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Rumors and lies.

7 **Airbnb Scam**
Two men arrested.

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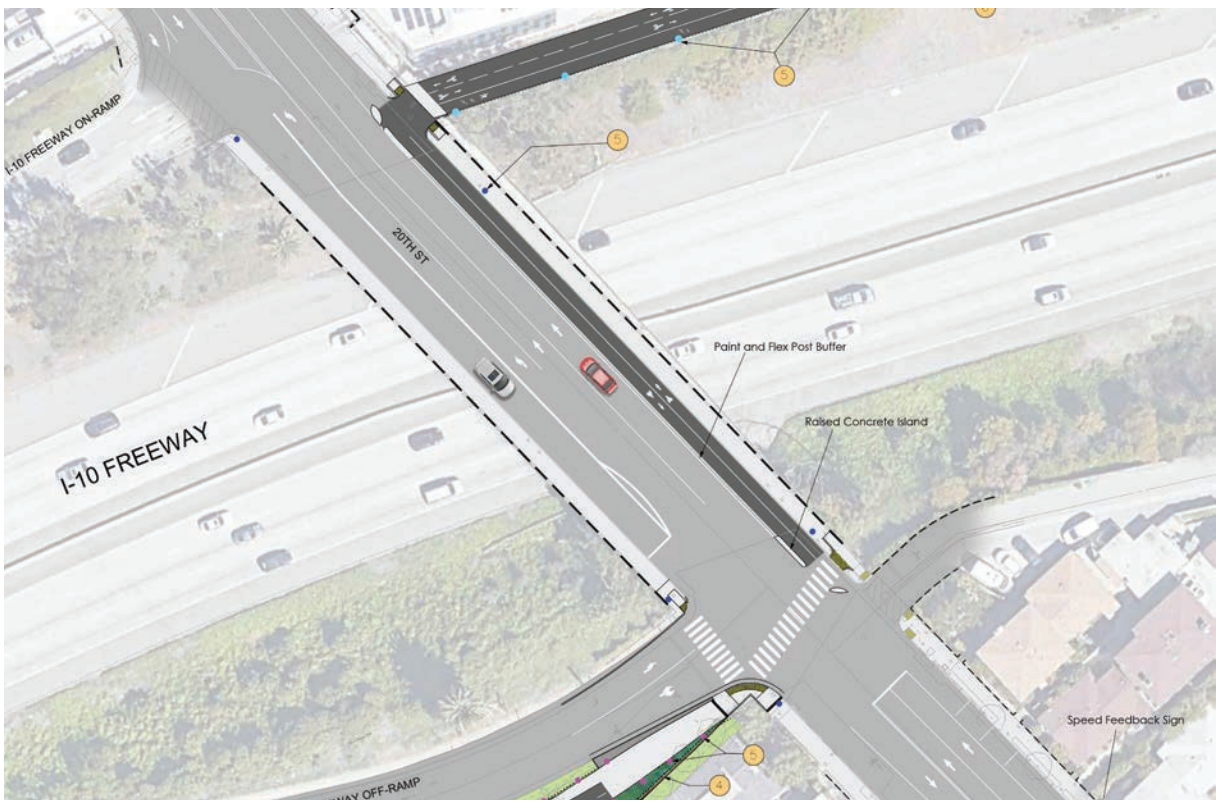
Road safety improvements continue throughout town with stop signs, bike lanes and new traffic warnings

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

A bevy of road-related projects within Santa Monica kept the city's Mobility Department busy during the final months of 2023, and will guide the department's schedule for the first quarter of 2024.

During the second half of 2023, 10 different intersections were upgraded from two-way to four-way stops, including a necessary change at the intersection of 19th Street and Idaho Avenue. After the October death of Tania Mooser at the intersection, followed by a crash at the same place in November that left Paul Postel with four broken and two bruised ribs, an installation of relevant markings and road signs at 19th and Idaho took place on November 27.

On the same date as the 19th and Idaho upgrade, the Mobility Department installed "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" warning signs at the intersections of 18th and Idaho, as well as 21st and Idaho. Santa Monica Mobility Manager Jason Kligier told the Daily Press that those two locations "are being evaluated for upgrade to all-way stops" along with "about a dozen others" based on community feedback.



Courtesy image

BIKES: After a bicyclist was killed, City Hall began a series of road improvements throughout Santa Monica including new bike lanes and barriers along 20th street.

While other intersections such as the two Idaho locations await further evaluation, the department took action during the latter months of 2023 by upgrading to four-way stops at nine different intersections besides the 19th and Idaho spot. These intersections are the following:

-Arizona Avenue at Princeton Street
-Arizona Avenue at Harvard Street
-Nebraska Avenue at Berkeley Street
-7th Street at Hill Street
-Washington Ave at 9th Street
-10th Street at Bay Street
-5th Street at Strand Street
-5th Street at Idaho Avenue

SEE **TRAFFIC** PAGE 11

Police oversight commission encourages SMPD to look for tear gas alternatives

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

Local officials want law enforcement to consider something other than chemical agents during emergency crowd control situations.

The Santa Monica Police Department's (SMPD) stockpile of defense technology chemical agent canisters, or "tear gas," was discussed by the Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission (PSROC) during a Tuesday meeting, with the commission ultimately encouraging SMPD to "search for an alternative method of control" than the chemical agent.

Discussion on the SMPD stockpile coincided with the commission's review of the department's California Assembly Bill 481 mandated report regarding use of approved military-grade equipment. The bill, referred to as AB 481, requires all California law enforcement agencies to obtain approval of funding, acquisition, or use of military equipment within its jurisdiction, and requires that these agencies submit an annual report on the "inventory, procurement, use and misuse of covered military

SEE **SMPD** PAGE 2

Guards hired by California keep eye on sites deemed risky under Los Angeles freeway damaged by fire

CHRISTOPHER WEBER, JULIE WATSON AND KAVISH HARJAI
Associated Press

Since an arson fire at a storage yard damaged a key Los Angeles freeway, security guards hired by the state have been keeping watch for smoke and other trouble at three additional sites beneath Interstate 10 that were leased to the same bankrupt businessman.

Associated Press journalists visited the properties and saw wooden pallets and other hazardous and flammable material much like what fed the Nov. 11 inferno under the freeway, which is used by 300,000 vehicles daily. Rats scurried beneath cars, trucks and RVs in various states of repair as electrical wiring snaked across the ground.

SEE **FREEWAY** PAGE 4



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SMPD

FROM PAGE 1

equipment items."

The SMPD's annual report covering 2022 is broken down into several equipment categories, including "unmanned, remotely piloted, powered aerial or ground vehicles," "projectile launch platforms and their associated munitions," as well as "flashbangs, chemical agent delivery devices, and pepper ball launchers," in which the tear gas is a part. SMPD previously received approval for the list of items, with the commission review merely a discussion item.

A commission motion, made by Chair Derek Devermont, states that the report is approved by the commission in its entirety, with the encouragement to search for tear gas alternatives. An alternative motion was made prior to the final motion by Commissioner Joseph Palazzolo to approve the report in its entirety without the tear gas-related language, stating that SMPD is the "only entity" that has expertise on the subject, and that the commission should not legislate the department's stockpile.

Devermont responded by saying he is "not questioning" or "denying" the judgment or expertise of SMPD, and that the language request was not necessarily a recommendation to stop the procurement and potential use of the item.

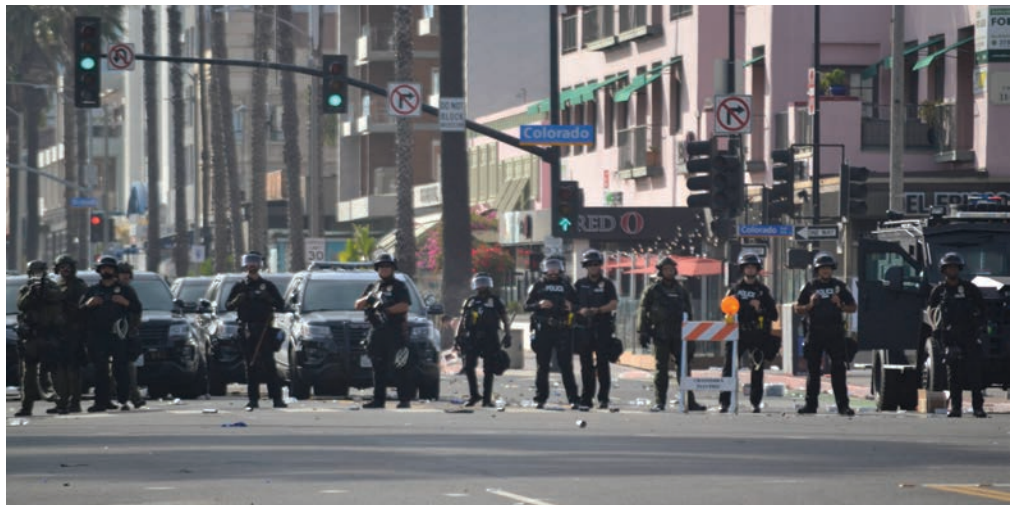
"I don't see any harm, and I don't think it speaks negatively about SMPD, I don't think it reflects poorly on SMPD, to simply say that there's a less violent method of (control), because I think we'd all like to see those," Devermont said. "I think we'd all like to see the least violent methods used if possible. I don't think it's (calling) on SMPD to not use tear gas if that's the least violent method, it's not calling on them to get rid of it. It's just saying, hey, look for it, and if it's out there, great." Devermont's previous motion included the words "less violent" which were substituted into the word "alternative."

The 2022 SMPD report states that the department is in possession of 32 canisters of various defense technology chemical agents, saying that the items' capabilities are designed "to safely resolve critical situations such as violent civil unrest and high-risk tactical operations." SMPD Deputy Chief of Police Darrick Jacob spoke to the commission about potential use of the canisters, saying that use is "rare" but would typically be used for barricaded suspects. No usage of canisters occurred in 2022, per the report.

"We rarely use it, when we do use it, it's to extricate somebody from a house, from a building, someone who's armed trying to get someone out when all things have failed instead of rushing in … (Los Angeles Police Department) has tear gas, and they do use it on those particular issues," Jacob said.

Jacob added that deliverance of the canisters is "one of the most regulated things in our state," particularly after a 2021 bill that barred law enforcement agencies from using chemical agents such as tear gas to break up peaceful demonstration. Normal officers are unable to deploy munitions, only a specially-trained Mobile Field Force Unit or SWAT Unit of officers. The SMPD report says that the canisters "can also be used by trained and qualified members at the direction of a supervisor."

The Deputy Chief said that authority on usage begins with a request from a tactical commander, then one from an incident commander, and ultimately the Chief of Police or a designee of the Chief can make the decision to use. Any usage of a canister must also be presented to the Oversight Commission within 30 days.



Matthew Hall

EQUIPMENT: The use of tear gas in Santa Monica is extremely rare with the only deployment of recent memory occurring during the protest and riots of 2020.

A prior commission discussion on emissions of tear gas is that it should be used "sparingly" and "with great caution" due to the "unknown health effects of these munitions as well as the impact they have on the community at large." The commission's view further states that "all uses of force should only be used when all peaceful alternatives have been exhausted in accordance with penal codes" such as codes concerning use of force, kinetic energy projectiles, civil disobedience and de-escalation.

Asked by Commissioner Craig Miller if Jacob personally has concerns on the health consequences of tear gas, Jacob replied that it "doesn't matter" what he personally thinks, because he can only speak professionally when he is uniform. Jacob noted that there is a "tremendous liability" in SMPD actions, that he's prepared to deal with any consequences of non-compliance with the state's view on tear gas, and that tear gas has only been deployed once in his 20 years of service.

That came on May 31, 2020, when officers deployed the gas in an attempt to disperse individuals from the downtown area.

thomas@smdp.com

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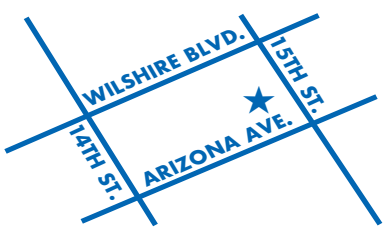
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News Binge: All of last week's stories in one place



Photo by Scott Snowden

OPEN: Modern Bread and Bagel is now open at 15th and Montana.

STAFF REPORT

LOCAL 'POLAR BEARS' TAKE THE PLUNGE INTO 2024:

Santa Monica's proximity to the Pacific Ocean was on display on Saturday, as the Annenberg Community Beach House held the annual "Polar Bear Plunge" event that saw residents throughout the Los Angeles area jump into the water. Participants of all ages chose to either dip their toes in the ocean, take a small plunge, or go all the way with a 300-yard swim around a buoy placed 150 yards out into the Pacific. After the plunge, attendees used the beach house's historic pool for a recreational swim.

MONTANA AVE. BIDS FAREWELL TO SWEET LADY JANE (AND GLUTEN) WITH BAKERY OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS:

Over the New Year holiday, Sweet Lady Jane announced it had closed all locations and operations. Founded by Jane Lockhart in 1988 on Melrose, the company grew into a Los Angeles institution with six stores throughout the area, but a steady decline in business doomed the bakery. In December, Modern Bread and Bagel opened at 15th and Montana, with owner Orly Gottesman stating she expanded her New York based company to Los Angeles in response to a growing demand for her gluten-free products and the opportunity to reduce some of her shipping costs.

SANTA MONICA EMERGENCY SERVICES REPORT FEWER CALLS THIS NEW YEAR:

It was a relatively quiet New Year in Santa Monica, as the number of emergency calls that the Santa Monica Fire Department responded to over the New Year weekend was down 23%, from 213 to 164, compared to the same period last year. The Santa Monica Police Department also responded to fewer call outs, with a drop of 5.5%, from 895 to 845, over the same four day period compared to 12 months ago. However, on the morning of Tuesday, January 2, a body was discovered outside the Samoshel homeless shelter at 505 Olympic Blvd and reported to the police department.

HOW TO DISPOSE OF YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE RESPONSIBLY:

Discarded Christmas trees in the area can be placed in a green composting bin for collection, but Santa Monica residents were also advised to consider the city's Resource Recovery & Recycling alternative. Through January 31, trees will be picked from the curbside or alley to receive a second life as mulch, keeping Santa Monica clean and sustainable. There is no need to contact 311 to request the pickup, as the service will be provided automatically.

COMMISSIONERS ACCUSE POLICE UNION OF SUPPRESSING RACIAL TRAFFIC STOP DATA:

Members of the Santa Monica Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission (PSROC) accused the union representing local police officers of trying to suppress a report on racial profiling and traffic stops in the city. Commissioner Angela Scott opened a recent discussion by stating that she was informed by "reliable sources" that the Santa Monica Police Officers Association (POA) was attempting to block commission's Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) findings and recommendations from making the City Council agenda. POA representative Lieutenant Cody Green strongly denied the accusation, saying the union had just raised a question of the legality of discussions that had not been properly agendized under the Brown Act.

RENT RELIEF PROGRAM TARGETS LA COUNTY LANDLORDS:

To recoup some of the lost unpaid back rent from the COVID-19 pandemic across Greater Los Angeles, eligible landlords are now able to apply for the Los Angeles County Rent Relief Program, offering grant awards to cover eligible expenses incurred from April 1, 2022 onward on a rolling basis. The county will be providing over $68 million in grants to qualified landlords, geared toward smaller landlords who own up to four rental units. The deadline to submit an application is January 12 at 11:59 p.m. PST.

RESIDENTS OF SANTA MONICA GET REMINDER TO REMAIN EARTHQUAKE-READY:

A minor earthquake that recently occurred, centered off the Rancho Palos Verdes coast, coupled with the news that Japan had been rocked by a massive magnitude 7.6 quake, once again reminds us that our chosen location to live is vulnerable to significant seismic activity. This month also marks the 30th anniversary of the Northridge quake that devastated much of Los Angeles on January 17, 1994. The City of Santa Monica takes earthquake preparedness seriously, with a

SEE **NEWS** PAGE 6



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **59.0**

MONDAY
POOR

SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

Steep-angled NW swell mix fades through the day. Offshore flow looking likely setting up a clean morning session as swell drops out.

TUESDAY
POOR TO FAIR

SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

Down another peg but still rideable. Wind looks light in at least the morning, could stay light into the afternoon.

Weather

Monday: Sunny, with a high near 61.
Monday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 42.
Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 60.
Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 44.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted	(ft)High/Low
2024/01/08	Mon	06:15 AM	5.88	H
2024/01/08	Mon	1:50 PM	-0.77	L
2024/01/08	Mon	8:28 PM	3.36	H
2024/01/09	Tue	12:26 AM	2.43	L
2024/01/09	Tue	06:57 AM	6.31	H
2024/01/09	Tue	2:28 PM	-1.25	L
2024/01/09	Tue	9:03 PM	3.54	H
2024/01/10	Wed	01:14 AM	2.31	L
2024/01/10	Wed	07:40 AM	6.66	H
2024/01/10	Wed	3:07 PM	-1.58	L
2024/01/10	Wed	9:39 PM	3.68	H
2024/01/11	Thu	02:00 AM	2.15	L
2024/01/11	Thu	08:22 AM	6.87	H
2024/01/11	Thu	3:47 PM	-1.73	L
2024/01/11	Thu	10:17 PM	3.82	H
2024/01/12	Fri	02:48 AM	2.00	L
2024/01/12	Fri	09:06 AM	6.86	H
2024/01/12	Fri	4:27 PM	-1.68	L
2024/01/12	Fri	10:57 PM	3.97	H
2024/01/13	Sat	03:39 AM	1.89	L
2024/01/13	Sat	09:52 AM	6.57	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: 1/3
30 31 38 48 68
Power#: 8
Jackpot: 35 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 1/2
3 18 27 29 64
Mega#: 1
Jackpot: 140 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 1/3
3 10 16 21 29
Mega#: 1
Jackpot: 12 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 1/4
7 15 21 25 39

Daily 3
Draw Date: 1/4
EVENING: 0 3 7
Draw Date: 1/4
MIDDAY: 2 9 8

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 1/4
1st: 01 - Gold Rush
2nd: 12 - Lucky Charms
3rd: 07 - Eureka
Race Time: 1:40.08

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Santa Monica Daily Press

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Santa Monica invites sealed proposals for

RFP: # 395 Civic Auditorium - Request for Letters of Interest

- **Submission Deadline is January 31, 2024 at 5:00 PM Pacific Time.**

Proposals must include forms furnished by the City of Santa Monica. Request for Proposals may be obtained on the **CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL**. The website for this Request for Proposals and related documents is OpenGov (https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca) There is no charge for the RFP package.

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA NOTICE INVITING BIDS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that bids will be received by the City of Santa Monica until 3:00 p.m. on the date indicated at which time they will be opened and posted for:

BID #4475 Citywide Water Feature and Pond Maintenance

Submission Deadline is February 9, 2024 at 3:00 PM Pacific Time.

Bids must be submitted on forms supplied by the City of Santa Monica. Bid packages containing all forms, specifications, terms and conditions may be obtained on the **CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL.** The website for this Notice of Inviting Bids and related documents is: OpenGov (https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca). There is no charge for bid package and specifications.

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: **Proposed Extension of Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2772 (CCS) Authorizing the Establishment of Objective Design Standards for Qualifying Housing Projects that Elect to Use the Streamlined, Ministerial Approval Process Established by Senate Bill 35.**

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to extend Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2772 (CCS) authorizing the establishment of objective design standards for qualifying housing projects that elect to use the streamlined, ministerial approval process established by Senate Bill 35. The Council adopted Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2772 (CCS) on December 19, 2023 and will expire unless extended by Council.

DATE/TIME: **TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024 AT 6:30 PM**

LOCATION: City Council Chamber, Second Floor, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT:
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Members of the public unable to attend a meeting but wishing to comment on an item(s) listed on the agenda may submit written comments prior to the public hearing via email to councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov or via mail to City Clerk, 1685 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, California 90401. Written public comment submitted before 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be available for online viewing. All written comments shall be made part of the public record. Please note the agenda item number in the subject line of your written comments.

You may also comment in person at the City Council hearing. Please check the agenda for more detailed instructions on how to comment in person.

Address your comments to: City Clerk
Re: SB 35 ODS Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Extension

VIA EMAIL: councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov
VIA MAIL: 1685 Main Street, Room 102
Santa Monica, CA 90401

MORE INFORMATION: If you want more information about this project, please contact Steve Mizokami by e-mail at steve.mizokami@santamonica.gov . For disability-related accommodations, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (310) 458-8211 or (310) 917-6626 TDD at least 72 hours in advance. Every attempt will be made to provide the requested accommodation. All written materials are available in alternate format upon request. Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Lines serve City Hall and the Civic Center area. The Expo Line terminus is located at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, and is a short walk to City Hall. Public parking is available in front of City Hall, on Olympic Drive, and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the public hearing.

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de una audiencia pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Carmen Gutierrez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-2275.

FREEWAY

FROM PAGE 1

The state has subcontracted the security services as it fights to evict Ahmad Anthony Nowaid and scores of tenants subleasing through him in violation of his contracts with the California Department of Transportation (or Caltrans), according to court records.

They are due back in court this month.

No arrests have been announced in the arson case that forced a one-week closure of a 2-mile stretch of a key corridor for America's supply chain and for commuters in the nation's second-largest city. Gov. Gavin Newsom said the property was in the hands of "bad actors."

The state leased more and more land to the businessman even as accusations mounted against him, raising questions about the government's vetting process before it leases land under California's freeways and highways.

Nowaid leased the storage yard that burned and four other properties from Caltrans — all but one of them under I-10 — through his companies, Apex Development Inc. and Metro Investments Group.

The guards from Treston Security Services are also at a receiving area where combustible items were moved to from properties leased to Nowaid, and a maintenance yard where Caltrans has set up temporary offices, Caltrans said.

On a December afternoon, one of those guards wearing a neon vest sat in a folding chair outside a gated storage yard stacked with wooden pallets that is leased to Nowaid.

Six tenants subletting spaces under I-10 described Nowaid as a bully. They showed receipts of their monthly payments to The Associated Press. Nowaid owes the state nearly $223,000 for one property, according to court documents.

"Where did all our money go?" said Alberto Mazariegos, who stores his business's industrial laundry machines at the site where he paid $1,100 in monthly rent. "The state empowered this guy. They are responsible too."

A person who answered a phone number listed for Nowaid referred questions to an attorney, Mainak D'Attaray. The attorney didn't respond to calls and emails seeking comment on any of the allegations. D'Attaray said in a statement in November that Apex was not to blame for the fire and had made improvements to that property, though he said the company had not been able to access the premises shortly before the blaze happened.

The Nov. 11 fire quickly spread, fueled by wooden pallets, supplies of hand sanitizer and other flammable materials stored there in violation of the lease contract. The inferno damaged nearly 100 support columns of the interstate. Sixteen people who were living there, including a pregnant woman, were safely evacuated. The Biden administration gave the state $3 million in response to the disaster, though Caltrans has not released a final price tag.

Records show the state was aware of problems at the sites managed by Nowaid, with inspectors offering blistering reports identifying unsafe conditions for years.

Among the legal filings involving Nowaid while he did business with the state starting in 2008:

— A 2015 restraining order granted to a man who alleged civil harassment from Nowaid.

— A 2016 lawsuit by a recycling business owner who said she was subletting from Nowaid and was illegally locked out after he posted "two attack dogs at the premises, presumably to greet anybody who would dare enter," the court filing said. The lawsuit was eventually dismissed.

— A $70,000 settlement in a 2019 case against one of his companies to cover unpaid wages for construction workers.

In 2017, Caltrans sold Nowaid land used for a mobile home park in Ceres, California. Residents there filed a lawsuit in 2022, accusing him of overcharging for rent while leaving the property in squalor. That suit is ongoing.

Caltrans said the agency conducts reference checks before leasing its properties but declined to answer other questions about Nowaid's history.

Nowaid's name is tied to at least 20 firms — including real estate, property management and construction businesses — that have registered with California's Secretary of State. Two of his businesses separately filed for bankruptcy in 2016 and 2019, according to state court records.

Following the fire, Newsom ordered a review of all 601 so-called "airspace" sites that Caltrans has leased around roadways. The program dates back to the 1960s and most of the properties have been used for parking lots, cellphone towers, open storage and warehouses. The lots range anywhere from a few hundred to thousands of square feet, and they are concentrated in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area.

The airspace leases have brought in more than $170 million for public transportation over the past five years.

The sites leased by Nowaid's companies "are outliers, and relatively few sites present confirmed safety or fire concerns," Caltrans said in a statement.

State inspectors paid six visits to the site that burned, starting in 2020, and reported repeatedly that flammable and hazardous materials were being stored there.

In February 2020, inspectors noted multiple subtenants, wooden pallets and washing machines. In September 2021, inspectors reported hazardous materials, and in August 2022, in a surprise visit by inspectors and the fire marshal, they found solvents, oils and a homeless encampment that had returned.

"This is a filthy unmaintained lease," inspector Daryl Myatt wrote in a September 2022 report. "This area has been utilized since the mid-1970s and looks like it."

In that same month, Caltrans warned Nowaid that hazardous materials were also found at two other sites leased by him, and inspectors were denied access to the remaining two.

Weeks before the fire, a tenant at one of the properties said Nowaid not only locked him out of his own business but showed up "with a person with guns" and that he was afraid that Nowaid might kill him. The case was dismissed when the tenant failed to show up in court.

Nowaid's tenants at another property flagged as unsafe said they installed lighting, large water tanks, and purchased fire extinguishers, which Nowaid was supposed to provide. About a dozen people work there at businesses ranging from a mechanic shop to a scrap metal recycling trade.

Caltrans officials visited this summer and told the tenants they would be evicted because Nowaid hadn't been paying rent. The tenants said they want to rent from Caltrans directly and would adhere to the rules.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Amazon thinks it's 'Earth's best employer.' Southern California would like a word

JIM NEWTON

Activists in the Inland Empire recently got their hands on an internal Amazon memo that detailed the company's political and community strategy for Southern California this year, a document that they shared with journalists who, in turn, trumpeted it as a "stark look" at the company's efforts to "buy influence" and project power.

There's a lot of hype in that, but the memo does not do Amazon any favors. It's full of pablum and reeks of smugness – the author refers to the company, more than once, as "Earth's Best Employer," and calls its allies "Amazonians."

Really?

The memo suggests that the company, for all its self-regard, has thin skin. It complains that after receiving donations from Amazon in 2022 and 2023, the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Arts & Culture, part of the Riverside Art Museum, had the audacity to exhibit a local artist "who depicted an Amazon facility on fire."

Earth's best employer didn't like that. "We will not donate to The Cheech," the memo declares with all the haughty insecurity of an unclothed emperor.

But is any of this remarkable? Amazon is a major employer (sorry, not the best but certainly one of the biggest) with far-flung and sometimes very specific ambitions. It has every right to strategize about its future and to plan for it.

Susan Phillips, who directs the Redford Conservancy at Pitzer College and is a leading critic of the region's warehouse boom, called the memo "totally unsurprising … and basically what we've known all along." A very large company has interests and influence and seeks to use its influence to advance them.

More revealing, however, are the assumptions it incorporates: the unthinking acceptance of a worldview in which self-serving corporate behavior is sold as a social good.



Photo by Pablo Unzueta for CalMatters

SOCAL: An Amazon warehouse in San Bernardino on Feb. 16, 2023. Warehouses in the Inland Empire have grown at an exponentially high pace.

It demonstrates, Phillips noted, that Amazon, like so many big and influential companies, believes that it is embracing "community engagement" when in fact it is practicing "manipulation."

As she points out, the strategies that the memo outlines do not actually aim to engage the community in conversation about its future. Instead, Amazon seeks to use money and community contact to secure advantages – to head off labor organizing, to keep wages low, to build more warehouses.

SEE **GUEST COMMENTARY** PAGE 8

Eric Uller at Police Activities League (PAL) sexually abused hundreds of children in the late 1980s – early 2000s

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Getting the whole story at the PSROC meeting

Your 1-4-2023 article regarding the PSROC accusations against the SMPOA is incomplete and contains errors.

To start with, the Commission did not accuse the POA of anything. It was primarily two Commissioners, Angelia Scott and Derik Devermont who did so. While there might have been others of the same mind-set they did not speak out.

Second, if one looks at the minutes of the meeting dates that were discussed, it is obvious that the "report" that is being referred to, is the report that was approved by seven of the 11 voting members of the PSROC on 11-30-2023. Previous meeting minutes show that Commissioners Centeno, Raman and Palazzolo previously against the report and on the date the report was approved Commissioners Centeno, Raman, Palazzolo and Mcglaughlin-Basseri did not attend the meeting and did not vote.

The report is heavily focused on the issue of "pretextual stops". When said report was presented to the full Commission for discussion on two occasions prior to 11-30-2023 in which the title of the report included the phrase "pretextual stops", many members of the public came to the meetings to speak against both the report findings and recommendations. I believe the title was subsequently changed to include "RIPA" for the purpose of stifling public attendance and input.

The issue that seems to have Commissioners Angelia Scott and Derik Devermont so upset is that they want a public forum at a City Council Meeting to promote their positions. There is nothing in the PSROC charter that requires a Council agendized public discussion on a commission report. Delivery of the written report to the Council via the City Clerk is all that is required and that is the normal course of action for all commissions.

I hope that when the audio recording of the meeting is made available the SMDP and the residents will take the time to listen to it to get the whole story.

Joseph Palazzolo, Santa Monica

Santa Monica Arrests

For the week of Dec 29th to Jan 4th

Crime	Arrests
Assault & Battery	4
DUI	4
Violation of Stay-away Order	4
Warrant	4
Drunk in Public	3
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	3
Shoplifting	3
Assault with a Deadly Weapon	2
Carrying A Concealed Dirk Or Dagger	2
Illegal Possession of Tear Gas	2
Possession of Methamphetamines	2
Robbery	2
Appropriation of Lost Property	1
Assault with a Deadly Weapon Upon Peace Officer	1
Burglary	1
Child Endangerment	1
Corporal Injury To Spouse	1
Domestic Battery	1
Grand Theft Auto	1
Joyriding	1
Larceny	1
Lights on Vehicle not in Working Order	1
Mail or Package Theft	1
Obstruction/Loitering on Promenade	1
Possession of a Controlled Substance	1
Possession of Burglary Tools	1
Possession of Marijuana for Sale	1
Resisting Arrest	1
Trespassing on Palisades Bluff	1
Vandalism	1
TOTAL	**53**

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Rumors and lies

As the Chair of the Police Officers Association, I understood that by accepting the position I would be wading into City politics whether or not I wanted to operate in that theater. In doing so I never thought that I would be accused, from the Council dias by City Commissioners, of threatening Council members, as I was at the last PSROC meeting.

The SMPD headline "Commissioners accuse police union of suppressing racial traffic stop data," which was splashed in a full front-page article is a complete lie, fabricated by those who are not getting their way. Like petulant children, they are now resorting to spreading rumors in Council chambers.

The Chair of the PSROC either enticed or allowed a Commissioner to place on the agenda an item that he knew was based on nothing more than rumors. This makes both the City and the Commission look like a complete circus, not to mention a litany of laws it may have violated including violations of one's First Amendment rights and union busting. It's absolutely astounding!

In fact, another commissioner looked so visibly uncomfortable as this was being said he chimed in to clarify that they were not accusing the Police Union of breaking the law. Although the POA appreciated they were not calling us criminals, the mere fact one would have to clarify statements made in a public meeting shows how outlandish it was.

The undeniable facts are that the Santa Monica Police Officers Association has not blocked nor attempted to block anything related to RIPA data. The Santa Monica Police Department has compiled the state-mandated data and posted it on its public website for Council or any member of the public to see. The Police Department then attended the PSROC's public meeting where the Deputy Chief and the Department's Public Information Officer presented the data for the Commissioners, Council or any other member of the public.

The fact that the PSROC has not adhered to its own bylaws and failed to post public minutes or recordings of its meetings is beyond the control of SMPOA. It wasn't until a member of a neighborhood group brought to the Commission's attention they were not in compliance with their bylaws that they began posting any minutes. Not to mention the Brown Act violation(s) the POA pointed out at a prior meeting.

In trying to hide from the public what they are really attempting to do the PSROC has tripped over traps they set for themselves. This has nothing to do with RIPA data or SMPOA. The PSROC wants to put restrictions on its police officers from making traffic stops. Most likely they feared the voting residents of Santa Monica would show up at their meeting and give them an earful about taking tools away from the cops when crime is on the rise, Downtown can barely function without private security in the public space and parking structures, and residents are encountering disruptive and, at times dangerous, severely mentally ill persons daily.

Don't be fooled by the PSROC Chair from attempting to hide what is going on, pretending this has anything to do with RIPA, RIPA data or the POA- because it doesn't! The PSROC has the right to have a public discussion about limitations to traffic stops if they choose. What they don't have a right to do is hide that discussion from the public under the guise of a RIPA data discussion, not comply with the Brown Act, and they certainly don't have the right to place items on the agenda that are in clear violation of their bylaws and spread lies from the dias.

The SMPOA is eagerly awaiting a public apology from the PSROC chair.... but we won't hold our breath.

Cody Green, SMPOA Chairman

NEWS

FROM PAGE 3

number of procedures such as the standard Drop, Cover and Hold On drill, as well as giving residents the opportunity to download the MyShake app from the Apple App Store.

SANTA MONICA MAN ARRESTED FOR KILLING TENANT IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY:

A Santa Monica landlord has been charged with murder after allegedly strangling his 71-year old tenant during a fight. William Durst, 54, was arrested on New Years Day in San Bernardino County where the Sheriff says he killed Jeffrey Cull. According to the Sheriff, officers and firefighters were called to an address on the 55800 block of Montana Road on Jan. 1 and found Durst and Cull on the property. Cull was unresponsive at the time officers arrived and pronounced dead. Through investigation, detectives learned Durst arrived at the location and attempted to force Cull to leave. Cull refused to leave, and an argument ensued, wherein Durst sprayed Cull with bear spray and placed him in a chokehold. Cull lost consciousness and succumbed to his injury. Durst was arrested and booked for murder at the Morongo Basin jail where he remains without bail.

COURT AWARDS POSSESSION OF COMMERCIAL UNIT TO OWNER IN DISABLED RESIDENT CASE:

In a ruling in the Santa Monica Courthouse by Judge Lawrence Cho, plaintiff 3231-3301 OPB Buildings, represented by property owner Scott Bentz, was awarded possession of 3301 Ocean Park Boulevard, Suite #208 in a case against defendant Scott Brutzman. The case over the commercial property was initially filed on September 26, 2023, after Brutzman was unable to cooperate with a 30-day notice to quit served by the plaintiff. The court's ruling states that Brutzman will have until February 18 to vacate the premises. Brutzman had been fighting to stay in his suite, complicated by the building's status as a commercial property, as well as his own health challenges and a lack of available financial and legal resources.

COMMUNITY NEWS

LOS ANGELES

2 Indicted in $8.5 Million Airbnb/Vrbo Scam that Allegedly Defrauded 1000s of Victims and Discriminated Against Renters

A federal grand jury has indicted two men on federal fraud charges that allege a double-booking, bait-and-switch scam run through online property rental platforms – primarily Airbnb – that brought in more than $8.5 million through misleading listings and fraudulently canceling reservations, which included discrimination against Black people, the Justice Department announced today.

Shray Goel, 35, of Miami, and Shaunik Raheja, 34, of Denver, were charged Wednesday in a superseding indictment that accuses them of fraud in connection with more than 10,000 reservations linked to nearly 100 properties across 10 states.

Goel was initially charged in an indictment returned on December 13. He was arrested in Florida on December 27 and was released on bond the following day. Raheja was added as a defendant in the superseding indictment. Both defendants are expected to be arraigned in United States District Court in Los Angeles in the coming weeks.

The superseding indictment alleges that Goel and Raheja owned and operated a short-term property rental business that they used to defraud Airbnb, Vrbo and guests renting properties through those platforms. The business operated under various names, including Abbot Pacific LLC.

Goel, Raheja and others who worked with them are alleged to have owned and leased properties throughout the United States for the rental business, including properties in Los Angeles, Malibu, Marina Del Rey, Denver, Chicago, Davenport, Savannah, Bloomington, South Bend, Cleveland, Nashville, Austin, Dallas and Milwaukee. By 2019, according to the superseding indictment, they were managing nearly 100 properties across the United States.

To carry out the fraudulent scheme, Goel and Raheja allegedly double-booked properties through multiple listings of the same property on Airbnb and Vrbo, and then invented bogus last-minute excuses – often claiming plumbing problems – to cancel overbooked guests or trick them into moving to inferior replacement accommodations. According to the superseding indictment, members of the conspiracy profited from the scheme by running a secret bidding war for the properties – meaning they posted multiple listings for the same property at different prices for the same night, allowed the highest bidder to rent a particular property, and then cancelled or switched the lower-paying guests to a different property in the area. The scheme also allegedly allowed Goel, Raheja and their co-conspirators to keep all of their properties in any given area at maximum capacity by using popular listings as bait to trick guests into booking those listings, and then steering overbooked guests at the last minute to less popular and open listings in the same area.

The superseding indictment further alleges that "Goel and Raheja made decisions about which guests to keep and which to cancel based in part on their racial prejudices and discrimination." The defendants, according to the indictment, tried to avoid renting to guests they perceived to be Black and "in this way depriv[ed] these guests of their property interest in the reservations and otherwise caus[ed] these guests to suffer monetary losses when their reservations were cancelled."

"This deplorable scheme victimized thousands of consumers and families across the country, some of whom allegedly were discriminated against because of racial bias," said United States Attorney Martin Estrada. "Fueled by greed, the defendants deceived consumers about the locations and conditions of properties, canceled reservations to double-book properties and based on racial prejudices, and lied to victims leaving them scrambling to find last-minute replacement accommodations. The sheer number of victims is astonishing, as is the millions of dollars earned though the scheme that took advantage of the reputations of online rental platforms that offer a valuable service."

"The defendants are charged with preying on unsuspecting travelers and robbing them of time and money, leaving them with no choice but to settle for inferior lodging at the last minute," said Donald Alway, the Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office. "The conspiracy charge alleging that the defendants discriminated against potential renters based on their skin color is a reprehensible abuse which must not be tolerated in the United States. The FBI will work with our federal partners and with the private sector to ensure business practices in the vacation rental industry are free of fraud and bias."

"This indictment charges defendants for their alleged roles in a scheme to defraud Airbnb, Vrbo, and guests renting properties through those platforms," said Special Agent in Charge Ryan Korner of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Office of Inspector General (FDIC-OIG). "FDIC-OIG remains steadfastly committed to protecting our nation and innocent victims by identifying and bringing to justice individuals who orchestrate these types of fraudulent schemes."

According to the superseding indictment, Goel, Raheja and their co-schemers used fake host names and, in certain instances, other people's identities to list properties. They allegedly used these fake host accounts to conceal their own identities, to double-book properties, and to post fabricated positive reviews of their properties. They were also allegedly using the fake host accounts to continue to list properties after they had been banned from Vrbo in 2015 because of repeated host cancellations and guest complaints.

In some cases, according to the superseding indictment, Goel, Raheja and their accomplices listed fake addresses, addresses that did not have any rental housing, were unaffiliated with the schemers, or did not exist at all – using these fake addresses to create duplicate listings for a single purported property. The fake addresses also allegedly allowed them to evade local rules and regulations governing short-term rentals, and to control who had access to properties.

To further their fraud, Goel and Raheja allegedly took steps to prevent negative reviews from affecting their business by falsely discrediting such reviews and otherwise trying to hide them from prospective future guests. According to the superseding indictment, they would post bogus negative reviews about the guests who had panned their listings or called out the fraudulent and deceptive listing practices, and they would remove negatively reviewed listings and then re-list the properties using new listing identifiers, thereby purging the bad reviews from the properties.

According to the superseding indictment, Goel and Raheja used these and other lies and misrepresentations to trick guests into booking properties they would not have otherwise booked and to keep payments from guests entitled to refunds. The last-minute nature of the cancellations also caused guests and the rental platforms to suffer losses when guests were forced to find alternative lodging at the last minute.

An indictment is merely an allegation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

SUBMITTED BY THOM MROZEK



Classifieds

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAMECase No. 23SMCP00639 Superior Court of California, County of Los AngelesPetition of Marcus Shawn Wyatt for Change of NameTO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:Petitioner or Attorney: Marcus Shawn Wyatt a petition with this court for a decree of changing names as follows: Marcus Shawn Wyatt to Marques Shawn Wyatt The court orders that all persons interested in this matter shall 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 02/16/2024 Time: 8:30 a.m, Dept: K Room: - The address of the court is SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA - COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES Glendale CourtHouse 1725 Main Street Santa Monica, CA 90401 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.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 23SMCP00649 Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles Petition of Irina Yuryevna Egorova for Change of Name TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner or Attorney: Irina Yuryevna Egorova a petition with this court for a decree of changing names as follows: Irina Yuryevna Egorova to Irina Russo The court orders that all persons interested in this matter shall 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 02/16/2024 Time: 8:30 a.m, Dept: K Room: - The address of the court is SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA - COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES Glendale CourtHouse 1725 Main Street Santa Monica, CA 90401 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.

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAMECase No. 23SMCP00672 Superior Court of California, County of Los AngelesPetition of Jonathan Macht for Change of NameTO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:Petitioner or Attorney: Jonathan Macht a petition with this court for a decree of changing names as follows: Jonathan Macht to Jonathan Stanley Jones The court orders that all persons interested in this matter shall 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 02/23/2024 Time: 8:30 a.m, Dept: K Room: - The address of the court is SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA - COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES Glendale CourtHouse 1725 Main Street Santa Monica, CA 90401 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.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAMECase No. 23SMCP00643 Superior Court of California, County of Los AngelesPetition of Liuni Monte Giovonni for Change of NameTO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:Petitioner or Attorney: Liuni Monte Giovonni a petition with this court for a decree of changing names as follows: Liuni Monte Giovonni to Gian Dipace Montino The court orders that all persons interested in this matter shall 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 02/16/2024 Time: 8:30 a.m, Dept: K Room: - The address of the court is SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA - COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES Glendale CourtHouse 1725 Main Street Santa Monica, CA 90401 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.

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NUMBER: 2023261978 ORIGINAL FILING This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES on 12/06/23. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as A & Z Events 1418 E Pacific Coast Highway Wilmington, CA 90744, Baby Girl Embroidery 565 Hye PArk Place Inglewood, CA 90302Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): Ai #ON The full name of the registrant(s) is/ are Jose de Jesus Gutierrez 565 Hye PArk Place Inglewood, CA 90302If corporation or LLC- Print State of Incorporation/ Organization: This Business is conducted by: An Individual The date registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 12/23Registrant/Corp/ LLC Name /s/:Jose de Jesus Gutierrez Title: Owner Jose de Jesus Gutierrez This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 12/06/2023NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS 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 PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement 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 PRESS01/08/24, 01,15/24, 01/22/24, 01/29/24

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GUEST COMMENTARY

FROM PAGE 5

The goals are not healthier or more prosperous places to live. They are fending off "reputational challenges" by doling out modest grants and backing supportive officials who are willing to carry out the company's agenda.

Mind you, Amazon thinks that's for the public's own benefit. As the memo showed, Amazon sees its interests as commensurate with the region's health – that what's good for Amazon is good for Southern California.

It's a "positive impact" when Amazon works to halt a warehouse moratorium for the Inland Empire, or when it influences alcohol advertising legislation, or promotes "proactive competition work" (see: pablum).

To be fair, those goals may sometimes be good for the public. But Amazon isn't interested in them because they're good for the public; it's interested in what's good for Amazon.

Asked about the memo, company spokesperson Jennifer Flagg was prompt, polite and deflective. The memo, she said, should not be considered complete or approved but merely a leaked draft.

To the larger point of Amazon's place in California, Flagg stressed its employment of more than 162,000 people, its investments in infrastructure and compensation and its charitable work – all of which are unchallenged and speak to the company's commitment, if not necessarily its motives.

The disconnect between Amazon as a corporate entity and guardian of public trust comes through in the memo's discussion of public concerns.

"Our customers in this region believe that homelessness is the overwhelming priority across the region," the memo concludes, "as well as supporting children and families in poverty, and reducing hunger."

Fair enough. Data supports that conclusion, and it seems intelligent of Amazon to note it.

But Amazon's proposed strategy in the face of those concerns is to "increase … visibility," to "hone language" and to make better and more frequent use of "the words 'hunger,' 'homelessness'" in its corporate speech.

"Additionally," the memo notes, "we will work with communications and PR to ensure our speeches, press releases, any external communication ties back to these topics."

Amazon does not, however, propose to increase wages for those struggling families or those who may be hungry. To the contrary: "Pay continues to be a significant concern," the memo states.

Instead, the company proposes to hone its messaging.

It's not Amazon's job to solve homelessness, but the company wants it both ways. It wants to be thought of as a partner to local governments, a beneficent corporate citizen here to help local electeds help their constituents. But it's really here for itself – for its profits, its future, its warehouses and its sales.

Amazon's communications and strategic investments may end up being good for the public, but that's not the goal. The goal is Amazon's image and the protection of its interests.

That is not engagement. It is, as Phillips put it, "corporate narcissism."

Amazon is hardly alone in all of this. This is what happens when governments relinquish leadership to special interests. It's neoliberalism and marketplace confidence at its worst, and it's mostly shocking in that it fails to shock. It seems perfectly natural of Amazon to think of itself as an exemplar of what a community needs because government encourages it to do so.

It's no great stretch for elected officials, especially those cultivated by the company, to think of it that way, too.

Government is supposed to sniff out special interests and think outside it – to do what's best for the public, not just for those who stand to make money. It might be good for the Inland Empire to have more Amazon warehouses and the minimum-wage jobs they supply, but it might not. In fact, it might be that warehouses are crowding out other uses of land that might be better for the region.

Amazon's strategy does not entertain those possibilities because, from its perspective, they are beyond consideration. And because of that, Amazon's "community engagement" approach will not actually engage those questions.

Rather, they will steer and guide conversations toward answers that favor "Earth's Best Employer."

This article was originally published by CalMatters.

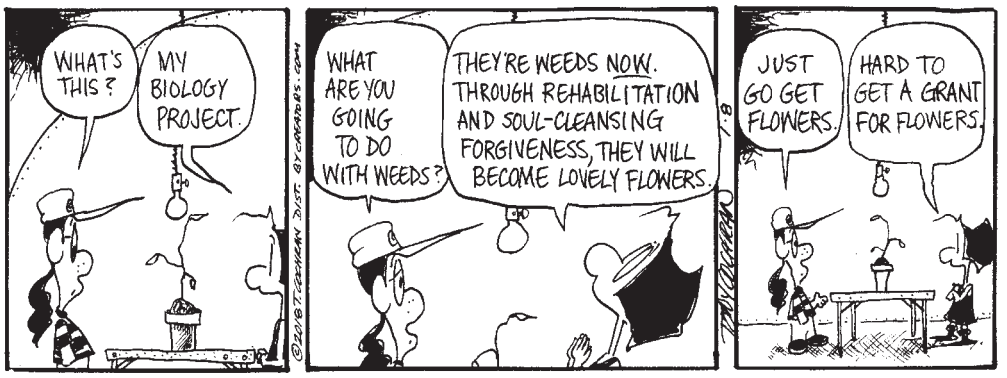
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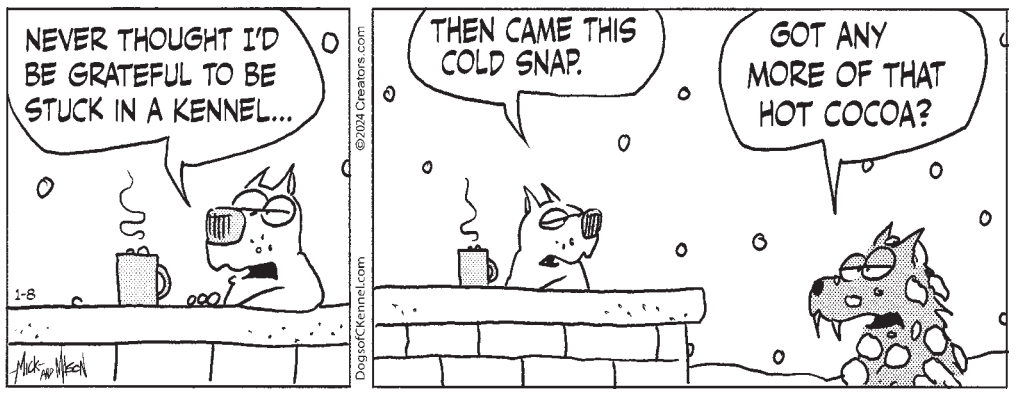
Agnes

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Dogs of C-Kennel

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Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"YOUR WORK IS PILING UP."

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 6083

Showtime

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

Arena	Cows	Groom	Ring
Band	Craft	Hall	Rodeo
Best	Crowd	Hot chips	Rope
Blue ribbon	Dogs	Lost	Scary
Boats	Dressage	Music	Sheep
Booth	Dust	Noise	Sore
Broke	Exhibits	Order	Tents
Bulls	Fish	Pass	Tired
Cakes	Flowers	Queen	Train
Chooks	Fruit	Rams	Tube
Corn on a stick	Funny	Real	Waffles
	Gates	Rides	Zumer

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 8)

You'll discover a power source inside you and you'll have the energy and strategies to rise to finally land a position, relationship or possession you've long had your eye on. More highlights: You'll have mutual love with an ideal travel companion. You'll reach the end of a delightful labyrinth and claim a prize. You'll earn the patronage of dream customers. Gemini and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 50, 13, 2 and 11.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The potential benefits associated with confidence can often be achieved without the negative consequences of arrogance. Stay open to feedback. Cultivate humility. Certain aspects of your self-assuredness will be beneficial.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). For optimum health you need exercise, fresh air, excellent sleep and good nutrition. But that is not all by any stretch. Positive relationships contribute much to your well-being, as does a satisfying method of self-expression.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll be preparing for an important event on the horizon. Your visionary powers are strong. Imagine it going right, but also think about what could go wrong so you can build contingencies and safety nets.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You have a message, and it's one people will care about. It may take some thought, practice and crafting to present this the right way — the way that gets quickly to the beating heart of the matter.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The bonding agent that makes relationships strong is a "glue" applied in tiny drops. Each small, positive interaction connects people in points of solidarity. These brief moments of trust count. They are, in fact, everything.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Good problems are the ones that have you stretching to meet them. You'll be expanding your creativity, skills network and resources all in the name of fixing the issue. Your surprising solutions will impress many.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll be aware that your every move is painting a picture of you. How you are perceived will matter. Be careful not to talk too much about what you've already demonstrated. Your confidence will read loud and clear.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Challenge yourself, aim higher and let your standards be the catalyst for continuous self-improvement. You'll achieve extraordinary results after you unhook yourself from the ordinary standards.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). People doing brave things inspire you to take courage before you even need it. Helping others is one way to ready yourself for the more exciting moments of life. Jump in and provide whatever the situation calls for.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). In this game of hide-and-seek, you are not the one counting blindfolded against the tree. You are running free, or ducking into mysterious shelter, or laughing and daring life to seek and find you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Relationships create their own emotional weather. When it shifts, this is not a cause to panic. This is a natural part of the growth process. How can you outfit yourself to accommodate the change?

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're the catalyst to change today. Though your tone may be playful and lighthearted, make no mistake — you're willing to make people a little uncomfortable if that's what it takes to move and inspire them.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

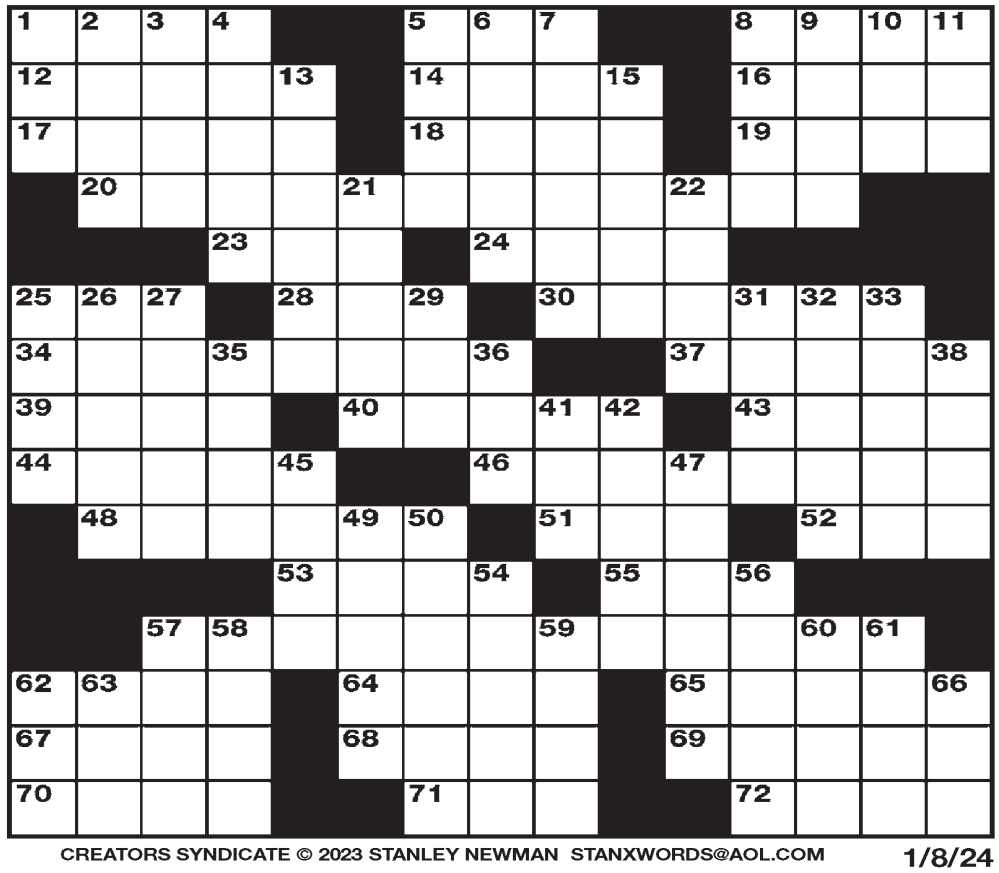
SPORTING PAIRS by Doug Peterson
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Shrub of roses
5 Baseball official, for short
8 Any carbonated drink
12 Approximately
14 Bathtub cake
16 Once more
17 "Greetings!"
18 What to call a king
19 Basic bit of heredity
20 Street hockey player's shoes
23 Mediterranean or Caribbean
24 Tex-Mex food in a shell
25 Donkey
28 No longer wet
30 Variations of color
34 Sticks held by a slalom racer
37 Ocean trenches
39 Toy flown on windy days
40 Thread holder
43 Vicinity
44 Flatten, informally
46 Scuba diver's footwear
48 Parodies
51 Pro hoops group: Abbr.
52 Magazine bosses: Abbr.
53 Lotion's soothing ingredient
55 Private __ (detective)
57 Prizefighter's fist coverings
62 British gentleman
64 Sheet in a notebook
65 Tear into pieces
67 Subtle glow
68 Sunflower's stalk
69 Sticky mud
70 Banana's exterior
71 Commercials and billboards
72 Traditional kilt wearer

DOWN

1 Shout from Scrooge
2 Lyft's rideshare rival
3 Single-handedly
4 Ships' frameworks
5 Russia, on older maps
6 Somewhat damp
7 Hooded winter coats
8 Wise advisor
9 Dollar bills
10 Family room
11 Impress greatly
13 "Holy" Ohio city
15 Fruit covered in fuzz
21 Noblemen below dukes
22 Frog's cousin
25 Poses a question
26 Quickly reads through
27 Abdominal exercise
29 Informal agreement
31 Tone-__ (unmusical)
32 Weird and spooky
33 Pay out
35 Money in Mexico
36 Ship's distress signal
38 Back talk
41 "Mind your __ business!"
42 Defame in print
45 Elaborate deception
47 City hall bosses
49 Does somersaults
50 Piano piece
54 __ on (encouraged)
56 The lesser of two __
57 With no decoration
58 White birthstone
59 Diamonds and emeralds
60 Long heroic tale
61 Japanese wrestling
62 Top of a toothpaste tube
63 Color variation
66 Poodle or parrot



CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2023 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 1/8/24

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

TRAFFIC

FROM PAGE 1

-Washington Avenue at 10th Street

The actions taken in 2023, and the evaluations to be done in early 2024, are part of a periodic review of stop sign requests called the "warrant analysis" process, where it is determined whether a stop sign is an appropriate measure for a specific intersection or street. Community feedback for all-way stops can be submitted through the city's 311 system, where residents can select a location by either placing a pin on a city map or typing in an address, followed by a description of desired changes.

According to the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, multi-way stop control "can be useful as a safety measure at intersections if certain traffic conditions exist," and is used "where the volume of traffic on the intersecting roads is approximately equal." The manual suggests that the decision to install multi-way stop control should be based on an engineering study, with criteria such as crashes that "are susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop" as well as "an intersection of two residential neighborhood collector (through) streets of similar design and operating characteristics where multi-way stop control would improve traffic operational characteristics of the intersection." The City of Irvine Transportation Department adds that stop signs, in general, "can be a useful traffic control device to enhance safety for all roadway users" when properly located.

Outside of vehicle-intensive maneuvers, the City is in the final months of construction on the 20th Street Bike and Pedestrian Connection Project, which is a component of the Michigan Avenue Neighborhood Greenway Plan adopted by City Council in 2014. The project, due to be completed by late March, will add an improved and widened bicycle and pedestrian path between 19th Court and 20th Street, a two-way protected bikeway on the 20th Street overcrossing and a new bicycle and pedestrian path between 20th Street and 21st Street along the northern side of the 10 Freeway.

The initial rationale behind the Michigan Avenue plan is "to provide a safe and comfortable place for neighbors of all ages to walk, bike, relax and interact with one another" along with ease of access to get around the Pico neighborhood on foot and by bicycle. The work follows the late 2023 completion of the 17th Street and Michigan Avenue bike lane project, which constructed a protected bikeway, pedestrian scale lighting, curb extensions and upgraded ADA ramps, restriped crosswalks and protected intersections for bikers from Wilshire Blvd to Pico Blvd on 17th Street.

thomas@smdp.com

COMMUNITY NEWS

Malibu

Community Members Invited to Join the City's Virtual Community Meeting on Homelessness in Malibu

The City of Malibu invites community members to join a virtual community meeting to discuss homelessness in Malibu on Wednesday, January 17, 11 a.m.

"The homelessness crisis impacts everyone, housed and unhoused, here in Malibu and across the state," Mayor Steve Uhring said. "It is critical that the City continue to offer outreach to help people experiencing homelessness to get into housing and comprehensive services This meeting will offer an opportunity for residents to join the discussions with our homeless service providers, law enforcement, City officials, business and civic leaders, and fellow community members."

Participants can ask questions, share concerns, and hear updates on homelessness, homeless outreach efforts, and services from the City's Homeless Outreach Team through The People Concern, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) the Las Virgenes-Malibu Council of Governments (COG) Outreach Coordinator, and City staff.

Malibu is a compassionate community that has been dedicating significant resources toward helping people experiencing homelessness in the community to get off the street and into housing and comprehensive services. The City began contracting for homeless outreach services in 2017, beginning with two outreach workers and expanding in 2020 to include a housing navigator. The City seeks to balance its service-based approach to this humanitarian crisis with the need to address the public safety, environmental, wildfire safety and quality-of-life impacts of homelessness on the community.

The results from the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA) Homeless Count on January 25, 2023, showed a continuing reduction in people experiencing homelessness in Malibu. Since 2017, when the City started tracking the data, the City's homeless population has continuously declined as follows:

2017 – 178
2018 – 155
2019 – 154
2020 – 239
2021 – 157
2022 – 81
2023 – 71

The meeting link is posted at www.MalibuCity.org/Homelessness. For more information, contact Public Safety Liaison Luis Flores at 310-456-2489, ext. 236 or lflores@malibucity.org.

For more information about the City's efforts to address homelessness, visit: www.MalibuCityorg/Homelessness.

Submitted by Matt Myerhoff, Media Information Officer

CORRECTION / CLARIFICATION: In a story published last week regarding accusations against the local police union, SMDP said the Commission made accusations against the union. Two commissioners made the accusation during an agendized discussion of the issue but the Commission as a whole took no action on the topic.



MONDAY | JANUARY 8

BABY TIME

Introduce your child to storytime with interactive books, bounces, and more! Free tickets are available at 10:15 and 11:15 a.m. For ages 0-17 months. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. Session 1: 10:30 - 10:50 a.m. Session 2: 11:30 - 11:50 a.m.

LANDMARKS COMMISSION

City Hall, 1685 Main Street. 7 p.m. Agenda available online at https://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Boards-Commissions/Landmarks-Commission/

MONDAY NIGHT TRIVIA

Trivia Night! Team up with groups of up to 6 people to compete for gift certificates and prizes. Questions range from pop culture to geography to the natural world... and everything in between. The Daily Pint, 2310 Pico Blvd.

VISION BOARDING

Space is limited so please RSVP by emailing silviwinthropcounseling@gmail.com. Come meditate and create your Vision Board for 2024. A vision board is a collage of images that represent goals and dreams. It can include cut-out pictures from magazines and words that help inspire you to manifest your dreams and get where you want to go. Silvi Winthrop, our wonderful meditation leader, is teaching this class. Vision boards may also help us imagine what a positive future could look like for us. Imagining a positive future is a helpful way to increase positive emotions and optimism. 10:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Palisades Branch Library, 861 Alma Real Drive, Pacific Palisades

TUESDAY | JANUARY 9

SOCIAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY PROVIDENCE ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM

Trained community health workers will be available to meet in person with community members at the Park Center Building in Virginia Avenue Park. The first Tuesday of the month 11:30 am to 7 pm and 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Tuesdays from 9:30 am to 5 pm. The trained Providence St. John's staff can assist with enrollment in CalFresh, the state of California's food subsidy program created to improve the nutrition of families through access to healthy foods. Staff can also help navigate enrollment or questions for MediCal and Medicare. Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave.

TUESDAY TALES: A TRAVELING STORYTIME

This engaging & fun weekly series of stories, songs and rhymes travels to different library locations. Limited space; free tickets available at 10:15 a.m. For ages 2-5. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 10:30 - 11 a.m.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CLUB

Learn how to play Dungeons & Dragons at the Library, from crafting the perfect character to participating in a short campaign. Materials provided. No registration necessary. For ages 10-18. Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Avenue, 4:30 - 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAY | JANUARY 10

BABY & TODDLER STORYTIME

For participation details, please e-mail akagan@lapl.org or gkim@lapl.org. Lap-sit (or not!) storytime for babies and toddlers and their grown-ups to share together. One child, one lap, please. For ages under 36 months accompanied by a grown-up. 10:15 a.m. Palisades Branch Library, 861 Alma Real Drive, Pacific Palisades.

COMPUTER CLASS - INTRO TO GOOGLE DOCS

Create and format text documents using this free online word processor. Google account recommended, but not required. For advanced beginners. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESS MIXER AT SOLIDARITY

Get ready for a laid-back evening of German American networking and good vibes on the cozy patio of Solidarity Restaurant, 1414 Lincoln Boulevard, 6 - 9 p.m. $10, https://www.eventbrite.com/e/la-business-mixerat-solidarity-tickets-769306555617

K-POP PARTY | WEDNESDAYS ON ICE

Time to slip on your best Jungkook (convince us otherwise) t-shirt and get your K-POP ON! with Ice at Santa Monica! Calling all ARMYs, BLINKs and K-Pop enthusiasts: don't forget your light sticks because we'll be keeping a close eye on which fanbase can own the ice rink and light up the night in style. 7 - 8:30 p.m. https://iceatsantamonica.com/$20.

BEAR SUPPLY HOUR

Bear Supply is a fast-paced sketch and long form improv team, performing at M.i.'s Westside Comedy Theater (1323-A 3rd St Promendade) at 9pm. Every show is accompanied by a live DJ, creating a high octane, freakishly entertaining and one-of-a-kind improvised spectacle. $10 https://ci.ovationtix.com/34923/production/976295

THE ART OF IKEBANA WORKSHOP

Discover modern Ikebana, the Japanese art of floral design, with Naoko Zaima. Create minimalist décor to take home with you. Limited spots available. Email library@santamonica.gov for registration. Main Library 601 Santa Monica Blvd.2 - 4 p.m.

THURSDAY | JANUARY 11

NAMI WESTSIDE RESOURCE TABLE

NAMI offers free programs to provide education, stigma reduction, and support for people with mental health conditions and their loved ones. Find resources and referrals for handling stress, anxiety, and depression. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 2 - 6 p.m.

SING YOUR SONG: A SCREENING AND PANEL DISCUSSION

Celebrate the shared legacies of nonviolent activists Martin Luther King Jr. and Harry Belafonte with a 5 p.m. screening of the documentary, Sing Your Song, about Belafonte's significant place in the Civil Rights Movement. At 7 p.m., a panel discussion follows with Harry's granddaughter, Maria Belafonte, SMC professor Tim Conley, filmmaker Marq Hawkins, and moderator Cassandra Chase, Director of the Equity & Justice Institute at Crossroads. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 5 - 8 p.m.

BIG 5 SPORTING GOODS

LA 5K

MARCH 16, 2024













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LA BIG 5K 2024

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Striving to cure neurological diseases while empowering communities to build a healthier world.

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