, 12/30/2025

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25LBCP00494. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 275 Magnolia Avenue, Long Beach, California 90802. Petition of Ms. Opal VaNess LeatherWood Martin for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Ms. Opal VaNess LeatherWood Martin filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Opal VaNess LeatherWood Martin to Opal VaNess Diva LeatherWood Martin. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING: Date: 02/04/2026, Time: 8:30 AM, Dept: 26. The address of the court is same as noted above. A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS. Date: 12/24/2025. Michael P. Vicencia, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 01/05/2026, 01/12/2026, 01/19/2026, 01/26/2026

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25SMCP00615 Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles 1725 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Samuel Francis Leghart filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present name: Samuel Francis Leghart to Proposed name: Samuel Francis Cubedo. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing. NOTICE OF HEARING Date: January 23, 2026 Time: 8:30 AM Dept.: K. The address of the court is the same as noted above. A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation printed in this county: Santa Monica Daily Press. Date: December 2, 2025 s/ Lawrence H. Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: December 15, 22, 29, 2025 and January 05, 2025.

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25STCP04178. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles. Petition filed: December 11, 2025. To All Interested Persons: Petitioner Kayla Renee Hutchison filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present name: Kayla Renee Hutchison to Proposed name: Kayla Renee Hinkston. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing. Notice of Hearing: Date: January 10, 2026, Time: 8:30 AM, Dept.: 45, Room: 529. The address of the court is same as noted above: Los Angeles Superior Court, 111 N. Hill Street, Room 102, Los Angeles, CA 90012. A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation: Santa Monica Daily Press, for resident of this county, printed in this county. Date: December 11, 2025. s/ Virginia Keeny, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: December 15, 22, 29, 2025, January 5, 2026.

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MALIBU

FROM PAGE 1

60 mph, the blaze scorched more than 23,000 acres before firefighters achieved full containment on Jan. 31, 2025.

The fire destroyed 6,837 structures and damaged approximately 973 more, according to CAL FIRE damage assessments. It forced the evacuation of more than 30,000 residents and affected an estimated 100,000 people across Los Angeles's westside communities. The disaster became the third-most destructive wildfire in California history.

Entire neighborhoods in Pacific Palisades and hillside Malibu were reduced to rubble, with iconic coastal stretches along Pacific Coast Highway left in ruins. The fire obliterated homes, businesses and public infrastructure, with the City of Los Angeles estimating roughly $350 million in public infrastructure damage.

Beyond the immediate destruction, the fire's health impact proved far more extensive than initially understood. While 12 people died directly in the flames, a public health study later estimated that approximately 440 deaths in Los Angeles County were attributable to the January 2025 wildfires, with most linked to smoke inhalation and respiratory emergencies among vulnerable populations.

Investigators determined the fire likely ignited when an earlier eight-acre New Year's Day brush fire, suspected to be arson, wasn't fully extinguished and rekindled under intense winds. Federal authorities arrested a suspect in October 2025 for allegedly starting that initial blaze.

The commemoration event will include a formal program from 4 to 5:30 p.m. featuring a native Chumash blessing and a moment of silence for three Malibu community members who lost their lives in the fire. Malibu Poet Laureate Charlotte Ward will present a remembrance poem written for the occasion. A reception will follow with light refreshments, a memorial space and an art gallery honoring first responders and community members.

The event will be livestreamed on the city's YouTube channel, and no RSVPs are required.

City officials described the Palisades Fire as the greatest disaster Malibu has ever endured, noting it was part of a historic regional catastrophe that destroyed thousands of homes across Southern California.

The fire also caused extensive environmental damage, generating toxic urban ash containing heavy metals, asbestos and other hazardous substances. Los Angeles County issued ocean water advisories warning of contaminated runoff along beaches from Malibu to LAX, and the massive smoke plume created hazardous air quality across the region for days.

"In the wake of the Palisades Fire, the city was left traumatized, its landscape transformed and its collective heart wounded," city officials said in announcing the commemoration. "Yet even amid the ashes, the resilience of Malibu's people began to take shape, as neighbors supported one another and the long, difficult path toward healing and recovery quietly began."

The January 2025 fire marked the first time on record that Southern California experienced "extremely critical" fire weather conditions in January, underscoring concerns about climate change extending the traditional fire season.

As residents prepare to mark the somber anniversary, city leaders emphasized their commitment to supporting recovery efforts and building a more resilient community for the future.

maaz@smdp.com

GUEST COMMENTARY

FROM PAGE 4

Stubborn, or even increasing, unemployment makes it more difficult for state and local governments to cover their budget deficits — thus underpinning the thrust for tax increases on state and local ballots. The sluggish economy also hampers efforts to improve two of the state's most pressing socioeconomic issues, its highest-in-the-nation poverty and homelessness levels.

Even Californians who have homes and jobs are feeling the economic pinch. Combining economic data with polling results, the Public Policy Institute of California recently discovered rising economic angst among California residents.

"California is one of the largest economies in the world, but many working Californians do not feel economically secure (and) they struggle to pay their bills, save for the future, and balance the demands of work and daily life," PPIC reported, adding that polling data "indicate that pessimism about future economic opportunity has become even more pervasive amid recent economic volatility."

As he shifts into presidential campaign mode, Newsom has every reason to keep bragging about the state's economy. But those running to replace him and state legislators should make 2026 the year to recognize that California has serious problems, to bore into the underlying causes and to do what they can to once again make California thrive.

History tells us that taking prosperity for granted —think Detroit — is an invitation to economic ruin.

Dan Walters CalMatters Opinion Columnist

To learn how to feature your upcoming event on the SMDP and various digital event calendars

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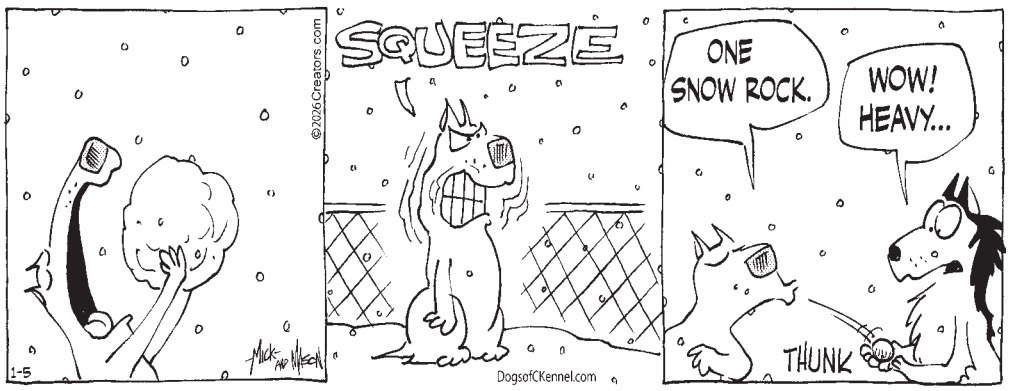
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



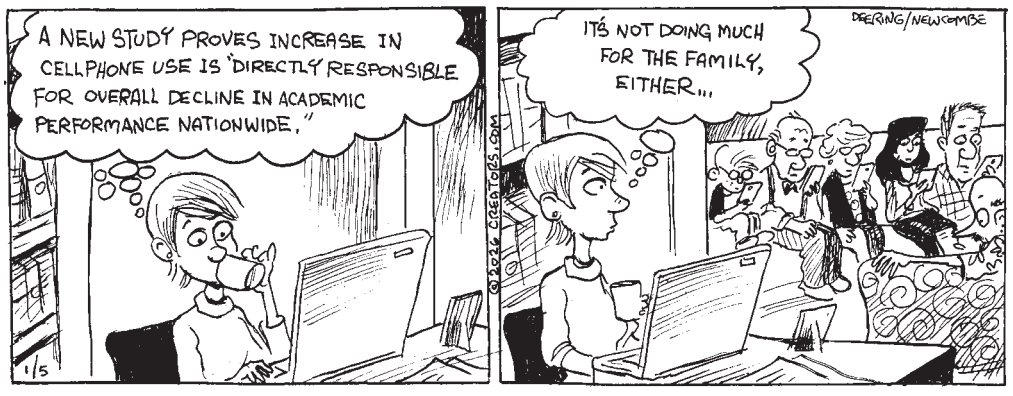
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



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 22 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 6811

Children's stories

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

Aladdin	Frightening	Ogre
Ancient	Frog	Pixy
Author	Gnome	Puck
Banshee	Grimm	Recite
Beast	Happy	Sinbad
Cottage	Hero	Spell
Dark	Hobbit	Story
Dormouse	Humpty Dumpty	Text
Eerie	Imagination	Trick
Elves	Imps	Trolls
Enchant	Lost	Wand
Fable	Nose	Weird
Foxes	Nursery rhymes	Witch

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 5)

Welcome to your Year of Sublime Competence. You'll handle life with style and move through life with less friction and more serendipity. Plans come together easily, schedules cooperate, and you find exactly who or what you need. More highlights: unexpected bonuses or gifts, a viral moment that brings doors knocking and adventures with people who get you completely. Libra and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 27, 5, 6, 12 and 8.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your success formula couldn't be simpler: Stick close to people who live the way you want to live, and you'll pick up their magic by osmosis. The vibes mesh, the momentum builds, and everyone gets a lift.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). When is confidence too much? When it makes people certain without demanding any evidence - or ignoring evidence to the contrary - of the assertion. It is better to be underconfident than to be certain of something that isn't true.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Welcome it all - even the stuff you wouldn't choose. It's how you stay in conversation with reality instead of wrestling it. Resistance narrows your view; acceptance opens it. Bonus: Acceptance feels a lot better, too.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You might be tempted to act out of spite. Check the emotional price tag. Spite is expensive. You pay twice: once in energy, once in fallout. Choose something that feels good now and later. It's more powerful to play the long game.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You can tell your taste is changing because new things suddenly appeal to you. You're willing to be a little adventurous with a fresh pursuit, and it's thrilling to feel the pull of something you didn't even know existed until now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). When someone confuses you, don't try to parse the details, because the answer won't be there. Instead of zooming in, step back. Relationships will only reveal their logic at a distance. What are the human needs driving the action?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Are the minutes and hours you've spent in fantasyland a waste? Your creativity is boundless. A little fantasy is fun. A lot of fantasy leads to unreasonable ideas and stratospheric possibilities that no one else would come up with.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The schedule is tight, but your vibe doesn't have to be. Keep your pace even and your pulse low. The rule of cool? Everything looks cooler in slow motion. Even if you feel a bit hectic on the inside, don't rush.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). When you say yes, things begin to happen. You'll end up in plans you never would have dreamed up alone, and they'll carry you into unexpected adventures. But that's all later. For today, all you have to do is say yes.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). History is full of examples of people doing things that made no sense on paper. So the fact that a goal is unreasonable doesn't automatically make it unattainable, which you will prove with today's astonishing outcome.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You may have a bit of help, but you're the one keeping everything on track today, which is why you feel a bit of pressure. You're leading from within the ranks, and though you're not the figurehead this time, none of it would get done without you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The orange seed looks like the lemon seed, and both resemble the grapefruit seed. You can't tell the fruit from the seed, and today's project is similarly mysterious. These are early days. You won't know the color of it until things ripen.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

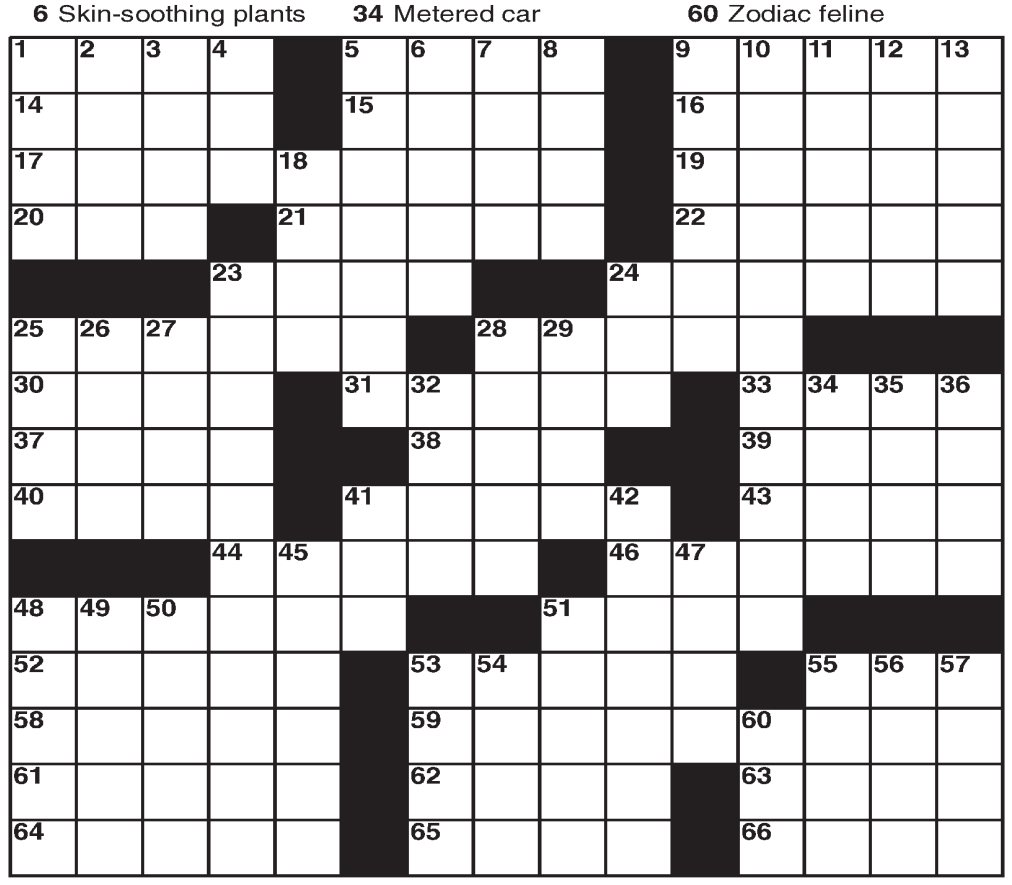
RESERVATIONS by Guilherme Gilioli
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Difficult
5 Stand in line
9 Book of maps
14 Out of town
15 "Additionally..."
16 Sparkled, as shoes
17 Urban overnight accommodation
19 Cheese chunk
20 Pub beverage
21 Prayer endings
22 Raring to go
23 Club fees
24 Makes changes to
25 Fast-moving river sections
28 Physically nimble
30 Unwrap
31 Made docile
33 Numbered roads: Abbr.
37 Actor Penn or Connery
38 Compete in a marathon
39 Keep for later
40 Car's wheel rod
41 More sensible
43 Highway off-ramp
44 Providence, __ Island
46 Online messages
48 Give, as an award
51 Be introduced to
52 Wedding vow platform
53 Prophetic signs
55 Large body of water
58 Big pieces of concrete
59 Auto picked up at an airport
61 Book's name
62 So what __ is new?"
63 Toward sunrise
64 Three letters in "fusses"
65 Leading performer
66 Small wallet bills

DOWN

1 "You're hilarious!"
2 Army no-show, for short
3 Evaluate
4 Fabric coloring
5 At the hottest temperature
6 Skin-soothing plants
7 "The shoe __ the other foot"
8 Male cats
9 In addition
10 Place to watch a play
11 Ski resort inn
12 Make furious
13 Fortune-tellers
18 Praise highly
23 Place to order a fine meal
24 Assist
25 Civil rights icon Parks
26 Mountain's acme
27 Bell's loud sound
28 Cause to laugh
29 Bit of heredity
32 Very dry, as a desert
34 Metered car
35 Wicked
36 Sinks, as the sun
41 "Gee, I'm impressed!"
42 Come in again
45 Racetrack animals
47 Southwestern plateau
48 Moisten while roasting
49 __ Island (former immigration center)
50 Lots of data
51 High-IQ club
53 Metals from mines
54 Turn to slush
55 Read quickly
56 Make simpler
57 Martial __ (kung fu and karate)
60 Zodiac feline



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01/05/26

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

BUSINESS

FROM PAGE 1

by former residents at its new Brentwood location. "We still have a constant stream of Palisadians on a regular basis," says co-founder Robert Flutie. "In the aftermath of the summer, as people were resettling in, a lot of them were having parties and would ask us to cater events." He hopes that providing pizza also creates a sense of normalcy and is passionate about continuing to support Palisades businesses despite not currently living there.

> We still have a constant stream of Palisadians on a regular basis
> - Robert Flutie, co-founder

For This Girl Walks Into a Bar co-founder Jordan Catapano, support from the L.A. Strong Comms Coalition has been "phenomenal. They said at the very beginning that their goal was to stick with these L.A. businesses indefinitely and they have lived up to their word," she comments.



Westside Current

CINQUE: Cinque Terre West's new Rose Ave. location.

NAVIGATING CHALLENGES

When Catapano lost her house to the fire, she also lost the equipment for her bartending business, forcing her to shut it down completely and focus solely on her organic mixers. Although still dealing with the repercussions of the loss, mixer sales are doing well and the business is continuing to grow.

Personally, however, "the Palisades and Altadena are carrying an emotional and mental load that will probably stay with us for a while," says Catapano. She has seen Palisades children go through the pandemic and now the fire, but "one silver lining is the children are going to be very resilient. There's a lot of opportunity to celebrate what children are going to be able to handle, how strong they are."

Kim Swim Studios founder Kim Vandenberg shares that sentiment. "Whenever things are really challenging in life, there are always lessons to learn. Sometimes it's hard to see when you're in the thick of it, but what I'm seeing now, even though I'm still processing, is that there is this beauty in resiliency and in understanding what's important: community, our health, our family, our loved ones, and being grateful for what we do have," she says.

She is still searching for a 25-meter pool to teach her advanced students and adults, but is grateful for the families who have opened up their own pools for her lessons.

Rosalyn Phipps, Root & Petal founder, stepped into the role of business owner for the first time after Palisades Flowers was destroyed. "It was really scary in the first couple months after the Palisades Fire," she recalls, but "I've built something that feels like it's going somewhere amazing. I didn't know I had that in me."

Although Phipps doesn't plan to work in the Palisades again, some former clients have reached out to her for floral arrangements. "I'm building a new community, but it's been really nice to see that the years and hard work I put into the Palisades – people haven't forgotten that either."

Marlo Vinzoni, however, has returned to her Palisades home. As a resident for over 20 years – and being involved in the community – she feels that loss acutely. "I open up the door, look out the window, and those places that used to be there are no longer there. I have friends and their kids and their pets that I would see regularly. I'm not happy because you walk out and all you see is devastation."

A HOPEFUL FUTURE

"What came out of the fires was a strong sense of understanding each other in a more human way," says Vandenberg. "My intention is to move forward with grace, honoring the grief that everyone experienced, but also appreciating the beauty and the pain."

Parts of Malibu were also affected by the fire, which resulted in a slow reopening of Mastro's Ocean Club Malibu. Now, "there's a real sense of renewal," says Divisional Vice President of Mastro's Restaurants Patrick Barrett. "Locals and visitors alike are coming back, and there is a sense of appreciation not just for the gorgeous coastline, but for each other."

The Malibu community showed support for businesses, displaced people, and first responders. "The fires reminded all of us how precious this community and its natural beauty are. Our hope is that Malibu continues to rebuild stronger than ever," comments Barrett.

V ROOM W A VIEW

Catapano also hopes that "people come back, support one another, support businesses and public schools, and help the community recover for decades to come." The decision to return is personal, but "my biggest hope is that the Palisades can return to the thriving, connected, close-knit community it was."

Flutie has seen the Palisades change before and is confident that it will "remain a beautiful place," he says. "The post-fire Palisades is going to evolve and be different in some respects than the pre-fire Palisades. The community is going to do what they can to preserve as much of the Palisades charm as possible and it may look a little different, but emotionally and intrinsically and spiritually, it is still the Palisades and the people are what make it so special."

By Lila Victor, Special to the Daily Press. Published in partnership with the Westside Current.





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