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Crime Watch
Suspect already knows his way to court.
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New boating rules
Coast Guard releases new rules as a result of the Conception boat fire.
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COVID-19 surge keeps thousands of Santa Monica students home

EMILY SAWICKI
SMDP Staff Writer

About 400 Samohi students isolating due to COVID-19 positivity; at least 57 virus cases detected at Malibu Middle and High schools; elementary schools averaging one out of every three students being kept home either due to illness or the fear of illness: that's the reality for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) in January 2022.

The highly-transmissible omicron variant of COVID-19, shortages of testing availability and changing county health guidelines have all contributed to a stressful new year for parents, teachers, students and administrators in the local school district.

On Monday, SMMUSD Spokesperson Gail Pinsker reported school sites were seeing about 10-12 percent positive cases at schools, with Samohi higher. Local schools have also had to deal with staff shortages and issues as the virus affected teachers, administrators and support staff as well as students. However, a lack of centralized information makes tracking all of these issues virtually impossible.

In mid-December, the district embarked on a plan to overhaul its

SEE **COVID-19** PAGE 7

Unlicensed vendor arrested for unregistered handgun

MATTHEW HALL
SMDP Editor

Enhanced enforcement of illegal vending on the Santa Monica Pier resulted in two arrests this weekend with police seizing an unregistered gun from a 14-year-old vendor and in a separate incident, a vendor was arrested in connection with a November assault.

In the first incident, SMPD officers assigned to an unlicensed vendor task force were patrolling Parking Lot 1 North, adjacent to the Pier, when they saw a group of vendors gathered around a pick-up truck loaded with carts. A man in the group lifted his shirt and officers saw the handle of a black handgun above his waistband.

During the altercation, the large group of vendors attempted to intervene on behalf of the armed suspect.

"Despite the vendors taunting and verbally abusive behaviors toward the officers, SMPD officers successfully detained and disarmed the individual," said SMPD in a statement. "Officers on scene required the immediate assistance of additional officers to assist with the safe departure from the area with the arrested individual."

Following the arrest, officers learned the individual was a 14-year old minor who had been operating one of the unlicensed cart and Lt. Rudy Flores said SMPD would be investigating why a child was operating an illegal food stand in addition to the gun charge.

Flores said the weapon lacked a serial number and the "ghost-gun" along with a high capacity loaded magazine were booked into SMPD property as evidence.

SEE **PIER** PAGE 5

Vaccine mandate could be coming soon to Santa Monica



Matthew Hall

COVID: With the spike in positive Covid tests, Council will debate a local vaccine mandate tonight.

EMILY SAWICKI
SMDP Staff Writer

Santa Monicans ages 18 and up who have not yet received their full COVID-19 vaccination could soon face a barrier to indoor dining at area restaurants, working out at local gyms or partaking in other activities indoors in close proximity to strangers. That's because Santa Monica City Council is set to discuss a potential COVID-19 vaccine mandate to cover a variety of indoor spaces when it meets on Tuesday evening, Jan. 11.

While LA County has been requiring proof of vaccination for indoor service at bars, breweries, clubs, lounges and wineries since October, there is no countywide vaccine requirement for restaurants, movie theaters or gyms. Meanwhile, the City of Los Angeles has required proof of full vaccination for indoor activities including restaurants, gyms, theaters and "personal care" establishments like salons since early November.

Up to this point, Santa Monica has not required proof of vaccination outside what is required under county rules. If council votes to enact the proposed mandate, the City Manager would have up until Feb. 8 to implement an executive order or return to council with an emergency ordinance for final approval.

Speaking to the Daily Press on Monday, Mayor Sue Himmelrich said the proposed ordinance would look similar to the vaccine mandate currently in place in neighboring LA.

"We've been looking at whether what they did in LA would really make a difference for the City of Santa Monica in terms of protecting its residents," Himmelrich said, later adding, "We're surrounded on three sides by LA and the fourth side by the ocean, so we do pay attention to what LA does. Sometimes it's to our benefit to be consistent and sometimes not — it depends on what the program and policy is, and in this case we're looking at LA because it is on all three sides."

Himmelrich was one of three council members who requested the item be placed on the Tuesday agenda; the others were Phil Brock and Christine Parra.

SEE **VACCINE** PAGE 11

NICK THE GREEK
SOUVLAKI & GYRO HOUSE
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DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 43 CALLS ON JANUARY 9

EMS 1400Blk Ocean Ave 1:05 a.m.
EMS 1900Blk 12th St 1:43 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1000Blk Euclid St 2:10 a.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury Chelsea Ave / Wilshire Blvd 2:24 a.m.
EMS Main St / Hill St 4:32 a.m.
EMS 19th St / Montana Ave 4:33 a.m.
Miscellaneous Outside Fire 800Blk Interstate 10 5:10 a.m.
EMS 2900Blk Exposition Blvd 5:23 a.m.
Miscellaneous Outside Fire 1600Blk 7th St 6:30 a.m.
EMS 2900Blk Neilson Way 6:55 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1100Blk 4th St 6:58 a.m.
EMS 600Blk Pico Blvd 7:13 a.m.
EMS 800Blk Ocean Ave 8:09 a.m.
Miscellaneous Outside Fire Interstate 10 / Centinela Ave 9:30 a.m.
EMS 2300Blk Ocean Park Blvd 9:50 a.m.
EMS 2000Blk Arizona Ave 9:54 a.m.
EMS 500Blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:15 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 600Blk California Ave 11:20 a.m.
EMS 2800Blk Pico Blvd 11:29 a.m.
Wires Down 5th St / Pacific St 12:01 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 800Blk 2nd St 12:38 p.m.
EMS 1900Blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:54 p.m.
EMS 2300Blk 31st St 2:06 p.m.
Miscellaneous Outside Fire Interstate 10 / 4th St 3:14 p.m.
EMS 1300Blk 2nd St 3:52 p.m.
EMS 2700Blk 7th St 5:15 p.m.
Miscellaneous Outside Fire 500Blk Wilshire Blvd 5:22 p.m.
EMS 1100Blk 7th St 6:39 p.m.
EMS 1300Blk 15th St 7:02 p.m.
Broken Water Main 2500Blk Beverley Ave 7:06 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 1400Blk 17th St 7:14 p.m.
Smoke Investigation 1400Blk 17th St 7:14 p.m.
EMS 4th St / Pico Blvd 7:20 p.m.
EMS 1800Blk 10th St 8:45 p.m.
EMS 400Blk 23rd St 8:46 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 1100Blk 4th St 8:49 p.m.
EMS 1100Blk 4th St 8:53 p.m.
EMS 1800Blk Wilshire Blvd 10:03 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 800Blk 3rd St 10:10 p.m.
EMS 900Blk 3rd St 10:30 p.m.
EMS 1900Blk Pico Blvd 10:35 p.m.
EMS 300Blk Olympic Dr 10:37 p.m.
EMS 5th St / Colorado Ave 11:34 p.m.

CRIME WATCH

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

Crime Watch is culled from reports provided by the Santa Monica Police Department. These are arrests only. All parties are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

ON TUESDAY, DEC. 28 AT 5:13 A.M.

Officers responded to an arson call at the Santa Monica Courthouse at 5:13 a.m. Upon arrival, officers located an individual lighting a bush on fire in front of the courthouse. The suspect quickly extinguished the fire when he noticed Officers approaching. A security guard across the street witnessed the subject lighting the bush on fire and contacted the police department. Robert Clouse was arrested for Arson.



DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 222 CALLS ON JANUARY 9

Petty Theft 600Blk Wilshire Blvd 2:23 a.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries Chelsea Ave / Wilshire Blvd 2:24 a.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries Chelsea Ave / Wilshire Blvd 2:29 a.m.
Assault W/Deadly Weapon 400Blk Santa Monica Pier 3:02 a.m.
Silent Robbery Alarm 3300Blk Ocean Park Blvd 3:16 a.m.
Battery 1200Blk 5th St 3:21 a.m.
Loud Music 1000Blk Ocean Ave 3:58 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 17th St / Pico Blvd 5:57 a.m.
Silent Robbery Alarm 3300Blk Ocean Park Blvd 6:14 a.m.
Burglary Investigation/Walk Through 3300Blk Ocean Park Blvd 6:58 a.m.
Smoking Violation 1100Blk 4th St 7:27 a.m.
Public Intoxication 1300Blk Wilshire Blvd 7:30 a.m.
Burglary Investigation/Walk Through 400Blk Wilshire Blvd 7:48 a.m.
Harassing Phone Calls 1400Blk 14th St 7:58 a.m.
Petty Theft 700Blk Broadway 8:01 a.m.
Animal Related Incident 800Blk Stanford St 8:12 a.m.
Death Investigation 800Blk Ocean Ave 8:12 a.m.
Found Property 1100Blk 4th St 8:16 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 400Blk Wilshire Blvd 8:16 a.m.
Red Zone Violation 2200Blk 5th St 8:19 a.m.
Silent Robbery Alarm 3300Blk Ocean Park Blvd 8:35 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto 200Blk Ocean Ave 8:44 a.m.
Animal Related Incident 20th St / Pico Blvd 9:15 a.m.
Harassing Phone Calls 1400Blk 14th St 9:18 a.m.
Auto Burglary 1400Blk 5th St 9:30 a.m.
Stolen Vehicle 2000Blk Ocean Ave 9:33 a.m.
Vehicle Blocking Driveway 600Blk Pacific St 9:34 a.m.
Malicious Mischief 1400Blk 3rd Street Prom 9:42 a.m.
Overdose 2300Blk Ocean Park Blvd 9:50 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 800Blk Ashland Ave 9:59 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto 1400Blk 9th St 10:24 a.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 1900Blk Pico Blvd 10:41 a.m.
Auto Burglary 1100Blk Ashland Ave 10:45 a.m.
Out Of Order Traffic Signals 4th St / Olympic Blvd E 10:45 a.m.
Grand Theft 2600Blk 6th St 10:50 a.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 2000Blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:04 a.m.
Petty Theft 3200Blk Donald Douglas Loop S 11:06 a.m.
General Parking Problem 1500Blk Lincoln Blvd 11:09 a.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 3300Blk Barnard Way 11:20 a.m.
Loud Music 2000Blk Ocean Ave 11:22 a.m.
Found Property 1400Blk 4th St 11:39 a.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 1300Blk 10th St 11:49 a.m.
General Parking Problem 800Blk Ashland Ave 12:21 p.m.
Traffic Hazard 1000Blk 9th St 12:28 p.m.
Handicap Zone Violation 1400Blk Olympic Blvd 12:39 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2300Blk Lincoln Blvd 12:58 p.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 1100Blk Ocean Ave 1:06 p.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 3300Blk Barnard Way 1:24 p.m.
Traffic Collision - Unknown Injuries Lincoln Blvd / Interstate 10 1:25 p.m.
Person With A Gun 17th St / Wilshire Blvd 1:29 p.m.
Person With A Gun 1600Blk Wilshire Blvd 1:30 p.m.
Petty Theft 400Blk Santa Monica Pier 1:35 p.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 1500Blk Lincoln Blvd 1:37 p.m.
Petty Theft 7th St / Wilshire Blvd 1:41 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 4th St / Olympic Blvd W 1:51 p.m.
Burglary Investigation/Walk Through 500Blk Arizona Ave 1:57 p.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 1600Blk Main St 2:19 p.m.
Battery 1200Blk 3rd Street Prom 2:28 p.m.
Traffic Hazard Main St / Ashland Ave 2:34 p.m.
General Parking Problem 1500Blk Pacific Coast Hwy 2:48 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 7th St / Marine St 2:56 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop Pacific Coast Hwy / California Incline 3:10 p.m.
Auto Burglary 700Blk Wilshire Blvd 3:11 p.m.
Person Down 2600Blk Barnard Way 3:29 p.m.
Petty Theft 1600Blk The Beach 3:34 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 5th St / Colorado Ave 4:09 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 1600Blk Bryn Mawr Ave 4:15 p.m.
Indecent Exposure 2600Blk Ocean Front Walk 4:21 p.m.
Battery 2000Blk Wilshire Blvd 4:27 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 33rd St / Pearl St 4:28 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 400Blk Hill St 4:32 p.m.
Traffic Hazard Pacific Coast Hwy / California Incline 4:39 p.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 700Blk Hill St 4:40 p.m.
Traffic Hazard 5th St / Wilshire Blvd 4:41 p.m.
Person Down 2700Blk 7th St 5:14 p.m.
Person With A Gun Lincoln Blvd / Pico Blvd 5:17 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 1500Blk Ocean Ave 5:18 p.m.
Arson 500Blk Wilshire Blvd 5:21 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 300Blk Wilshire Blvd 5:37 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries Main St / Hill St 6:29 p.m.
Critical Missing Person 300Blk Santa Monica Pier 6:47 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 4th St / Pico Blvd 7:20 p.m.
Traffic Hazard 1000Blk 4th St 7:57 p.m.
Loud Music 1400Blk Ocean Ave 8:12 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 800Blk Centinela Ave 8:18 p.m.
Drunk Driving Investigation 2800Blk Wilshire Blvd 8:59 p.m.
Oversize Vehicle Violation 2700Blk 11th St 9:05 p.m.
Encampment 1400Blk Lincoln Blvd 9:27 p.m.
Vehicle Burglar Alarm 3100Blk Neilson Way 10:03 p.m.
Loud Music 400Blk Broadway 10:16 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 11th St / Pico Blvd 10:23 p.m.
Public Intoxication 2000Blk Wilshire Blvd 11:07 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2600Blk Wilshire Blvd 11:29 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1500Blk 16th St 11:49 p.m.

California's Newsom wants health coverage for all immigrants

ADAM BEAM
Associated Press

Backed by soaring revenues amid the pandemic, California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Monday proposed a budget that would pay for the health care of all the state's low-income residents living in the country illegally, while cutting taxes for businesses and halting a scheduled increase in the gas tax later this summer.

California taxpayers already pay for the health care of young adults and people 50 and over living in the country illegally, provided they meet certain income requirements. Now, Newsom wants California to become the first state to cover all adults who are living in the country illegally, a move that would eventually cost $2.2 billion per year.

"We're doing something that no other state has done," Newsom said.

Newsom said his $286.4 billion budget proposal tackles five of the state's biggest problems — what his administration called "existential threats" — including the surging coronavirus pandemic; wildfires and drought worsened by global warming; homelessness; income inequality including the lack of health insurance for some immigrants; and public safety, including combating a recent flurry of coordinated smash-and-grab robberies.

The "existential" label is usually applied to climate change and the pandemic, Newsom acknowledged, but he said homelessness, the rising cost of living and public safety are "understandably top of mind in terms of people's concerns."

The governor said his budget includes a $45.7 billion surplus, which is larger than previous estimates because his administration uses a different definition of what counts as surplus.

The proposed $2.2 billion program to aid immigrants in the country illegally would not take effect until January 2024 to include "all low-income Californians, regardless of immigration status," Newsom said.

The state has made great strides in reducing its uninsured population in recent years, but the largest single group left behind under the state's Medicaid program are low-income residents in the country illegally.

The state began covering immigrants 26 and under in 2019, and those 50 and older last year.

The governor's budget address kicks off months of haggling with his fellow Democrats who control the state Legislature, talks that will intensify when Newsom presents an updated spending proposal in May.

Some progressive legislative Democrats last week proposed creating in California the nation's first universal health care system, backed by steep tax hikes that would have to be approved by voters. But Newsom touted his own more incremental approach.

Among steps to ease the state's rising costs, he proposed pausing a scheduled increase to the state's gas tax on July 1. It was one of 10 tax incentives he touted. He also proposed $45 million to promote tourism; $40 million to waive filing fees for new businesses; and $26 million to provide technical assistance to new businesses

Newsom also has pledged to spend $300 million on boosting law enforcement efforts to combat retail theft and another $2.7 billion to spend on things like coronavirus testing and hospital staffing.

He additionally on Monday proposed spending $648 million to back wildland firefighters and buy more helicopters and bulldozers, plus another $1.2 billion on top of the current budget year's $1.5 billion for forest management.

Another $750 million would go to drought relief, on top of the current budget year's $5.2 billion water package.

Also on the environmental front, he pledged to keep reducing California's reliance on fossil fuels.

"On the surface, there are certainly things to like in this proposal; funding for clean water, wildfire prevention and homelessness are all worthy goals," Assembly Republican Leader Marie Waldron said in a statement. "But look at the details and you'll see that much of this spending isn't going to transformative projects to improve the lives of Californians, but rather to clean up from years of Democratic mismanagement."

Sen. Jim Nielsen, ranking Republican on the Senate's budget committee, said the state should devote its budget surplus to building reservoirs, increasing forest management to alleviate wildfires and supporting law enforcement.

To confront the state's seemingly intractable homelessness problem, Newsom proposed spending $2 billion for mental health services, housing, and clearing homeless encampments. That's on top of last year's $12 billion package. The combination would create a projected 55,000 new housing units and treatment slots.

To help with the ever-growing cost of living in California, Newsom proposed "doubling down" on the state's existing plan to provide free universal pre-kindergarten; adding thousands of child care slots and boosting before-, after- and summer school programs.

He also proposed continued aid to small businesses hit hard by the pandemic by waiving fees and providing hundreds of millions in grants and tax breaks.

Newsom's massive projected budget and surplus brings the state a long way from the gloom of 2020, when Newsom and state lawmakers cut spending, raised taxes and pulled money from the state's savings accounts to cover what they feared would be a pandemic-fueled $54 billion deficit.

That deficit never happened. Instead, state revenues soared like never before. In September, collections from the state's three largest taxes — personal income, sales and corporation — were 40% higher than September 2020 and nearly 60% higher than September 2019, before the pandemic hit, according to the Legislative Analyst's Office.

Associated Press reporter Don Thompson contributed.

City of Santa Monica

**NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL
VIA TELECONFERENCE
Pursuant to AB361**

SUBJECT: **Proposed Amendment of Interim Zoning Regulations Allowing Automobile Dealer Showrooms in the City's BC (Promenade) District and Those Portions of the BC (2nd and 4th Street) District Bounded by Second Street to the West, Broadway to the South, 4th Street to the East, and Wilshire Boulevard to the North**

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to introduce and adopt an Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance to amend interim zoning regulations established by Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2636 (CCS), extended by Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2658 (CCS), and amended by Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Numbers 2667 and 2682 (CCS) allowing automobile dealer showrooms in the Third Street Promenade area where previously only alternative fuel automobile dealer showrooms were permitted.

DATE/TIME: **TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M.**

LOCATION: In an effort to reduce the risk of spreading Coronavirus (COVID-19), only members of the City Council and City Staff will participate in person at City Hall. Members of the public may participate via telephone. The meeting will be broadcast on CityTV Channel 16 and streamed on the City's website as normal at https://www.youtube.com/user/Citytv16santamonica or https://www.smgov.net/video. Members of the public may also dial in to listen to the meeting per the phone number that will be published on the meeting agenda.

HOW TO COMMENT
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Written public comment can be submitted via email to councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov. Written public comment submitted before 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be available for online viewing. Please note the agenda item number in the subject line of your written comments.

If you want to speak on a particular agenda item, please call (310) 312-8173 once the caller queue for the agenda item opens. Please note that the caller queue for each agenda item will not open until just before the item is called and will close after the first five public comments (from other callers) are heard.

Please see the January 25, 2022 City Council Agenda for more detailed instructions.

Address your comments to: City Clerk
Re: Promenade IZO Amendments

MORE INFORMATION
If you want more information about this project or wish to review the project file, please contact Tony Kim by e-mail at tony.kim@santamonica.gov. For disability-related accommodations, please contact (310) 458-8341 or (310) 458-8696 TTY 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. 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) 458-8341.



Coast Guard announces safety rules after deadly boat fire

STEFANIE DAZIO AND BRIAN MELLEY
Associated Press

The Coast Guard has announced new safety rules following a deadly blaze that killed 34 people on a scuba diving boat off the California coast more than two years ago, including installation of fire detection and suppression equipment.

The Labor Day 2019 fire aboard the Conception off Santa Barbara marked the deadliest marine disaster in modern state history and led to criminal charges and calls for tougher regulations for small passenger vessels.

The new interim rules will take effect over the next two years. In addition to the fire systems, owners of boats with overnight passengers will be required, among other things, to provide better escapes from below deck and use devices that make sure a night watchman is alert and making frequent rounds.

An investigation into the disaster blamed the Conception's owners for a lack of oversight and the boat's captain for failing to post a roving watchman aboard the vessel, which allowed the fire to quickly spread and trap the 33 passengers and one crew member below deck. Captain Jerry Boylan and four crew members, all of whom were sleeping above deck, escaped.

Boylan has pleaded not guilty to 34 counts of seaman's manslaughter. He is free on bond awaiting trial in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles.

The new rules were expected after Congress mandated in December 2020 that the Coast Guard review its regulations for small passenger vessels. The law, included in the National Defense Authorization Act, also added new requirements regarding fire detection and suppression.

The new rules apply to small passenger vessels with sleeping quarters or operating on oceans or coastal routes, but excludes fishing boats and ferries.

The National Transportation Safety Board recommended in its investigation that the Coast Guard require boat owners to install more comprehensive smoke detector systems, upgrade emergency exits and make mandatory inspection checks on roving watches.

Since 1991, no owner, operator or charterer has been issued a citation or fine for failure to post a roving patrol, prompting the NTSB to fault the Coast Guard for not enforcing that requirement and recommend it develop a program to ensure boats with overnight passengers actually have watchmen.

SEE **BOAT FIRE** PAGE 11

Inflation up, virus down as priorities in US: AP-NORC poll

WILL WEISSERT AND HANNAH FINGERHUT
Associated Press

Heading into a critical midterm election year, the top political concerns of Americans are shifting in ways that suggest Democrats face considerable challenges to maintaining their control of Congress.

A poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds that management of the coronavirus pandemic, once an issue that strongly favored President Joe Biden and his fellow Democrats, is beginning to recede in the minds of Americans. COVID-19 is increasingly overshadowed by concerns about the economy and personal finances — particularly inflation — which are topics that could lift Republicans.

Just 37% of Americans name the virus as one of their top five priorities for the government to work on in 2022, compared with 53% who said it was a leading priority at the same time a year ago. The economy outpaced the pandemic in the open-ended question, with 68% of respondents mentioning it in some way as a top 2022 concern. A similar percentage said the same last year, but mentions of inflation are much higher now: 14% this year, compared with less than 1% last year.

Consumer prices jumped 6.8% for the 12 months ending in November, a nearly four-decade high. Meanwhile, roughly twice as many Americans now mention their household finances, namely, the cost of living, as a governmental priority, 24% vs. 12% last year.

The poll was conducted in early December, when worries about the virus were rising as omicron took hold in the country, but before it sparked record caseloads, overwhelmed testing sites and hospitals and upended holiday travel. Still, in recent follow-up interviews with participants, including self-identified Democrats, many said those developments didn't shake their views.

"If we say anything along the lines of, 'Let's wait until the pandemic dies down,' well, this son of a gun virus has unlimited ability to mutate," said Mary Small, a 65-year-old pharmaceutical research contractor in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, who hopes efforts to promote gun safety will take center stage in November's elections, including her state's race for an open Senate seat. "We might never be done with this."

That sentiment reflects the challenge for Democrats at the onset of the election year. The party won the White House and control of Congress in 2020 with pledges to manage the pandemic more competently than the Trump administration. After initially earning high marks — roughly 70% approved of Biden's handling of the pandemic from late February through mid-July — the virus' persistence has undermined the new president's message.

Administration officials acknowledge that the public is growing increasingly weary of COVID-19.

"Pandemic fatigue is real, and all of us feel it at some point," Surgeon General Vivek Murthy said in an interview. "As a doctor, I've certainly seen it with my patients over the years. When you get tired and beaten down by a health problem — whether it's a personal health problem or a broader public health challenge — it can lead to disengagement."

The White House says COVID-19's waning as a preeminent concern actually underscores its success rolling out preventative measures, including vaccines. It argues that economic jitters now exacerbated by the pandemic eventually will ease.

Still, with Democrats likely struggling to campaign on the idea that they've now defeated the virus, the other issues gaining attention among voters pose more immediate political headaches.

Judy Kunzman doesn't blame Biden for the ongoing pandemic, calling it "just one of those events that are impossible to predict and almost as impossible to fix." But she's worried about continued supply chain disruptions, which affect "a lot of the other issues that we're having: The rising food prices. The fact that I can't buy my new car."

"Everything has chips and the chips aren't there," said Kunzman, 75, of Middletown, Pennsylvania, referring to a pandemic-fueled, global shortage of microchips many electronics depend on. She's waited months for the car she'd like to become available and noted that her sister faced difficulties finding a new cellphone.

"It's certainly not the victory the Democrats thought it would be," Adam Brandon, president of the conservative activist group FreedomWorks, said of the government's virus response. "We'll have another wave next year, and I just don't think anyone's going to care. I think we're going to get to a point where everyone's just going to have to learn to live with it. This will die with a whimper as people just lose interest."

Many respondents in the survey said they're not suggesting the country ignore the pandemic. But compared with last year, higher percentages of people called out other issues, including immigration among Republicans and gun control among Democrats, as pressing in 2022. Some said they were encouraged by early indications that the latest outbreak, while spreading fast, could have milder effects for many.

"I'm hopeful with omicron," said Samantha Flowers, a 33-year-old community college teacher in Columbia, Missouri, which has its own open Senate seat on November's ballot. "Even though more people are getting it, the sickness hasn't been as harsh for most people. Since we're all going to end up sick anyway, let it be one that we can recover from better."

Dorrie Keough from Garrettsville, Ohio, said she's vaccinated against COVID-19 and gotten a booster shot, but is still staying home as much as possible because of omicron.

"Whoever's not in power is going to spin it in such a way to make it look worse than it might be," said Keough, 68, whose state also has an open Senate seat this year. "As much

SEE **INFLATION** PAGE 6



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AWARD WINNER

Santa Monica Daily Press

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WINNER

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Home COVID tests to be covered by insurers starting Saturday

ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

Starting Saturday, private health insurers will be required to cover up to eight home COVID-19 tests per month for people on their plans. The Biden administration announced the change Monday as it looks to lower costs and make testing for the virus more convenient amid rising frustrations.

Under the new policy, first detailed to the AP, Americans will be able to either purchase home testing kits for free under their insurance or submit receipts for the tests for reimbursement, up to the monthly per-person limit. A family of four, for instance, could be reimbursed for up to 32 tests per month. PCR tests and rapid tests ordered or administered by a health provider will continue to be fully covered by insurance with no limit.

President Joe Biden faced criticism over the holiday season for a shortage of at-home rapid tests as Americans traveled to see family amid the surge in cases from the more transmissible omicron variant. Now the administration is working to make COVID-19 home tests more accessible, both by increasing supply and bringing down costs.

Later this month, the federal government will launch a website to begin making 500 million at-home COVID-19 tests available via mail. The administration also is scaling up emergency rapid-testing sites in areas experiencing the greatest surges in cases.

The insurer-covered testing would dramatically reduce costs for many Americans, and the administration hopes that by easing a barrier to more regular at-home testing, it can help slow the spread of the virus, get kids back into school more quickly and help people gather safely.

"This is all part of our overall strategy to ramp up access to easy-to-use, at-home tests at no cost," Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a statement. "By requiring private health plans to cover people's at-home tests, we are further expanding Americans' ability to get tests for free when they need them."

Biden announced the federal requirement late last year, and it kicks in on Jan. 15, but the administration had been silent until now on details of the plan.

The administration is trying to incentivize private insurers to cover the tests up-front and without a cumbersome reimbursement process. Insurance plans that work with pharmacies and retailers to cover the up-front costs of the tests will be required to reimburse only up to $12 per test if purchased through an out-of-network retailer. Plans that don't move proactively to set up a network of pharmacies would have to cover the full retail price that the customer paid — which could be more than $12 per test.

A major health insurance industry group said insurers would carry out the administration's order, but cautioned consumers it won't be as easy as flipping a switch.

"Health insurance providers will work as quickly as possible to implement this guidance in ways that limit consumer confusion and challenges," Matt Eyles, president of America's Health Insurance Plans, said in a statement. "While there will likely be some hiccups in early days, we will work with the administration to swiftly address issues as they arise."

The group said it supports provisions in the Biden administration plan to counteract potential price gouging on tests.

Only tests purchased on or after Jan. 15 will be required to be reimbursed, the administration said. Some insurers may choose to cover the costs of at-home tests purchased earlier, but they won't have to.

Mina Bressler, a mother of two and a therapist in San Mateo, California, was able to buy rapid test kits online and shared some with a parent who works in the service industry and doesn't have time to "sit at her computer every hour refreshing the Walmart page to see when tests are in stock."

"I gave her some and her kids went to school. That's one time and there's a million of her," Bressler said.

"Just like vaccines becoming available really shone a light on the inequity of what's going on in this pandemic, I think testing is the new flashlight for that because who's going online stalking Walmart? It's not the most vulnerable people in the county," Bressler added.

Americans on Medicare won't be able to get tests reimbursed through the federal insurance plan, but Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program plans are required to cover the cost of at-home tests fully. Those who are not on a covered insurance plan can receive free tests through the forthcoming federal website or from some local community centers and pharmacies.

AP writer Terry Tang in Phoenix contributed.

PIER

FROM PAGE 1

The minor was booked for carrying a loaded firearm and possession of high-capacity magazine.

In the second case, Antonia Murcia, 18, was arrested for a Nov. 21 fight between two unlicensed hot dog vendors.

According to SMPD, Murcia was involved in a fight with another female vendor that ended when Murcia pushed a hotdog cart at the victim, causing hot oil to spill onto the victims arms and hands. Murcia was videotaped during that altercation but she fled the scene before officers arrived.

On Jan. 8, at approximately 5:30 p.m. officers noticed Murcia standing in front of Hot Dog on a Stick in the 1600 block of Ocean Front Walk. She was detained and taken into custody without incident. Murcia was booked for assault with a deadly weapon.

Anyone with additional information pertaining to these incidents are strongly encouraged to contact Detective Spenser 310-458-8420 or the Watch Commander (24 hours) at 310-458-8426.

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Your column here

Mikke Pierson and Karen Farrer — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Snell and Mechur are Conflicted Over SMMUSD Vote

Even children know and understand the importance of fairness. Our entire system of democracy is built upon the foundations of equality before the law and the right to a fair process with transparent and accountable rules.

Therefore, it should be a no-brainer that Barry Snell and Ralph Mechur, member and member-elect of the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization, should recuse themselves from the Committee's consideration of the City of Malibu's petition to form its own school district independent of Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SM-MUSD).

The County Committee's policies state that, "A conflict of interest exists when a member, individually or as a representative of a public agency or special interest group, has a competing financial, personal, policy, or other interest on any issue."

Snell and Mechur have multiple, documented conflicts of interest. Snell has a leadership role with the Black Agenda and Santa Monica Black Lives Association (SMBLA), advocacy organizations that have actively and publicly opposed Malibu's petition. Snell also invited SM-MUSD Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati to speak against Malibu's petition at an SMBLA meeting one month before the County Committee's first preliminary public hearing on April 17, 2021. He offered to personally assist Dr. Drati if he had any trouble with or questions about attending the meeting.

Mechur is conflicted because he has served on the SM-MUSD Board of Education for more than 13 years, only leaving the Board last year. That means he was an active member of the Board while the City's Petition was before the County Committee. Furthermore, he has made several public comments before the County Committee against the City's petition in the most recent preliminary public hearings.

Furthermore, both Snell and Mechur are ex-officio members of the Community for Excellent Public Schools (CEPS), a community group that describes itself as being "dedicated to the preservation and betterment of public schools in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District." CEPS has opposed the City's Petition and continues to do so on the home page of its website in bold, red letters.

Snell and Mechur need to recuse themselves from the Committee's decision on Malibu's petition. The County Committee's rules prohibiting real or perceived conflicts of interest are in place for a reason: to establish and preserve the public's trust that the Committee will apply the rules fairly to all parties, not based on the financial or political interests of its individual members. Snell and Mechur's failure to recuse themselves would be an alarming, unacceptable and unfair violation of Malibu's right to a fair process under the rules laid out by the County Committee.

By violating these rules, the Committee and its conflicted members rob Malibu and its children and families of their due process as they strive to establish a school district within existing rules and policies of government agencies that are beholden to the public. This conflict of interest also erodes the public's faith in the Committee to fulfill its mission ethically in all future cases.

This is the same reason why judges in our legal system are supposed to be separated from politics and that nation's legal system has the motto "Justice is Blind." Judges make decisions based on applying the law, not based on the interests of other political advocacy groups that they belong to. This ensures that individual people with no power have their rights protected and are not steamrolled by larger entities with more power and resources.

The City urges Snell and Mechur to do the right thing and recuse themselves. The decision to recuse is entirely up to the discretion of those with the conflict, but we trust that anyone with a sense of fairness will agree and encourage Snell and Mechur to honorably step aside when it is time to decide the fate of the City's petition. As our nation faces an unprecedented attack on democracy itself, how can we expect our children to understand and embrace the principles of transparency, accountability, and the right to a fair process when we stand by as two members of the County Committee trample on these principles of fairness?

Mikke Pierson and Karen Farrer are members of the Malibu City Council.





What's the Point?

David Pisarra — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

A Marvelous Magic Show at the Playhouse

HAVE I GOT A MAGIC SHOW FOR YOU!

Magic is an age-old art form. It happens in every culture and has since the first cave grandpa pulled a rock from behind his grandchild's ear. I'd say most people love a good magic trick, and in a day and age of blockbuster shows in Vegas and huge tricks like David Copperfield making the Statue of Liberty disappear (okay that was more than a few years ago, but still…) the art of close up magic has lost some of its popularity, but definitely not its WOW factor.

For anyone who has attended the Magic Castle and had the pleasure of being amazed at sleight of hand wizardry I have good news for you. We have a local version for the month of January.

Last Friday I was invited to attend the opening night of David Carlo's Modern Parlor Magic. On this brisk evening, about 60 of my fellow Santa Monicans shuffled in to the Santa Monica Playhouse on 4th street to experience an up-close and personal demonstration of prestidigitation.

Carlo is a 35 year resident of Santa Monica and the westside and he is bringing a unique combination of theater and magic to our local playhouse. The show is inspired by the parlor shows that happened in private homes around the turn of the 20th century. It used to be in the time before television, and the Internet that parties would be held where a magician and/or musician would be hired to perform for a small group. Today, 100 years later we're again looking at intimate venues with smaller crowds to reduce the pandemic's impact and Carlo has created a show that is more audience participation focused than those big shows in Vegas.

Historically magic has been performed as small tidbits. If you ever saw Steven Spill at Magicopolis it was a great show, but was more of a carousel of tricks. Most shows are not often incorporating a story. Carlo's show is based on a diary entry from a show of 1895 that describes an actual party. He chose to use this as the foundation of the story and to replicate what happened in 1895 while upping the quality and amount of magic in the show, and incorporating a few modern twists.

As I was seated in the Santa Monica Playhouse surrounded by old school paintings on the walls, and a décor that is reminiscent of the 1890s with velvet wallpaper as the backdrop I couldn't help but feel as if I was transported to a different time and location. In a nod to a historical style, Carlo does have a live musical score run by Solitary Science.

The show itself was a collection of exceptionally well-done sleight-of-hand deceptions and a good amount of mentalizing. Carlo's ability to be dramatic and engaging while keeping the flow of the show going was evident from the start and kept up through the very end of the show. Audience participation is a crucial piece in a good magic show to help create that sense of authenticity, and in this "highly highly interactive show" as Carlo put it, I'd estimate about ½ of the 60ish people were incorporated into the show.

Overall this was a family-friendly show and I think kids over 5 or 6 would enjoy it and be able to follow most of the show. There is one trick that involves a paintball gun in the "catch the bullet" trick, but I don't think it is too scary for children if they're prepared for it by mom and dad.

The show runs the 1st three weekends in January and tickets can be purchased at www.ModernParlorMagic.com. I recommend this show and if you haven't been to the Santa Monica Playhouse, I think it's worth a visit just to see what they've done with the decorations of that great stage.

David Pisarra is a Los Angeles Divorce and Child Custody Lawyer specializing in Father's and Men's Rights with the Santa Monica firm of Pisarra & Grist. He welcomes your questions and comments. He can be reached at dpisarra@pisarra.com or 310/664-9969. You can follow him on Twitter @ davidpisarra

INFLATION

FROM PAGE 4

reading as I do — and as much investigating that I do — it's real hard for me to parse out what is actually happening versus what people are saying is happening."

Adam Green, co-founder of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, said the key to Democrats' 2022 success is easing COVID-19 fears — but also delivering tangible policy results. That includes passing Biden's "Build Back Better," the massive social spending bill that remains stalled in the Senate.

"I don't think we're going to win an election for lack of anxiety," Green said, "if we've achieved nothing else."

The AP-NORC poll of 1,089 adults was conducted Dec. 2-7 using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

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COVID-19

FROM PAGE 1

COVID-19 data dashboard, a project that, a month later, was still underway, meaning no centralized public data is available for cases at local schools.

Work on the system was delayed over the winter break and officials said fluctuating rules are impacting the final product.

"We are revamping and this takes time. It was originally designed before vaccinations were available and information for quarantine and isolation is different now if someone is vaxxed and asymptomatic," said Pinsker. "We are looking at what other districts are doing and working with our team to determine input and maintenance of the new dashboard."

As the new omicron COVID-19 variant has sent cases skyrocketing across LA County, testing and reporting has struggled to keep up with the radically increased demand.

In the interim, data was coming in piecemeal from various school sites.

According to a Friday, Jan. 7, update from Lincoln Middle School, 57 Lincoln students tested positive for the virus the first week of school. The school district confirmed about 400 positive cases had been reported at Samohi in the first week back to school.

At Will Rogers Learning Community, Principal Ryan Bourke wrote to assure parents that "we are working behind the scenes to ensure the safety of our students and staff," in his weekly email dated Sunday, Jan. 9.

"Due to the sheer volume of PRC [PCR] tests, laboratories are backlogged," Bourke's letter continued. "This is causing a delay in returning results. As of Sunday evening, about 95% of our school's tests have been returned; anyone who tests positive will be contacted by the laboratory. If you have not received your 'negative result' email, it is because of the delay. It is reassuring to know that our school's COVID-positive numbers are extremely low."

Will Rogers was not the only SMMUSD school site dealing with delays in test results.

"Last week, due to overwhelming volume, test results were delayed in being emailed to families," Malibu Elementary Principal Christopher Hertz wrote in his weekly email to parents dated Jan. 10. The email was initially reported on by KBUU News. "As of 9AM today MES still does not have our batch results. This is worrisome for me. Health staff and I prioritize communication to the parent(s) of any child who tested positive. I am assured by Malibu Medical that this week they will return to emailing results by Wednesday evening, as they had done weeks prior."

Pinsker reported school sites across the district saw anywhere from 25 percent to 60 percent of students staying home on the first day of school. Additional data requests have been hampered by a lack of SMMUSD staff who are also testing positive.

Data showed the school sites with the highest rates of students being kept home included Will Rogers Elementary, Malibu Elementary, CDS Preschool and Olympic High School, which each saw more than 40 percent of the total student body miss the first day of class. About one-quarter to one-third of students were not in classrooms at Edison, Grant, John Muir, McKinley, Franklin, Roosevelt, Webster, SMASH, Lincoln, JAMS, Malibu Middle, Samohi and Malibu High.

Across the district, which has a total student body of about 13,000, about 2,800 students were absent for the first day of classes, including 881 students "absent at least one period" from Samohi. The district was offering excused absences due to the COVID-19 surge through this Friday, Jan. 14, Pinsker wrote.

"Students home are not enjoying an extended winter break," Pinsker wrote. "It's on a school by school basis on how they are handling specifically as it involves whether a teacher is out and a sub is or is not available, or if a portion of a class is on quarantine, or other factors. The interest of the District is that students are engaged in meaningful work while at home as we navigate this challenging time where we may see students and staff in and out in the next few weeks."

Multiple sources also cited shifting protocols as an additional burden going into 2022.

In a letter to parents on Jan. 4 — which was revised one day later — Superintendent Ben Drati wrote that "new guidance provides for students and staff who are required to isolate because of a positive test result to be released from isolation and return to school on the sixth day following the initial positive test result, provided that they have a negative antigen rapid test done on the fifth day and are not symptomatic.

"This is a change from the previous 10-day requirement, however, at this time we are continuing with the 10-day schedule," Drati continued.

He said the district was working on the process for recording and approving return to school on the sixth day as this was a significant shift in their protocol and it would take some time to develop this system.

According to Pinsker, that would be in place by Jan. 18.

"Starting 1/18, secondary schools will move to the five-day isolation / quarantine, with a negative test," Pinsker wrote. "Or, still 10-day with no test, as long as [there are] no symptoms."

emily@smdp.com

LET US KNOW YOUR OPINION
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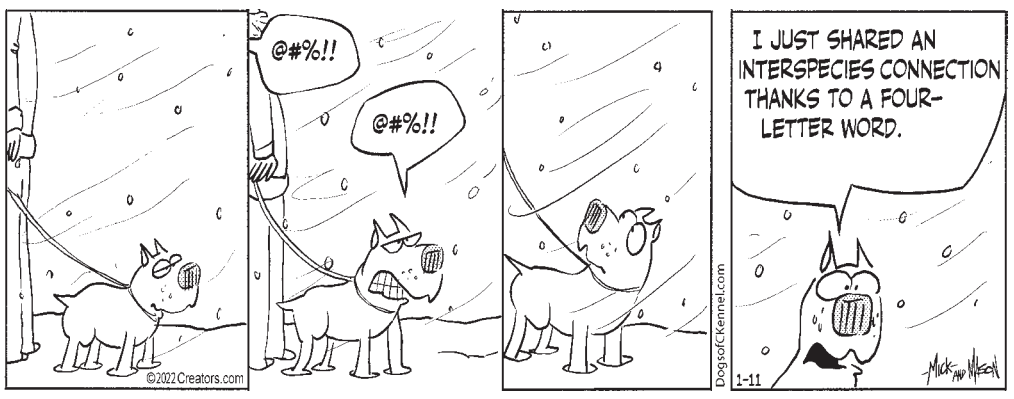
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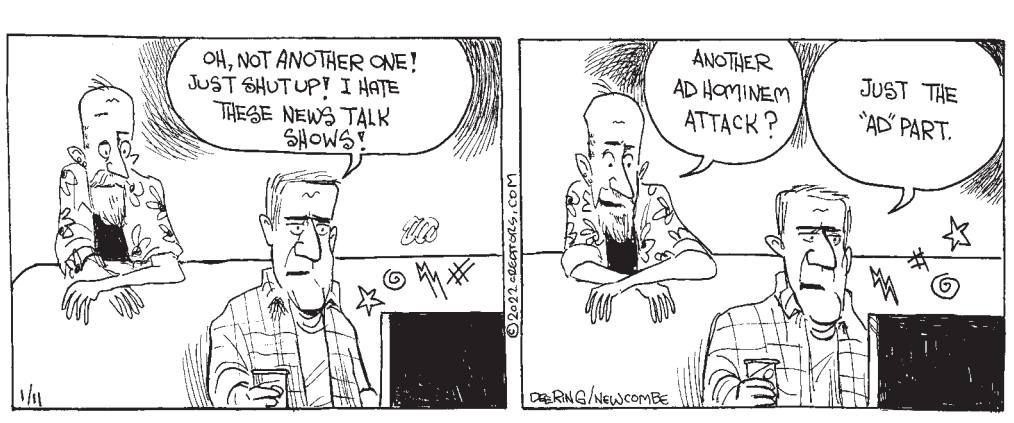
Dogs of C-Kennel

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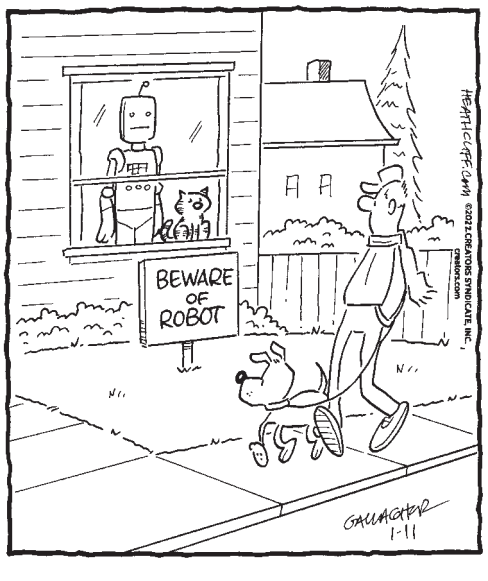
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



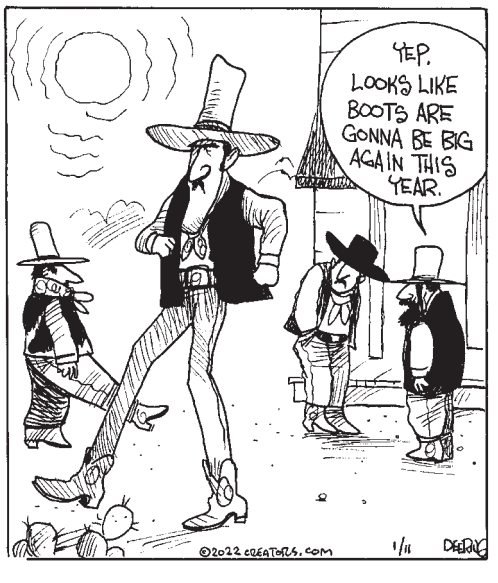
Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 57.0°

TUESDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 3-5ft Waist to head high
Stronger WNW swell builds through day & conditions have a good chance to be favorable. A predawn high tide slows down the dawn patrol but it could get pretty fun as the tide drops through the morning.

WEDNESDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 3-4ft+ Waist to shoulder high
Stronger WNW swell continues with potential favorable conditions. A predawn high tide slows down the dawn patrol but it could get pretty good as the tide drops through the morning.

WEATHER

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 74. North northeast wind around 10 mph.
Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 49. Northeast wind around 10 mph.
Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 75. North wind 5 to 10 mph.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2022/01/11	Tue	04:43 AM	4.91	H
2022/01/11	Tue	12:16 PM	0.80	L
2022/01/11	Tue	6:30 PM	2.92	H
2022/01/11	Tue	10:43 PM	2.21	L
2022/01/12	Wed	05:25 AM	5.12	H
2022/01/12	Wed	1:01 PM	0.28	L
2022/01/12	Wed	7:36 PM	3.11	H
2022/01/12	Wed	11:33 PM	2.41	L
2022/01/13	Thu	06:03 AM	5.32	H
2022/01/13	Thu	1:38 PM	-0.13	L
2022/01/13	Thu	8:18 PM	3.29	H
2022/01/14	Fri	12:17 AM	2.49	L
2022/01/14	Fri	06:39 AM	5.52	H
2022/01/14	Fri	2:10 PM	-0.43	L
2022/01/14	Fri	8:49 PM	3.40	H
2022/01/15	Sat	12:56 AM	2.47	L
2022/01/15	Sat	07:13 AM	5.71	H
2022/01/15	Sat	2:40 PM	-0.64	L
2022/01/15	Sat	9:17 PM	3.48	H
2022/01/16	Sun	01:31 AM	2.39	L
2022/01/16	Sun	07:46 AM	5.87	H

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 1/8
20 21 36 60 65
Power#: 13
Jackpot: 27 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 1/7
7 29 43 56 57
Mega#: 6
Jackpot: 300 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 1/8
2 13 25 41 42
Mega#: 27
Jackpot: 7 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 1/9
9 18 27 29 37

Daily 3
Draw Date: 1/9
EVENING: 2 6 6
Draw Date: 1/9
MIDDAY: 6 8 7

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 1/9
1st: 06 - Whirl Win
2nd: 05 - California Classic
3rd: 11 - Money Bags
Race Time: 1:42.31

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (JANUARY 11)

Your cosmic superpower will be to take hold of moods and change them into what you want them to be. You help others and bring people up wherever you go. You'll enjoy a financial bump and have fun with your resources. You'll grow your network and influence with some high-profile moves. Cancer and Gemini adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 5, 17, 38 and 2.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The idea of a thing is much different than the experience of it. When you have no clue what's behind the door, don't waste time imagining it — just open the door.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You can easily accomplish in just a few minutes the thing that takes others hours to do. It's about time you started teaching others what you know!

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Those with an instinct for helping will come to you with a soft approach, an amenable attitude and a plan that makes sense. And those with less interpersonal skill can still help you; you just have to tell them how.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Knowing how pleasantly relaxing it is to spend your time in one place instead of rushing around to different engagements, you'll commit yourself sparingly and only to what you're reasonably sure you'll enjoy.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're happy for people who get things similar to the things you want. Someone else's win doesn't prevent you from having success, and it might even teach you the way.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There are those who will talk your ear off, oblivious to social cues. Maybe they just haven't learned them yet. It's not your job to teach but when you're feeling cornered, to gently assert yourself will be the kindest thing for both of you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Each time you try, it counts. You're making statistics; changing the odds; creating a probability. "Every winner has an archive of losses, but each attempt creates the chance for a victory." — James Clear

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Lately, you've wondered if other people are having more fun than you. Remember: It's human instinct to cultivate appearances to some degree. Most are just like you — smiling regardless of the state of the party inside.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Use technology to your advantage. It's easier than ever to automate certain parts of your life. You need to free up some time and brain space so you're freer to ride the wave of opportunity coming your way.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The feeling of an interaction is more important than what happens in the exchange. The feeling says whether and how future exchanges happen. Repetition drives your plot more than the outcome of any individual scene.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Wisdom is often silent. You know things about the world, but you're cool about this knowledge — guarded, even. You're careful not to offer opinions unless your opinion is requested.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You thank people when they do something for you even when that "something" happens to fit neatly into their job description. People trust you to be gracious, which is the reason they want to work and play with you.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

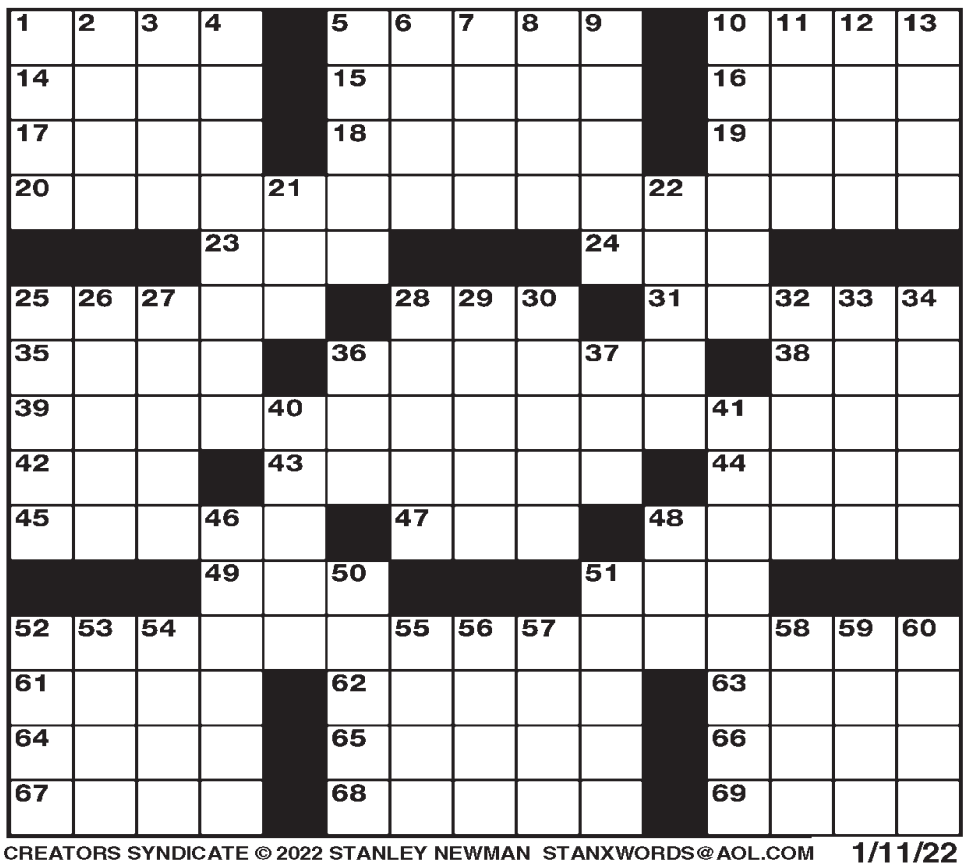
			5	6	1			
1						2		5
	6				2			3
		8	2		7	6		
9	1						3	2
		6	3		4	7		
2			1				8	
6		3						7
			6	4	3			

Newsday Crossword

UP IN THE AIR by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Frolic like children
5 Duos
10 "Billy" farm animal
14 Ridesharing rival of Lyft
15 Accumulate, as debts
16 Rowing implements
17 Just passable
18 __ Sam (symbol of America)
19 Pack and send
20 Daydreamer's state
23 Find a purpose for
24 Follower of fa on the scale
25 Baker's cookie quantity
28 Smartphone predecessor: Abbr.
31 Alpine song
35 Post-workout soreness
36 Japanese hostess
38 Yale student
39 "As much as you want"
42 Comics cry of distress
43 Hams it up
44 Jot down
45 "Someone else did it"
47 Boy in the family
48 More reasonable
49 Likely (to)
51 __ room (place to play)
52 Kindred spirits
61 Aroma
62 Doesn't agree to
63 Des Moines' state
64 Mongolian desert
65 Say hello to
66 Unlock
67 Snow coaster
68 Gets cash for
69 Sparrow's home

DOWN
1 Hurry it up
2 Woodwind instrument
3 Southwestern tableland
4 Manufactures
5 Dried plum
6 Parent's sister
7 1/12 of a foot
8 Regulation
9 Project details, for short
10 Try to make it on one's own
11 Honolulu's island
12 Getting little rainfall
13 Sugar amts.
21 Suffix meaning "sort of"
22 Faithful
25 Relay race stick
26 Sound of a sneeze
27 Crime of stealing
28 Mexican coins
29 "Me too"
30 Very pale
32 Speed __ (fast driver)
33 Privileged few
34 Soda bottle size
36 Workout facility
37 Men and boys
40 Doesn't throw out
41 Idleness
46 Capital of Spain
48 Large body of water
50 Salad-serving implements
51 Relaxes
52 Marshy places
53 Object of worship
54 After-bath garment
55 On __ (ablaze)
56 Skater's leap
57 Sense intuitively
58 Aspiration
59 Mothers of lambs
60 Talk angrily



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What's Up Westside

out and about in Santa Monica

TUESDAY | JAN 11

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
The Zoning Administrator issues land use permits that are minor in nature and may adopt specific findings of fact to support the resulting decision, or require specific conditions. Some Zoning Administrator permits are administrative determinations, while others require a noticed public hearing. 10:30 a.m. https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/erjtkjhz
DIAL-IN NUMBER: 1 (415) 466-7000 (US), PIN: 7933565 #

WEDNESDAY | JAN 12

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET
Arizona Ave. (between 4th & Ocean)
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

THURSDAY | JAN 13

SMMUSD MEETING
Regular Meeting of the SMMUSD Board 5:30 p.m.

UNFINISHED WORK (VIRTUAL PROGRAM)
Advancing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's legacy of racial equity. Hosted by New Roads School featuring young orators, filmmakers, musicians and artists. For more information visit www.newroads.org/MLK

RENT CONTROL REGULAR BOARD MEETING
The Rent Control Board meets to conduct business associated with the Rent Control Charter Amendment and Regulations. 7 p.m.

STORYTIME AT CAYTON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
Join organizers for fun stories, songs, and fingerplays and, after storytime, enjoy the museum for free. Babies to Preschool. Registration is required: visit https://bit.ly/SMPLCayton. 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

FRIDAY | JAN 14

COURTYARD & SPLASH PAD OPEN
The Annenberg Community Beach House gated area, including the courtyard and splash pad, are open to the public daily 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Please note, from September - May hours are subject to change with short notice. Check the Beach House website calendar or call (310) 458-4904 to confirm.

MLK INTERFAITH FREEDOM CELEBRATION (VIRTUAL PROGRAM)
For information and registration, contact the Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council: office@mtolivelutheranchurch.org or minister@ciop4justice.org. To be held at Mt. Olive Lutheran.

SATURDAY | JAN 15

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET
Arizona Ave. (between 2nd & 4th)
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

PICO FARMERS MARKET
Pico Blvd. & Cloverfield Blvd.
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

NOTABLE BOOKS DISCUSSION GROUP
A community-led book club, focusing on books which have won major prizes or are otherwise notable. Contact jeff.schwartz@santamonica.gov for the Zoom link. 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

ANNUAL MLK HOLIDAY CONCERT
John Adams Middle School Performing Arts Center, 1630 Pearl Street, 2 - 3:30 p.m. https://www.mlkjrwestside.org/ or www.smsymphony.org

SUNDAY | JAN 16

MAIN ST. FARMERS MARKET
2640 Main St. (In The Victorian Parking Lot) 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

MONDAY | JAN 17

37TH ANNUAL REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION
Come join the 37th annual celebration of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The festivities will include music by the Linda Alvarez Trio and spoken word by Get Lit: Words Ignite, who will also receive a Community Light Award. Education awards will be presented to local students and a Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to longtime community activist, LaVerne Ross. 9 a.m. Free. Visit https://www.mlkjrwestside.org for more information.

For help submitting an event, contact us at
310-458-7737 or submit to events@smdp.com

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

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Out on the town

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

Bacon
Beans
Beer
Broccoli
Carrot
Caviar
Chips
Choko
Cocoa
Crab
Crepe
Crowd
Dawn
Day spa
Dear
Eggs
Fish
Fruit
Garlic
Gift
Goose
Heat
Hors d'oeuvres
Host
Indulgence
Liver
Mango
Mornay
Nougat
Opera
Pasta
Pate
Peas
Pies
Play
Port
Rage
Rice
Risotto
Salt
Sauna
Sorbet
Squid
Steak
Sweets
Syrup
Taxi
Thai
Wafers
Wine

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
A night in the ICU ward

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VACCINE

FROM PAGE 1

According to Brock, the proximity to Los Angeles had another consequence for Santa Monica: making the city a magnet for unvaccinated Angelenos to dine indoors.

"The continuing worry among residents who have been vaccinated — and Santa Monica is one of the highest vaccinated cities in the state of California — is that people who have not been vaccinated are meandering over our borders to have dinner here, because we're not asking for proof of vaccination," Brock said. "Some of our residents are saying they will not eat in Santa Monica unless it's at one of the high-price restaurants that ask for proof."

The agenda item for the vaccine mandate discussion outlined the proposed scope of the ordinance: "...At a minimum, this mandate should consist of the following:

-A date certain by which all employees of certain indoor facilities be fully vaccinated and show proof of full vaccination to their employer.

-A date certain by which all persons 18 years and older are required to show proof that they are fully vaccinated to enter certain indoor facilities and certain indoor City facilities.

-Unvaccinated patrons without a negative COVID-19 test may go inside briefly to order food or use the bathroom while wearing a surgical or N-95 mask."

Whether "fully vaccinated" includes a booster shot is up for discussion, both Himmelrich and Brock said in separate conversations with the Daily Press on Monday, but neither believed that stipulation would be approved.

"I would love to see that [a booster requirement] but I know that I also have an obligation to be realistic and use common sense," Brock said.

Himmelrich said she would be in support of that requirement as well, but did not feel there was broad support for the move across the seven-member city council.

"I think that under the current circumstances it should include a booster [requirement] — but that would be my personal opinion. It takes seven votes to pass it," Himmelrich said.

Himmelrich and Brock also said they believed the move had support from the business community; the mayor had not received any complaints or concerns from stakeholders about the proposed mandate since the item appeared on the council agenda on Jan. 7, while Brock said he had received one email urging against the move.

Himmelrich said she encouraged members of the public with concerns to reach out or speak up during the Tuesday hearing.

"If they have reasons for being opposed to it, and actual data supporting those reasons, they should write to us or appear at the city council meeting and verbalize those reasons," Himmelrich said. "That's why we're doing it publicly, so that people can say if they object or say if they support. I encourage public input on all of these points, because we are trying to listen."

As of the latest data available from LA County, about 70,400 of Santa Monica's 84,350 residents ages 12 and up — 83.5 percent — were fully vaccinated (though another 7,000 residents received their first dose of a Moderna or Pfizer vaccine and did not yet return for their second). Local rates of booster doses, which began to be available in August with wide availability by November, were much lower: just 35,700 Santa Monica residents, or 42.3 percent of the 12-and-over population, had been boosted.

To watch live Council meetings, go to smgov.net/video or watch on the City's YouTube Channel.

emily@smdp.com

BOAT FIRE

FROM PAGE 4

The rules would also require boats to have at least two exits so if one is unavailable there is another way to escape. The exits must be clear and both cannot be directly above a berth.

The Conception bunkroom had an open stairwell toward the bow and a small escape hatch that was difficult to access and climb through above one of the bunks in the center of the boat. However, both led to the galley, which was in flames.

Family members of those who died have filed wrongful death lawsuits against the boat company, Truth Aquatics Inc., and the family that owned it. They have also sued the Coast Guard for lax enforcement that they say doomed the people below deck.

The families said the fire detection and suppression systems were out of compliance, and the two escapes from the bunkroom violated Coast Guard regulations because they led to the same place.

The boat had passed its two most recent Coast Guard safety inspections.

The Coast Guard has declined to comment on the lawsuit because of a policy not to discuss pending litigation.

The rules published late last month in the Federal Register begin taking effect March 28 and could be changed after a public comment period that ends in June.

Other new requirements include better training of crew, escape drills for passengers and guidance on how to handle flammable items such as rechargeable batteries.

While investigators said they couldn't determine what caused the fire because the boat burned and sank, they say the blaze started toward the back of the main deck salon — where divers had plugged in phones, flashlights and other items with combustible lithium ion batteries.

After the fire, the Coast Guard issued a bulletin recommending a limit on the unsupervised onboard use of lithium ion batteries and extensive use of power strips and extension cords.

Associated Press journalist Janet McConnaughey contributed from New Orleans.

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Housing

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RHF WILSHIRE HOUSE
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Phone: (310) 395-4545

To Request an application call (310)395-4545, e-mail becky.zambrano@rhf.org or may be obtained online at www.rhf.org.

The primary applicant must be at least 62 years of age or 18 and over with a disability. Applicants must meet annual income levels of less than $41,400.00 for one person or $47,300.00 for two persons.

Applications must be mailed to:
RHF-Retirement Housing Foundation
911 N. Studebaker Rd. Long Beach, CA 90815
and received between **January 17, 2022 and February 16, 2022** or they will **not** be considered.

No walk-in applications will be accepted.
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Section 504 Coordinator:
Perry Glenn, Senior Vice President of Operations,
Foundation Property Management, Inc.,
911 N. Studebaker Road, Long Beach, CA 90815
(562) 257-5100 • TDD (800) 545-1833 x359

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