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Investors snap up fire zone properties and housing recovery struggles

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

As the region marks the one year anniversary of last year's horrific fires, real estate investors are purchasing roughly 40% of properties selling in the hardest-hit areas, according to a new report

SEE **INVESTORS** PAGE 6

California's fire recovery reckoning: what one year revealed about insurance, claims, and fairness

One year after wildfires tore through Pacific Palisades, Altadena, and surrounding communities, the physical signs of destruction remain visible. Empty lots sit beside newly framed homes. Construction crews work steadily along canyon roads. Temporary fencing still hums in the coastal wind.

But as recovery enters its second year, the most consequential challenges are no longer physical. They are embedded in insurance policies, claims files, and regulatory

SEE **FIRE** PAGE 11

Los Angeles continues its road to recovery one year after twin infernos ripped through the region



SMDP Photo

ANNIVERSARY: The memories of the Palisades Fire remain fresh for many as governments and nonprofits continue to support survivors.

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

In January of last year, twin wildfires tore through opposite ends of Los Angeles County and the region continues to grapple with the disaster that claimed dozens of lives, destroyed more than 16,000 structures and left thousands of families struggling to rebuild their lives.

The Palisades and Eaton fires ignited within hours of each other last year, exploding from small blazes into catastrophic infernos that charred 59 square miles — an area roughly the size of San Francisco. Fueled by Santa Ana winds gusting up to 90 mph and tinder-dry vegetation after months of little rain, the fires killed 19 people in Altadena's Eaton Fire and 12 in the Pacific Palisades blaze.

The Palisades Fire burned for 31 days across 37 square miles, while the Eaton Fire scorched 22 square miles over 25 days. In Altadena alone, 9,418 homes and buildings were destroyed. Another 6,837 structures were lost in Pacific Palisades and neighboring areas including Malibu.

Rebuilding has proven painfully slow. According to city and county data, only 10 homes have been completed so far — most in Altadena, with one in Pasadena and

SEE **RECOVERY** PAGE 7



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NFL MVP debate will continue until a winner is announced next month

The NFL regular season has ended and the MVP debate continues.

It could be another close race with no clear front-runner. Matthew Stafford and Drake Maye have the best odds, according to BetMGM Sportsbook.

Playoff results won't matter because it's a regular-season award. Winners of the AP NFL awards will be revealed at "NFL Honors" on Feb. 5.

Stafford had an outstanding season for the Los Angeles Rams, leading them to a 12-5 record and the NFC's No. 5 seed. Maye led the New England Patriots (14-3) to a 10-win turnaround and the AFC's No. 2 seed in just his second season.

Stafford was first in the NFL with 4,707 yards and 46 touchdowns. His passer rating of 109.2 was second only to Maye, who finished at 113.5. Maye had 4,394 yards passing and 31 TDs. Both quarterbacks threw eight interceptions. Maye had the higher completion percentage, 72% to 65%.

Christian McCaffrey also belongs in the conversation after an outstanding do-it-all season in which he helped the injury-depleted San Francisco 49ers (12-5) overcome losing several key players and going long stretches without QB Brock Purdy. The Niners even reached Week 18 with a chance at the No. 1 seed before Seattle's defense shut them down in a 13-3 win.

A running back hasn't won the MVP award since Adrian Peterson in 2012.



LA Rams

RAMS: Quarterback Matthew Stafford is in the running for MVP.

Micah Parsons is worthy of consideration. Parsons tore his ACL during Green Bay's loss to Denver in Week 15. The Packers were 9-3-1 in games he finished; 0-4 in the others, including last week when they rested starters.

Quarterbacks have won the MVP award 12 straight seasons. Those QBs have played for a No. 1 seed nine times in that span and a No. 2 seed the other three.

Only three quarterbacks have ever won MVP on a team that didn't win its division. Peyton Manning did it in 2008, Steve McNair as a co-MVP in 2003 and Johnny Unitas in 1967, when the Colts went 11-1-2 but missed the playoffs.

Last year, Josh Allen edged Lamar Jackson for MVP. However, Jackson was the first-team All-Pro. It was the first time a first-team All-Pro didn't win the NFL MVP award since 1987, when John Elway was the MVP and Joe Montana received All-Pro honors.

The MVP award is given to a player who had the most valuable season while All-Pro is a statistical recognition. All-Pro rosters will be announced this week and the debate will still continue until next month.

PLAYOFF SEEDING

The Detroit Lions proposed last season that playoff seeding should be based on winning percentage instead of automatically placing division winners in the top four spots.

NFL owners voted against it in May because a majority value the importance of teams winning their own division.

"I'm a division purist," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said.

The league will likely revisit this idea after a second straight season in which three teams with better records will play on the road during wild-card weekend.

The 49ers (12-5) play at the Philadelphia Eagles (11-6). The Rams (12-5) play at the Carolina Panthers (8-9). The Houston Texans (12-5) play at the Pittsburgh Steelers (10-7).

Last year, the teams with the better records went 1-2.

The Rams-Panthers matchup will be the ninth time a road team in the playoffs has at

SEE **RAMS** PAGE 8

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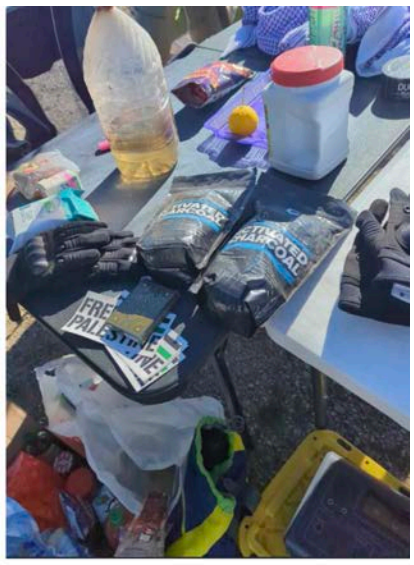
Suspects plead not guilty in Southern California bombing plot





Courtesy photos

BOMBS: The suspects are accused of building explosives.

Three of the four suspects accused of plotting to bomb several Southern California business locations on New Year's Eve have pleaded not guilty.

Audrey Carroll, 30, and Zachary Page, 32, entered their pleas in federal court Monday. Tina Lai, 41, entered her plea in court a few days earlier. Their attorneys did not immediately respond to emailed requests for comment.

The fourth person, Dante Anthony-Gaffield, 24, will enter his plea Jan. 20.

The suspects, all from the Los Angeles area, were arrested Dec. 12 in the Mojave Desert east of Los Angeles as they were rehearsing their plot, First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli said last month. Officials said they made the arrests before the suspects assembled a functional explosive device.

Essayli said Carroll created a detailed plan to bomb five or more business locations owned by two companies across Southern California on New Year's Eve described as "Amazon-type" logistical centers. He did not identify the alleged targets.

A grand jury indicted the four on multiple counts of providing and attempting to provide material support to terrorists and possession of unregistered firearms. Carroll and Page were also indicted on one count of conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction.

Officials said they are members of an offshoot of an anti-capitalist and anti-government group dubbed the Turtle Island Liberation Front. The group calls for decolonization, tribal sovereignty and "the working class to rise up and fight back against capitalism," according to the criminal complaint.

They also are members of what one of the defendants characterized as a "radical" faction of the group that communicated using a chat called "Order of the Black Lotus," according to the indictment.

The term "Turtle Island" is used by some Indigenous peoples to describe North America in a way that reflects its existence outside of the colonial boundaries put in place by the U.S. and Canada. It comes from Indigenous creation stories where the continent was formed on the back of a giant turtle.

Two of the group's members also had discussed plans for future attacks targeting U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents and vehicles with pipe bombs, according to the criminal complaint.

Photos included in the court documents show the desert campsite where they were arrested with what investigators said were bomb-making materials strewn across plastic folding tables.

Trial for Carroll, Page, and Lai is scheduled to begin Feb. 17. Anthony-Gaffield's trial will be scheduled once he enters his plea.

If convicted, Carroll and Page could face a maximum sentence of life in federal prison, and Anthony-Gaffield and Lai could face a maximum sentence of 25 years in federal prison.

By JAIMIE DING Associated Press

GET IT DAILY...



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **61.9**

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

Surf dips from Tuesday with easing swell. Winds look mainly light+ onshore. WNW swell tapers off for waves averaging under waist high, slower during the mid day high tide. Light+ WNW-W onshores expected through the day.

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

Up tick in WNW swell mix for a little more size at exposures. Winds looking mainly light+ onshore. Blend of fresh, mid to longer period WNW swell edges up, with more thigh to waist high waves for exposed spots Light+ NW winds due much of the day.

Weather

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 63. Calm wind becoming west southwest around 5 mph in the afternoon.
Wednesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 48. North wind around 5 mph.
Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 61. North wind 5 to 10 mph.
Thursday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 48.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
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
2026/01/09	Fri	08:13 AM	2.04	L
2026/01/09	Fri	1:26 PM	3.31	H
2026/01/09	Fri	7:32 PM	1.27	L
2026/01/10	Sat	02:49 AM	4.54	H
2026/01/10	Sat	10:02 AM	1.71	L
2026/01/10	Sat	3:14 PM	2.70	H
2026/01/10	Sat	8:12 PM	1.87	L
2026/01/11	Sun	03:41 AM	4.67	H
2026/01/11	Sun	11:27 AM	1.17	L
2026/01/11	Sun	5:38 PM	2.59	H
2026/01/11	Sun	9:10 PM	2.35	L
2026/01/12	Mon	04:31 AM	4.83	H

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: 1/5
4 18 24 51 56
Power#: 14
Jackpot: 105 M

Mega Millions
Draw Date: 1/2
6 13 34 43 52
Mega#: 4
Jackpot: 180 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 1/3
5 35 37 42 46
Mega#: 24
Jackpot: 17 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 1/5
5 9 15 21 24

Daily 3
Draw Date: 1/5
EVENING: 5 5 5
Draw Date: 1/5
MIDDAY: 7 3 0

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 1/5
1st: 06 - Whirl Win
2nd: 09 - Winning Spirit
3rd: 01 - Gold Rush
Race Time: 1:43.29

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The Santa Monica Daily Press publishes Monday - Saturday with a circulation of 8,200 on weekdays and 8,000 on the weekend. The Daily Press is adjudicated as a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Los Angeles and covers news relevant to the City of Santa Monica. The Daily Press is a member of the California Newspaper Publisher's Association, the National Newspaper Association and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. The paper you're reading this on is composed of 100% post consumer content and the ink used to print these words is soy based. We are proud recipients of multiple honors for outstanding news coverage from the California Newspaper Publishers Association as well as a Santa Monica Sustainable Quality Award.

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DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2025274030. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: SUNSET PARK ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY RESIDENTS 2 SPEAR, 2528 29TH ST., SANTA MONICA, CA 90405, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): TERI DAVIS BERNSTEIN, 2528 29TH ST., SANTA MONICA, CA 90405. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 12/2025. 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/ Teri Davis Bernstein, OWNER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 12/10/2025. 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: 12/24/2025, 12/31/2025, 01/07/2026, 01/14/2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2025278452 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: MICROFEST RECORDS, 229 Rennie Ave, Venice, CA 90291, LA County. Registered Owner(s): John Schneider, 229 Rennie Ave, Venice, CA 90291. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The date registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: N/A. s/ John Schneider, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on December 16, 2025. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: December 24, 2025, December 31, 2025, January 7, 2026, January 14, 2026

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25SMCP00645. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Petition of Katherine Chen for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Katherine Chen filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Katherine Chen to Katherine Chen Mason. 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: 01/24/2026, Time: 8:40 A.M., Dept: K. 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: 12/17/2025. Lawrence H. Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/24/2025, 12/31/2025, 01/07/2026, 01/14/2026

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25SMCP00642. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Petition of Richard Bruce Spitznass Jr. for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Richard Bruce Spitznass Jr. filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Richard Bruce Spitznass Jr. to Richard B. Spitznass. 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: 01/22/2026, Time: 8:30 AM, Dept: K. 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: 12/16/2025. Lawrence H. Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/24/2024, 12/31/2024, 01/07/2025, 01/14/2025

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25SMCP00642. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Petition of Richard Bruce Spitznass Jr. for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Richard Bruce Spitznass Jr. filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Richard Bruce Spitznass Jr. to Richard B. Spitznass. 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: 01/23/2026, Time: 8:30 AM, Dept: K. 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: 12/16/2025. Lawrence H. Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/18/2024, 12/24/2025, 12/31/2024, 01/07/2025.

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Fighting LA wildfires broke my heart but prepared me for life outside prison

On a cold January day at our fire camp in Northern California, I learned my crew was being sent south. On the bus, I kept wondering why they would need our help with a fire in the winter.

As we got closer, I saw towering black smoke rising miles into the sky and spreading across the horizon.

For the next three weeks, I was one of hundreds of incarcerated firefighters who helped battle and contain the deadly LA fires. During the blazes, I moved through ash-covered Eaton Canyon, creating fire breaks, hauling sandbags to prevent mudslides and clearing fallen trees and debris in Altadena.



JOSE ANGEL AMEZCUA

Before then, I had only fought wildland fires. I had never seen such devastation in a city. In neighborhoods I saw homes and structures reduced to rubble and people trying to salvage whatever they could. It was heartbreaking to witness the destruction.

But it was also a stark reminder that I was right where I was supposed to be — helping to save the communities I had once harmed.

Early in my incarceration I knew I had to better myself, so I attended as many classes and groups as I could. Then the opportunity came to join a fire camp, which would allow me to leave the prison and spend time outside. I joined knowing I could earn time off my sentence — but what I gained was so much more.

I joined the Youth Offender Fire Camp Program at Growlersburg, a pilot program launched in 2023 that allowed young people under 26 to train as wildland firefighters, instead of being held in a high-security prison. At Growlersburg, I noticed a big difference from my time in prison: we had better food, better living arrangements and we got to be outside in the woods.

The Cal Fire Captains treated us like equals. I trained as a handcrew firefighter, creating firelines to contain wildfires and clearing vegetation with hand tools. Then I started to fight fires.

Nothing can mentally prepare you for being on a fire line. You feel the adrenaline, and it pushes you to your limits. Fighting a fire means working 24-hour shifts, sometimes climbing mountains in the dark, using heavy tools to create a fire line.

I didn't realize our impact until, in a stereotypical moment, we helped a woman find her cat during a wildfire. That showed me the difference our work made in helping someone during their darkest moments.

Over time, I became a sawyer, someone who cuts down trees with a chainsaw. I began to enjoy the work and imagined a different future as I watched my crew members get released and become firefighters with Cal Fire's support.

During the LA fires, the Rose Bowl became our base camp, where we were greeted with gratitude from elected officials, celebrities and community members. For the first time, we realized that people wanted to hear our stories, that the world saw us as more than our past mistakes.

It was an incredible feeling to know our hard work mattered and that others believed we were deserving of a second chance.

At firecamp, the rehabilitation and reentry preparation classes I took with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition helped me get ready to come home and prepare for my next journey. Fire camp reduced my 10-year sentence to 5½ years, and I came home from prison a few months ago.

Since then I've been cherishing every moment with my family and my wife. Life on the outside is harder than I expected, but fire camp prepared me for the mental challenges of rebuilding my life. It taught me to push forward, no matter what. I had never held a job before. I came to prison at a young age. I never believed in my future. Now, becoming a firefighter is my calling. I'm working to expunge my record so I can keep saving lives and stopping fires from spreading. When people think of incarcerated people, they often see us as a danger, with our past mistakes magnified. Amid the smoke, ash, and destruction of the LA fires, people saw us as heroes, recognizing the good we could achieve when given a second chance.

It's been one year since the fires. California has raised wages for incarcerated firefighters and made the Growlersburg Fire Camp program permanent. During the LA fires, the attention to our stories showed that people want to see second chances given not just to firefighters, but to all incarcerated people working to turn their lives around.

Jose Angel Amezcua is a formerly incarcerated firefighter from Salinas

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

California's urgent issues loom over Newsom campaign and his would-be successors



Photo by Rahul Lal, CalMatters

NEWSOM: Gov. Gavin Newsom leaves the stage after addressing attendees at his inauguration for a second term at the Plaza de California in Sacramento on Jan. 6, 2023.

Political California cranked up for the New Year Monday.

The Legislature reconvened after a 114-day recess, Gov. Gavin Newsom renewed his nascent campaign for president and the dozen or so men and women who covet his job continued to seek ways to reach a so-far-uninterested electorate.

Newsom's interview Monday on MS NOW, the cable channel beloved by Democratic politicians and activist voters, implied anew that his final year as governor will be dominated by his all-but-certain bid for the White House in 2028. He spent much it criticizing President Donald Trump for refusing aid to Los Angeles fire victims and cracking down on undocumented immigrants.

Newsom's preoccupation will color whatever he and the Legislature do about a deficit-ridden state budget and a half-dozen or so other stubborn issues that have emerged or become more acute since Newsom took office seven years

SEE **GUEST COMMENTARY** PAGE 8

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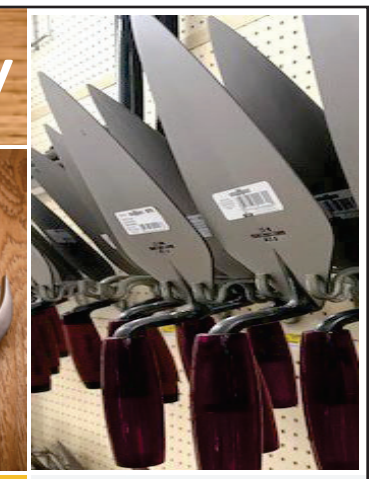

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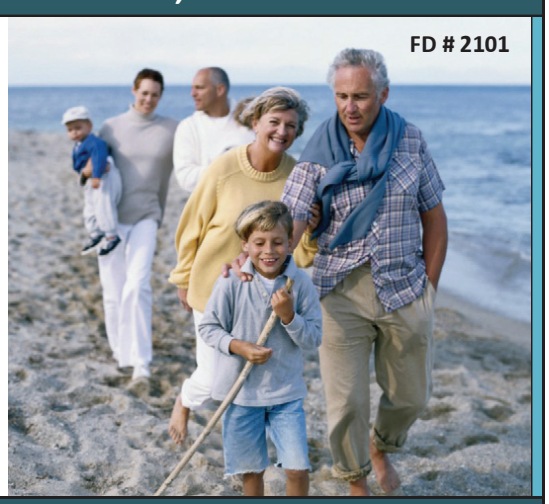
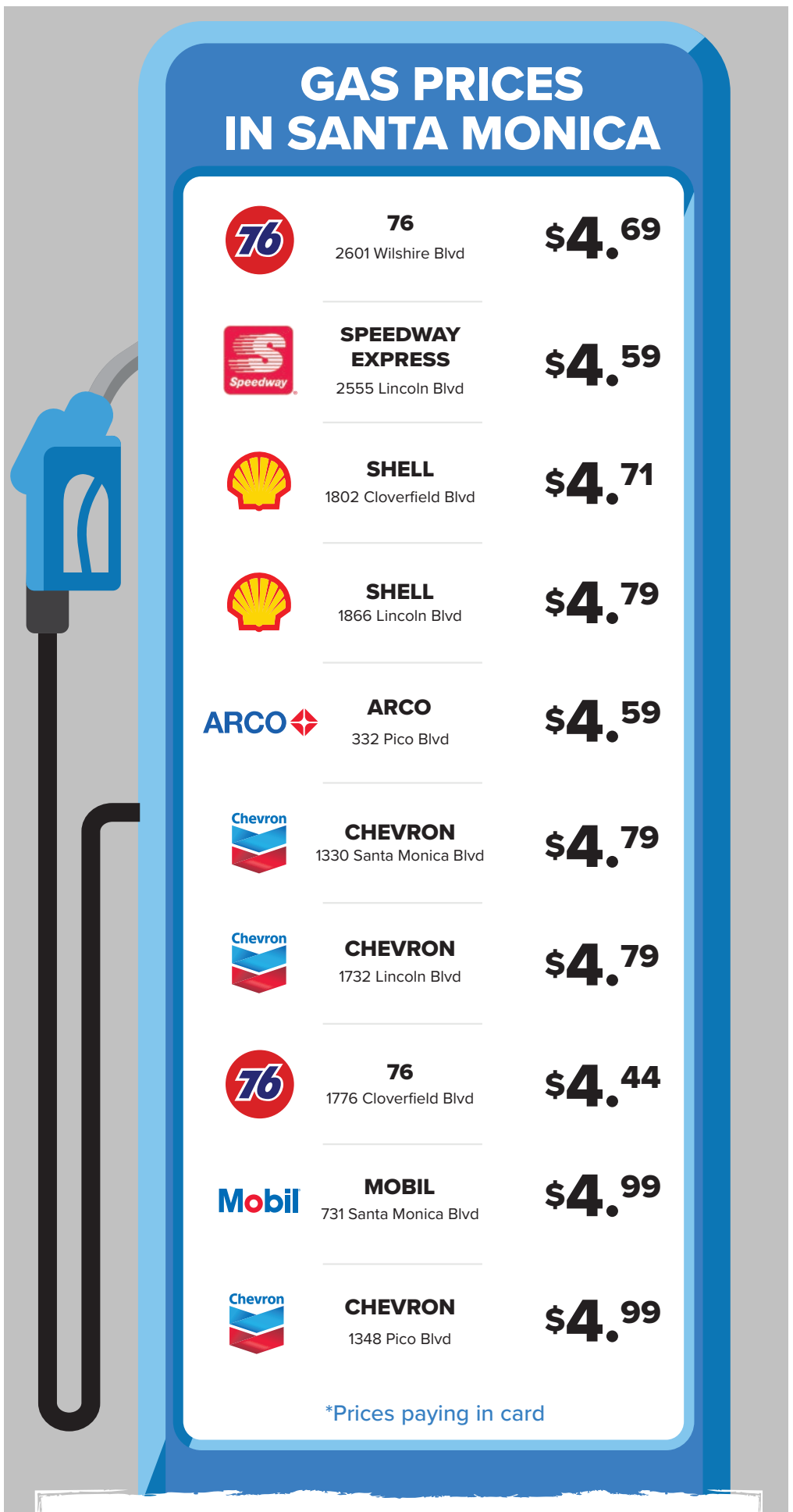




Average gasoline prices in Los Angeles have fallen 3.9 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging $4.32/g today, according to GasBuddy's survey of 2,135 stations in Los Angeles. Prices in Los Angeles are 28.9 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 2.3 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has decreased 2.3 cents compared to a week ago and stands at $3.498 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Los Angeles was priced at $3.15/g while the most expensive was $5.79/g, a difference of $2.64/g. The lowest price in the state was $2.49/g while the highest was $8.19/g, a difference of $5.70/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 1.2 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging $2.74/g today. The national average is down 21.2 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 29.2 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Santa Monica Daily Press

INVESTORS

FROM PAGE 1

from Redfin.

In Pacific Palisades' 90272 zip code, investors bought 48 of 119 lots—or 40.3%—that sold in the third quarter, compared to zero lot purchases by anyone the previous year. Altadena saw similar patterns, with investors acquiring 27 of 61 lots sold (44.3%), while Malibu investors purchased 19 of 43 lots (44.2%)—more than double the 21.4% share from a year earlier.

"In Altadena, there's a real push around the idea that the community is not for sale," said Redfin Premier agent Sylva Khayalian. "People who plan to stay are encouraging others not to sell because of how much it could change the neighborhood—but for some residents, selling is the only option that makes financial sense."

Many investors are making lowball offers with plans to flip the land into new homes, Khayalian said. Some owners reject these offers, but others are signing on because they're desperate to sell. Many who plan to sell are elderly or underinsured, lacking funds to rebuild.

The January 2025 Palisades and Eaton fires killed 31 people and destroyed roughly 16,000 homes and structures. The blazes impacted $51.7 billion worth of homes in Los Angeles—approximately 11,000 residential properties, according to Redfin's analysis of Los Angeles City Council data. The typical impacted home had a pre-fire value of $3.7 million, with nearly 100 properties valued over $20 million.

Vacant lot listings have exploded in affected areas. Pacific Palisades saw 309 lot listings during the three months ending November 30, up from just seven a year earlier. Altadena listings jumped to 225 from two, while Malibu rose to 214 from 125.

"There are so many lots sitting on the market that sellers are starting to cut prices to attract offers," Khayalian said. "Many of the lots that are selling in Altadena are in the $500,000 to $600,000 range. If there was still a home on them, they might sell for $1 million or more."

The typical lot sold in Altadena went for $510,000 during the three-month period, while Pacific Palisades lots sold for $1.6 million and Malibu lots for $1.3 million.

Property values in burn areas have plummeted 30% to 60%. Pacific Palisades saw average sale prices fall from $3.6 million before the disaster to $2.4 million by late 2025—a 33% decline. Altadena prices dropped even more dramatically, from $1.8 million to roughly $684,000—a 62% plunge.

Home sales have ticked up from record lows but remain below pre-fire levels. Pacific Palisades recorded 31 single-family home sales during the three months ending November 30, up from six in the immediate post-fire period but down from 45 a year earlier. Altadena saw 58 sales, up from 26 but down from 67.

Rebuilding has been slow. As of January 2026, authorities have issued over 2,600 rebuilding permits—only a fraction of destroyed housing. California has funded nearly 1,000 new affordable homes across Los Angeles County to help fire survivors stay in their communities.

The rental situation also became dire after the fires, with average rents jumping 20% in the two weeks following the blazes—double California's maximum increase allowed under anti-price-gouging laws. Some neighborhoods saw rent hikes of 30% to 50%.

California's Attorney General sued violators, including landlords in Hermosa Beach who raised rent 36% overnight. The state issued emergency orders to strengthen protections, and by mid-2025, Los Angeles County and city officials approved new penalties to fine landlords for unlawful rent hikes.

The price-gouging ban remained in effect through January 7, 2026, helping curb drastic rent spikes. However, some estimates suggest landlords collectively overcharged tenants by $7 million per month beyond legal limits after the fires.

Governor Gavin Newsom announced Tuesday that California will expand its CalAssist Mortgage Relief Program and explore new financing to help survivors bridge the gap between insurance payouts and rebuilding costs. The state has paid $5.98 million to 732 households so far, with most being Palisades and Eaton fire survivors.

editor@smdp.com



SMDP photo

PROPERTY: Burned lots are being snapped up as investment properties.

RECOVERY

FROM PAGE 1

two in Pacific Palisades. None are finished in Malibu. Hundreds more remain under construction across the region.

As the region marks the anniversary of the disaster, many are still questioning exactly what happened. Officials have said the Palisades fire was in fact a rekindling of a previous fire and while a suspect has been arrested, many still question how the response was botched so badly. The cause of the Eaton Fire remains under investigation.

Governmental responses to both fires are ongoing. Gov. Gavin Newsom has requested $33.9 billion in federal disaster aid, which the Trump administration and Congress have yet to approve.

However, on the eve of the anniversary, Newsom announced $107.3 million in state funding for nine affordable housing projects that will create 673 new rental homes across Los Angeles County. The projects, funded through a special Multifamily Finance Super NOFA for disaster-impacted areas, are located in Los Angeles, Bellflower, Claremont, Covina, Santa Monica and Pasadena.

None of the projects are in burn scar areas or will replace destroyed homes. Instead, the state is building affordable housing in multiple communities to relieve pressure on the region's tight rental market without concentrating new development in fire zones.

"We are rebuilding stronger, fairer communities in Los Angeles without displacing the people who call these neighborhoods home," Newsom said in a statement. "More affordable homes across the county means survivors can stay near their schools, jobs, and support systems."

New units will be offered first to fire survivors through occupancy preferences and priority policies. The projects also include 29 homes reserved for veterans.

Combined with an earlier statewide funding round, the state has now committed to 974 new affordable homes in Los Angeles County through its housing programs.

The state has also accelerated wildfire prevention efforts, completing 218 projects covering more than 40,000 acres statewide under fast-tracked permitting that reduces approval timelines to as little as 30 days. Southern California has seen 48 projects approved, including 10 covering nearly 1,000 acres in Los Angeles County.

Last month, CAL FIRE awarded nearly $62.7 million in wildfire prevention grants to 84 projects statewide, with $10.3 million funding 16 projects in Southern California.

The state has assigned five new Type-6 fire engines to the Los Angeles City Fire Department and expanded its aerial firefighting fleet with a third C-130 Hercules airtanker. California also released its first-ever statewide LiDAR datasets mapping terrain and vegetation conditions across more than 100 million acres to identify where wildfire fuels have accumulated.

Since 2021, the state has awarded more than $300 million to support nearly 250 wildfire resilience projects in Southern California.

The County has also maintained programs to address the disaster, including efforts to support businesses. Los Angeles County is hosting a Small Business Pop-Up Fair on Thursday at Loma Alta Park in Altadena to mark the anniversary and connect fire-impacted businesses with recovery resources.

The event, organized by the county Department of Economic Opportunity in partnership with Supervisor Kathryn Barger and the Altadena Chamber of Commerce, will run from noon to 4 p.m. and offer one-on-one technical assistance with commercial permitting, capital and grant programs, pro bono legal aid and financial subsidies for hiring.

A marketplace will also feature local small businesses, giving residents an opportunity to support fire-impacted enterprises directly.

While government support has been available, it hasn't filled the need and charity groups are also working on various projects.

Total charitable commitments to Los Angeles fire relief have reached between $860 million and $970 million, according to a study by the Milken Institute. Individual donations through GoFundMe brought in $265 million.

The California Fire Foundation announced it has provided more than $9 million in support over the past year to individuals, families, first responders, fire departments and community organizations across Los Angeles and Ventura counties.

The foundation has funded 100 community projects and supported 45 fire departments through its multi-year grant initiatives, committing to invest $5 million annually over five years in the Los Angeles region.

Immediately after the fires, the foundation distributed 7,263 emergency aid cards providing more than $1.8 million in direct financial assistance to nearly 23,000 individuals, including more than 4,800 children. It also provided more than $500,000 in food vouchers through Uber Eats, Postmates and DoorDash.

Grant recipients have included organizations providing fresh produce distribution, fuel reduction through goat grazing, legal services for survivors, mental health support, youth camps for affected children and smoke remediation for homes impacted by toxic ash.

"We are inspired by the resilience of our communities and the dedication of our firefighters," said Angie Carmignani, the foundation's executive director. "While much progress has been made, our work continues."

The foundation is currently accepting applications for its Wildfire Disaster Relief & Recovery Grant, with typical awards ranging from $25,000 to $100,000.

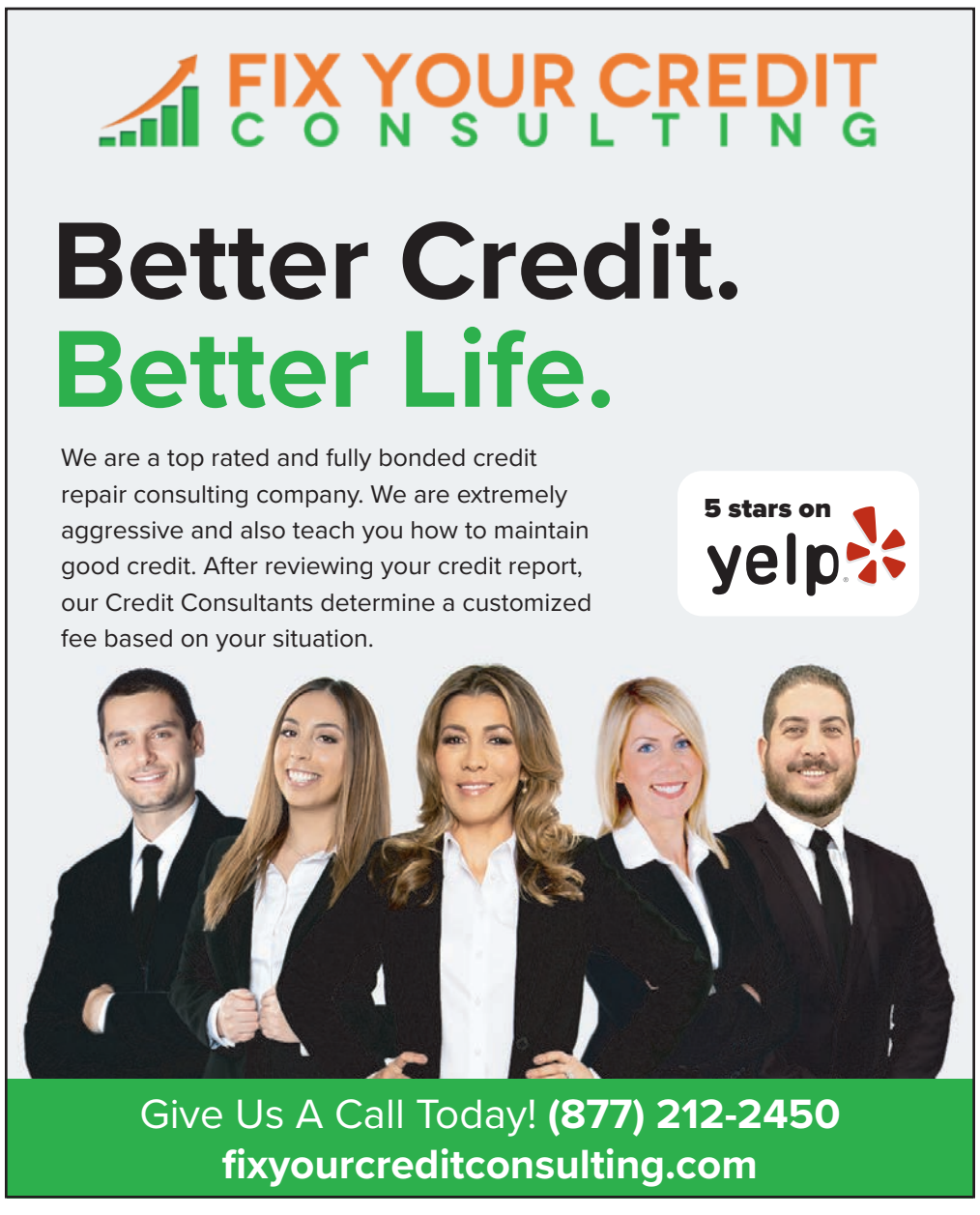
The Associated Press contributed to this report.











RAMS

FROM PAGE 2

least four wins more than its opponent. The teams with the better records are just 2-6 in those games.

DEFENSE NEEDS HELP

Two of the teams with the NFL's top four defenses didn't even make the playoffs.

The Vikings (9-8) were third, allowing 282.6 yards per game. The Browns (5-12) finished fourth, giving up 283.6.

Both teams had quarterback issues. Minnesota lost starter J.J. McCarthy for seven games and backup Carson Wentz started five games, playing the final 2 1/2 games with a shoulder that required season-ending surgery.

The Browns started veteran Joe Flacco for four games, rookie Dillon Gabriel for six and rookie Shedeur Sanders the last seven.

Houston and Denver finished 1-2. The Broncos earned the AFC's No. 1 seed. The Texans got the No. 5 seed.

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

GUEST COMMENTARY

FROM PAGE 5

ago.

In past years Newsom has been lackadaisical about delivering the annual State of the State message to the Legislature that the state constitution requires. But he'll perform the chore later this week, then unveil his response to the projections of semi-permanent, multi-billion-dollar deficits.

Gabe Petek, the Legislature's budget analyst, sees an immediate $18 billion gap between income and outgo that could mushroom to $35 billion if not closed. He's warned that Newsom and legislators can't count on a sluggish economy to solve their problem.

They have used a variety of gimmicks, including raids on emergency reserves, off-the-books loans and deceptive accounting gambits to stave off the day of fiscal reckoning, but the shortfall, born of overspending revenues, has continued.

"If our estimates hold, the Legislature will face a fourth consecutive year of budget problems — all during a period of overall revenue growth," Petek said in a November analysis. "As it stands — with larger forecasted deficits and many fewer tools available to address them — California's budget is undeniably less prepared for downturns."

The Legislature's leaders, pressed by a powerful progressive contingent, don't want to reduce the health care and income support services they so willingly enacted after Newsom declared, erroneously, that the state had a $97.5 billion surplus three years ago.

Progressives and their allies in public employee unions and other left-of-center groups want to close the budget gap with new taxes and are sponsoring two ballot measures, one to extend a surtax on the highest-income taxpayers that's due to expire and a second to impose a new wealth tax on the state's billionaires.

Newsom has steadfastly rejected tax increases to deal with the deficit, unwilling, obviously, to become a pro-tax presidential candidate. But neither has he offered, so far, anything other than gimmicks to solve the problem his wildly off-base 2022 surplus declaration created.

The state's stubborn budget deficit is just one of the issues that continue to defy resolution as Newsom's final year begins. Other issues include high levels of homelessness and poverty, a housing shortage that's just as acute as when he took office in 2019, an insurance crisis born of chronic wildfires, a woebegone bullet train project, soaring costs of living, persistent water supply uncertainties and a looming shortage of gasoline as refineries close due to hostile state regulation.

> "If our estimates hold, the Legislature will face a fourth consecutive year of budget problems — all during a period of overall revenue growth"
>
> - Gabe Petek, the Legislature's budget analyst

On top of everything, California's $4 trillion economy is more or less stuck in neutral, with the nation's highest unemployment rate, no net job growth since the COVID-19 pandemic and severe employment cutbacks in signature sectors, such as film and TV production technology.

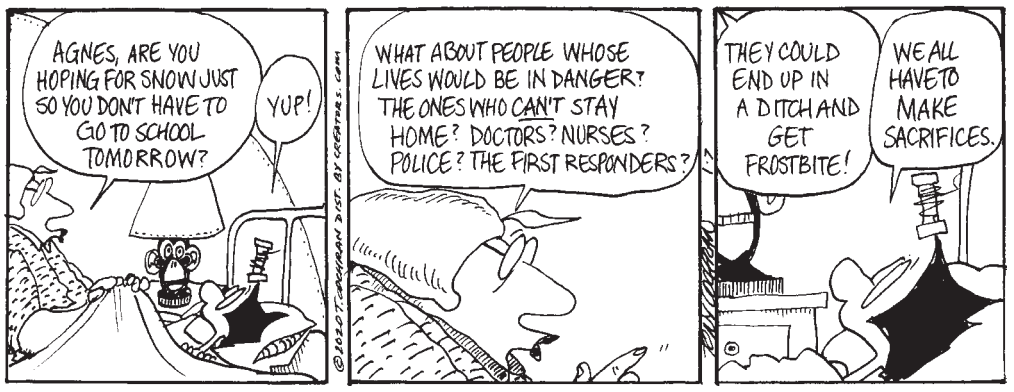
The stark existence of such issues during Newsom's final year as governor is not only a potential drag on his presidential campaign, but it colors the cast-of-thousands campaigns to elect a successor.

Will the would-be Democratic governors be willing to point out Newsom's leftover issues — especially the budget deficit — and tell voters how they would approach the challenge? Or would they merely joust over who can be the loudest?

Dan Walters, CalMatters Opinion Columnist

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



"IS IT WEDNESDAY ALREADY?"

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 19 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

© australianwordgames.com.au 6813

Halloween night

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

Ariel
Ball
Banshees
Boxer
Buccaneer
Christmas elf
Cinderella
Cleopatra
Convict
Dragon
Dwarf
Elves
Enchant
Frog
Genie
Glamour
Grimm
Gypsy
Happy
Hare
Hypnotise
Imps
Lady
Lost
Nose
Ogre
Peri
Pirate
Pixie
Puck
Roman
Rumpelstiltskin
Stepmother
Swan
Tiger
Trolls
Weird
Witch
Wizard

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
Mostly household names

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 7)

Celebrate your Year of Bold Receiving. You've given so much; now life gives back. Supporters show up, networks widen, and an exciting opportunity arrives because someone can't stop singing your praises. Love energizes you. Money matters stabilize and then improve. More highlights: a bucket-list event, confidence in your voice and a mentor who truly sees your potential. Cancer and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 18, 20, 34 and 48.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your recollection may not be 100% factual, but that's just the nature of memory in general. At least your recollections will be kind and positive, so happy stories will get better over time and sad stories will lose their sting.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Daunting tasks need doing. They look complicated, heavy or painfully boring, but they're usually quicker than they appear, and the psychic lift afterward is delicious. Jump in, get it done and enjoy the freedom that follows.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If a choice feels impossible, zoom out. Instead of, "Which one is right?" try, "Which one would future-me thank me for?" Decisions get easier when you let identity lead. Your future self has better taste than you think.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Sometimes you just don't trust others to give you the right help, or you fear the hidden costs. Sometimes you simply like doing things alone. You're like a creature whose needs shift with the seasons, and the right care will come.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Some of the choices are too big, too hot, too cold, and suddenly, you're in the Goldilocks challenge of doing what's just right. What Goldilocks didn't get right was falling asleep on the job. Don't get too comfortable, and you'll be fine.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Although no one else can stop you, you'll be wise to stop yourself every so often. Take breaks! Good, healthy pacing allows you to avoid the burnout that could prevent you from collecting your prize at the finish line.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your thoughts will move in straight lines, and everything else will support your purposefulness. It's all getting straight to the point now. People will literally step aside because no one dares get between you and your target.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're hungry for glamour and bright, creative minds to riff with. If the world isn't serving it up, curate your own scene. Throw a gathering, join one or even start a little salon. The vibe you're after is waiting to be conjured.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There's a prize for winning, but honestly, it's not the only reward. It may not even be the best reward, as life has a way of doling out "participation prizes" that are more valuable than the big trophy.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Ideas will click into place, blueprint-style, giving you a future you're excited about. The vibe is "totally doable." Wrap one project and the support for the next pops up automatically, like the system is refreshing itself for you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll be made aware that you're not where you want to be in terms of performance. Maybe it's good enough for the others on your team, but you think you can do better, so it's not good enough for you. Keep putting in the practice. You'll get there.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You contain multitudes, but multitudes can't be taken in all at once. Offer one thread of yourself today. It invites people in instead of leaving them unsure where to begin.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

H	A	R	D	■	S	P	E	C	K	■	T	A	T	S
A	F	A	R	■	T	E	X	A	N	■	E	C	H	O
L	E	G	O	■	A	P	P	L	E	■	C	A	I	N
T	W	E	N	T	Y	S	O	M	E	T	H	I	N	G
■	■	■	E	R	S	■	■	■	L	E	I	■	■	■
M	O	L	D	Y	■	P	C	S	■	M	E	S	S	Y
O	H	I	O	■	D	I	A	L	U	P	■	C	E	E
T	W	E	N	T	Y	Q	U	E	S	T	I	O	N	S
H	O	T	■	R	E	U	S	E	S	■	N	O	O	N
S	W	O	R	E	■	E	E	K	■	I	N	T	R	O
■	■	■	I	V	E	■	■	■	T	O	O	■	■	■
S	I	X	F	I	G	U	R	E	I	N	C	O	M	E
I	D	O	L	■	G	R	O	V	E	■	E	V	I	L
B	L	U	E	■	O	G	L	E	R	■	N	E	T	S
S	E	T	S	■	S	E	E	R	S	■	T	R	E	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	8	6	2	1	4	7	3	9
1	9	4	6	3	7	5	8	2
3	2	7	8	9	5	4	1	6
2	5	1	9	4	3	8	6	7
7	3	8	1	2	6	9	5	4
6	4	9	7	5	8	3	2	1
8	1	2	3	7	9	6	4	5
9	6	5	4	8	1	2	7	3
4	7	3	5	6	2	1	9	8

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

Newsday Crossword

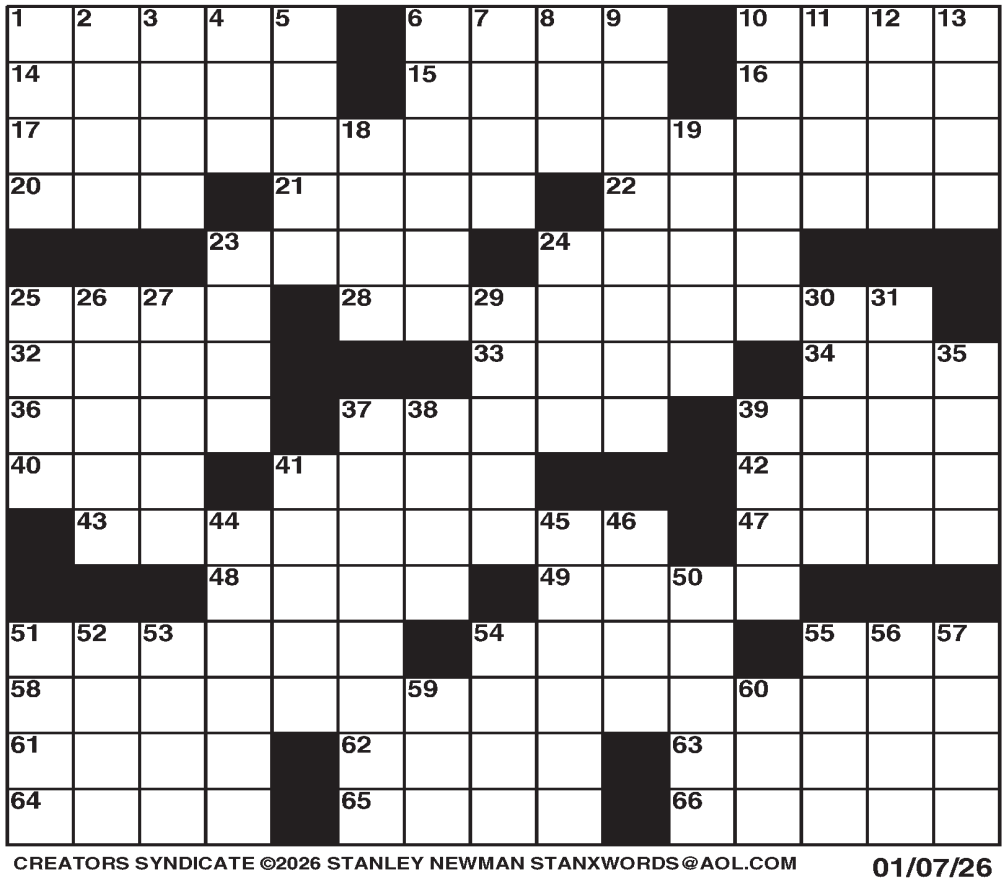
ALL ABOARD by Fred Piscop
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Beam in a printer
6 Informal agreement
10 Formal agreement
14 Prefix for physics
15 Predatory dolphin
16 Scandinavian capital
17 Electric vehicle power source
20 Most important
21 Loosen, as laces
22 Bakery loaves
23 Fancy party
24 Drought ender
25 *Hamilton* bad guy
28 Church instrument's knob
32 Tenor solo
33 Ferris wheel, for instance
34 "Ready or ___..."
36 Dryer buildup
37 Drops of dew
39 Local food shop
40 Fall behind
41 Utters
42 Garden implement
43 Lowe's competitor
47 "That's a shame"
48 Custard ingredients
49 Icy Arctic hazard
51 Wide street
54 Jacob's brother
55 Parenthesis shape
58 Place for a jumper cable
61 Annapolis sch.
62 Feasts on
63 Last Greek letter
64 Color like aqua
65 Shade changers
66 Moved with oars

DOWN

1 Don't have
2 Tennis great Arthur
3 Stick around
4 Slip up
5 Scoundrel
6 Way out there
7 Thus
8 BTU producers
9 Fedora decor
10 Very powerful
11 Locale of Laos
12 Bumbler
13 Large quantity
18 Fascinated by
19 Become prominent
23 College club
24 Sudden attack
25 Formal dance
26 Fictional Heep
27 Seated Beatle
29 Hold firmly
30 Shaq of hoops fame
31 Oktoberfest tune
35 Trash bag closers
37 Pestered
38 Observes closely
39 Lug along
41 Smooth change
44 Brain-based
45 Preoccupy
46 Sock flaw
50 Unconfirmed report
51 Be alongside
52 Piece of pottery
53 European erupter
54 Suffix for kitchen
55 From scratch
56 Hot fashion
57 Dressed (in)
59 "Hooray!"
60 Texter's opinion intro



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01/07/26

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

FIRE

FROM PAGE 1

decisions that increasingly determine who can rebuild, how quickly, and at what cost.

The past year has forced a reckoning across California's homeowners insurance system—one that extends well beyond the burn zones. It exposed deep disparities in claims experiences, highlighted the limits of outdated regulation, and underscored a central truth of climate recovery: fairness in rebuilding depends as much on claims handling and underwriting as on construction itself.

In the months following the fires, homeowner frustration centered less on whether coverage existed and more on how claims were handled. Consumer sentiment varied sharply by carrier, with surveys and regulator feedback showing meaningful differences in responsiveness, transparency, and outcomes. Smoke damage emerged as one of the most contentious issues. While total losses were often resolved more quickly, homeowners with smoke-impacted properties reported delays and disputes—particularly over whether damage that could be cleaned warranted full recovery.

A narrow legal interpretation circulating around the time of the fires suggested that "cleanable" smoke damage might not rise to the level of a compensable loss. That interpretation proved deeply controversial. Regulators took notice, pressing insurers to conduct thorough investigations, rely on independent experts when appropriate, and avoid default assumptions that minimized recovery. The issue was not simply technical; it was about confidence. For families already displaced, the perception of lowballing or delay compounded trauma and eroded trust in the system meant to support recovery.

Even insurers with strong reputations for claims handling struggled with the sheer scale of the disaster. The volume of claims overwhelmed existing infrastructure, forcing carriers to reassign adjusters across regions and, in some cases, transfer files multiple times. Those transfers—while necessary—introduced delays and confusion.

"The fires revealed that claims infrastructure is now as critical as reinsurance capital," said Greg Econn, Executive Vice Chairman of Venbrook Insurance Services, who has worked closely with carriers, regulators, and rebuilding communities following major wildfire events. "Two policies can look identical on paper, but the way a carrier investigates and pays a claim can completely change a family's recovery timeline."

In response, several insurers expanded claims staffing, invested in training, and reexamined surge capacity models. Claims handling, it became clear, is no longer a back-office function; it is a core resilience issue in a climate-driven risk environment.

No institution better illustrates California's insurance tension than the California FAIR Plan, the state's insurer of last resort. Designed as a temporary backstop for properties unable to obtain coverage in the voluntary market, the FAIR Plan now insures a significant share of homes in high fire-severity zones—by some estimates, roughly 40 percent in parts of the Palisades.

While essential, the FAIR Plan has drawn criticism for limited coverage, slower claims resolution, and restrictive interpretations of damage, particularly around smoke claims. Regulators acknowledge these concerns while emphasizing the Plan's constrained mandate and growing exposure. State policy now aims to reduce reliance on the FAIR Plan by restoring voluntary-market participation, but that goal hinges on deeper regulatory reform.

For decades, California maintained some of the most restrictive insurance regulations in the country. Until recently, it was the only state that prohibited insurers from using forward-looking catastrophe models in ratemaking or recovering the cost of reinsurance—even as wildfires grew more frequent and severe. That changed with the state's Sustainable Insurance Strategy, which allows insurers to incorporate catastrophe modeling and reinsurance costs into rate filings in exchange for commitments to write policies in wildfire-distressed areas and recognize mitigation efforts.

"The old system was increasingly disconnected from reality," Econn said. "The new framework creates a path toward stability. Rates will be higher, but availability improves—and without availability, recovery simply stalls."

The reforms mark a philosophical shift from suppressing prices to stabilizing markets. Insurers have begun testing the new framework, and industry leaders express cautious confidence that capital will return, albeit at a cost.

The fires also reignited scrutiny of Coverage A—the dwelling limit that determines how much a homeowner can rebuild. Lawsuits against insurers in recent years have alleged systemic underinsurance, driven in part by replacement-cost tools that underestimated rebuild expenses. Some insurers are now reevaluating minimum coverage standards and vendor models, even if doing so makes their policies less competitive on price. The calculus is shifting: fewer, better-insured policies may ultimately prove more sustainable than broader exposure to underinsured losses.

For homeowners, the lesson is sobering but necessary. Affordability that depends on inadequate coverage can be devastating after a total loss.

If there is a hopeful throughline, it lies in mitigation. Insurers and regulators increasingly agree that wildfire risk is not binary; it can be reduced, measured, and priced. New homes rebuilt under modern Wildland-Urban Interface codes are objectively safer than the structures they replace. Hardened materials, ember-resistant vents, noncombustible clearance zones, and improved roof assemblies significantly extend survivability. In the years immediately following a fire, reduced vegetation can further lower risk.

Some insurers now offer substantial premium discounts for verified mitigation, creating a clearer link between investment and affordability. These incentives alone may not offset all mitigation costs, but they begin to align private behavior with public resilience.

"Wildfire is a solvable problem," Econn said. "The communities that invest in mitigation—at the home and neighborhood level—are already seeing different outcomes. We just don't talk about those successes enough."

Five years from now, California's homeowners insurance market will likely be smaller, more expensive, and more risk-sensitive. Rates will reflect costs long deferred. But the system may also be healthier if mitigation, modeling, and regulation continue to align. The alternative is grim: expanded reliance on last-resort coverage and shrinking options for homeowners in fire-prone areas.

One year after the fires, recovery is no longer just about rebuilding homes. It is about rebuilding trust—between insurers and policyholders, between regulation and reality, and between communities and the systems meant to protect them. Fairness, it turns out, may be the most critical foundation of all.

By Michelle Edgar, Special to the Daily Press



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

CANDLELIGHT SANTA MONICA: FILM SCORES AND HOLLYWOOD EPICS

6:30 p.m. Regent Santa Monica Beach 1700 Ocean Ave Santa Monica. Candlelight concerts bring the magic of a live, multi-sensory musical experience to awe-inspiring locations like never seen before in Los Angeles. Get your tickets now to discover the music of Film Scores and Hollywood Epics at Regent Santa Monica Beach under the gentle glow of candlelight.Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/candlelight-santa-monica-film-scores-and-hollywood-epics/17758761/2026-01-08T18

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

WESTSIDE WITCHES PRESENTS: NEW YEAR, SAME YOU

8:00 p.m. - 9:45 p.m. Mi's West Side Comedy Theater 1323-A 3rd Street Santa Monica. Witches aren't just here for spooky season — summoning laughs is a year-round responsibility. The coven is back with another night of laughter, chaos, and comedy magic! Join host Brenna McNamara and Sabrina Kennelly as we conjure up LA's funniest comics including Phil Morris, Kelly Farmer, Boo Milligan, Jenny Burnett, Danny Hackin and Ryan the Cable Viewer. $20.00 —21+ event. Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/westside-witches-presents-new-year-same-you/17744622/2026-01-08T20

FOOTBALL SHOWINGS AT THE WHALER!

101 Broadway CA 90401 Contact Info (424) 330-0166 info@venicewhaler.com Does not apply on holidays Santa Monica. Enjoy food & drink specials during every football game! The Whaler shows every college and nfl game on all tvs every week all season! (Sound is only on if that is the only game playing). Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/football-showings-at-the-whaler-/17408731/2026-01-08T00

FRIDAY | JANUARY 9

BRUNCH FRIDAYS WITH LIVE MUSIC IN OUR GARDEN PATIO!

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Tiato Kitchen & Venue 2700 Colorado Ave Santa Monica Our newly launched Brunch Fridays just got vibey-er! Every week enjoy great eats, summer libations, and a featured music artist on our beautiful garden patio! So come toast to summer with our uniquely crafted brunch menu including our Turmeric Spiced Cloud Egg dish, Smoked Gouda Scramble with Smashed Ube, Vietnamese French Toast, along with Mama An classics such as Famous Garlic Noodles, Shaken Beef, and Seafood Egg Fried Rice! And of course, it wouldn't be brunch without bottomless mimosas & summer punch bowls, so grab your brunch crew and enjoy the fair along the beautiful backdrop of Al fresco dining. Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/brunch-fridays-with-live-music-in-our-garden-patio-/14639006/2026-01-09T11

APRÈS CHALET

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Regent Santa Monica Beach 1700 Ocean Ave Santa Monica. Après Chalet is a pop-up that transforms seaside cabanas into LA's chicest winter retreat. Each private cabana holds its own holiday ritual: a curated s'mores kit, a warm welcome cocktail, and the crackle of fire from a glowing firepit reserved exclusively for your group. Winter-white decor and twinkling lights frame the scene, as live music drifts through the salt air and a dedicated fireside mixologist creates enchanting, seasonal cocktails. $55.00 to $125.00. Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/apr-s-chalet/17758170/2026-01-09T16

Share the Stoke

Have you ever tucked your toes in the sand of Mother's Beach on a quiet morning?

You breathe in the cool crisp air with nothing but you and the sound of your paddle dipping in the calm flat water. It's the steady churn that puts your body back into the right kind of rhythm and helps the rest of life feel a little lighter. That feeling is the kind of gift that money can't buy.

But you're in luck because money can buy...
Pro SUP Shop rental packs & memberships.

Choose from five visits, ten visits or go unlimited and give them a stack of incredible mornings.

Let's be honest, most gifts end up collecting dust but people actually remember and use our rental packs again and again.



Located on the Southwest end of the Jamaica Bay Inn parking lot at
4175 Admiralty Wy, Marina del Rey, CA (Entry on Palawan or Marina Lot #10)