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Committee corruption probe.

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Toll continues to rise.

4 **Celebrity fire aid**
Beyoncé, more help out.

6 **Local Beach Grades**
From Heal the Bay.

smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

Volume 24 Issue 39 TUESDAY 1/14/25 smdp.com

Students return to Santa Monica campuses, Malibu schools remain shut

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

After a traumatic week of school closures due to the Palisades Fire, students have begun to return to Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) campuses.

On Monday, SMMUSD campuses in Santa Monica opened for students and staff, with the exception of Roosevelt Elementary, which was still in an evacuation warning zone Sunday evening when district officials made the decision. The warning zone that included Roosevelt was lifted on Monday morning, and Roosevelt students returned to school on Tuesday.

Students at Lincoln Middle School and Samohi, along with families who made the personal decision to keep children home Monday, were given excused absences if needed.

Schools operated on an "inclement weather schedule" on Monday, which meant no outside play time. SMMUSD Community & Public Relations Officer Gail Pinsker told the Daily Press that the inclement schedule was out of an abundance of caution. Outdoor play areas underwent cleaning on Monday.

Meanwhile, Malibu schools will remain closed at least through Wednesday due to ongoing safety concerns and the need for campus assessment, cleaning and road re-openings.

Pinsker said that as of Monday



Courtesy Photo

SMMUSD: Roosevelt Elementary School remained the only Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) campus in Santa Monica closed on Monday.

SEE **SMMUSD** PAGE 11

Over 40 arrests made in Santa Monica as crime rears its ugly head in wildfire tragedy

SCOTT SNOWDEN
SMDP Staff Writer

As Los Angeles prepared for another dangerous wind event, law enforcement officials issued strong warnings this week that criminal behavior targeting wildfire victims would not be tolerated.

On Monday, Los Angeles County District Attorney Nathan Hochman was joined by local and federal law enforcement officials to announce charges against a group of people in a residential looting in the city of Pacific Palisades.

Moreover, the Santa Monica Police Department (SMDP) also announced on Monday that from January 7 to the 13, over 40 arrests were made in the zones in violation to the legal emergency orders. Most were also violating the city and county curfew orders but others were more serious.

The Santa Monica suspects were arrested for burglary (three individuals in one incident on 18th Street, four individuals in the 200 Block of Euclid and two individuals at 10th and Carlyle). Six were in possession of burglary tools, the rest

SEE **LOOTING** PAGE 6

Evacuation Order Lifted for Santa Monica

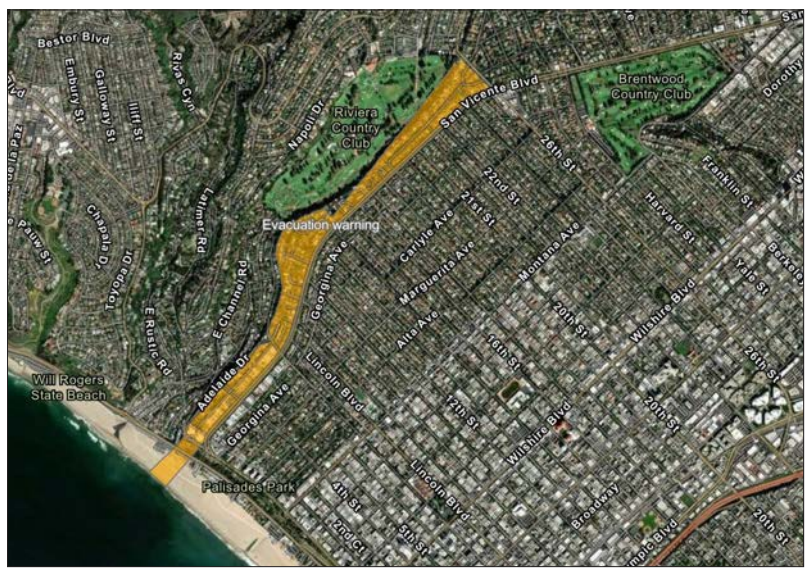
MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

Santa Monicans forced out of their homes by the Palisades Fire were able to return on Monday after the last evacuation order in the city was lifted.

Within minutes of the 8 a.m. announcement, traffic into the city backed up as residents flocked back to the Northern portion of the city that has been evacuated since the fire broke out last week. While residents can return to the zone, they are still under an evacuation warning.

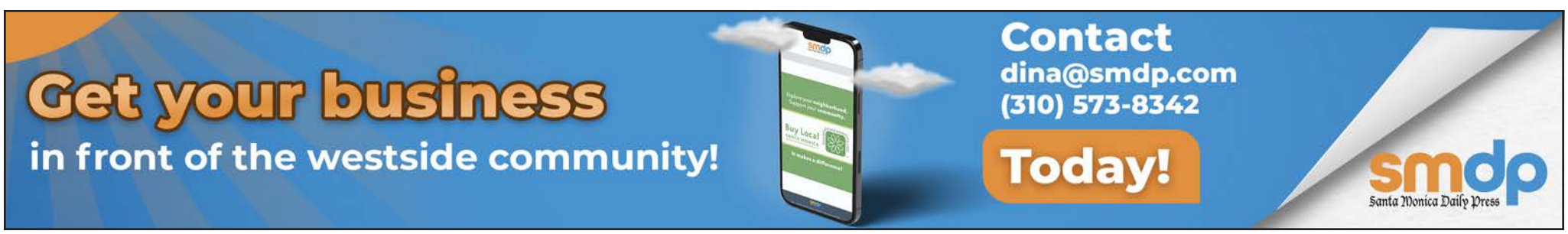
Evacuation orders require residents to leave and violations of the zone are punishable by law.

SEE **EVACUATION** PAGE 11



Courtesy Graphic

EVACUATION: An easing of evacuations due to the Palisades Fire has taken place in Santa Monica.



PUBLIC NOTICE

If your child attended Santa Monica Police Activities League (PAL) or went to Memorial Park or Virginia Park during the late 1980s to early 2000s, your child may have come in contact with and been sexually abused by Eric Uller, who masqueraded as a police officer.

- Over almost 30 years, he sexually abused hundreds of boys and girls.
- Victims were often too scared or ashamed to tell their parents.
- Many victims have moved away and don't know they have a right to make a claim.
- Share this notice. There may still be time to file a claim.



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As wildfires burn, a corruption probe left the Senate's insurance committee chair vacant



Photo by Fred Greaves for CalMatters

CORRUPTION: State Senators Susan Rubio, left, and Angelique Ashby, right, talk during the first Senate floor session of the year at the state Capitol in Sacramento on Jan. 6, 2025.

RYAN SABALOW

As fires rage through Southern California and exacerbate the state's insurance crisis, the California Senate has no one in charge of its Insurance Committee due to questions surrounding a federal corruption investigation.

Senate President Pro Tem Mike McGuire said he is waiting to hear from federal prosecutors about Sen. Susan Rubio, who's been questioned in a federal corruption probe, before making a decision about reappointing her to her previous position as chair of the Senate Insurance Committee.

"We have requested and are awaiting additional information from the U.S. Attorney's Office before finalizing any decisions," McGuire's office told CalMatters in an email.

Rubio, a Democrat from Baldwin Park, said she's "currently not involved" in the federal corruption investigation that has already ensnared a handful of other officials in San Bernardino County, Compton, Commerce and Baldwin Park.

Federal officials have not identified Rubio by name in the case. However, there is nobody else matching the description of "Person 20," who is accused in recently released federal court documents of asking for $240,000 in bribes from a cannabis company and accepting $30,000 in illegal campaign contributions. The allegations stem from when Rubio was a member of the Baldwin Park City Council.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles is overseeing the case. A spokesperson declined to comment about who Person 20 is or say when – or if – charges would be filed against them.

Experts in federal corruption cases suggest that McGuire is right to be concerned.

At CalMatters' request, three former federal prosecutors reviewed the court documents.

The prosecutors – one of them a former U.S. Attorney – said there's no way the U.S. Department of Justice would make public that much identifying information about a

SEE **RUBIO** PAGE 7

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Los Angeles wildfire deaths rise to 24 as more fierce winds are forecast

A growing force of firefighters moved into the Los Angeles area Monday as more powerful winds were expected to trigger new wildfires that could set back the recent progress made in containing blazes that have destroyed thousands of homes and killed at least 24 people.

Crews and equipment arrived from across the U.S., and from Canada and Mexico — including water trucks and planes that drop firefighting chemicals — as the National Weather Service warned that the coming days could become "particularly dangerous."

It predicted severe fire conditions will last through Wednesday, with wind gusts in the mountains reaching 65 mph (105 kph). The most dangerous day will be Tuesday, warned fire behavior analyst Dennis Burns at a community meeting Sunday night.

The relative calm Sunday allowed some people to return to previously evacuated areas. But even as containment increased in the worst of the fires, more bad news emerged from the ashes: The death toll surged late Sunday with an update from the Los Angeles County medical examiner. At least 16 people were missing, a number authorities said was also likely to rise.

Fierce Santa Ana winds have been largely blamed for turning the wildfires sparked last week into infernos that leveled entire neighborhoods around the nation's second-largest city where there has been no significant rainfall in more than eight months.

In less than a week, four fires around the nation's second biggest city have ignited more than 62 square miles (160 square kilometers), roughly three times the size of Manhattan.

Most of that destruction has been from the Eaton Fire near Pasadena and the Palisades Fire, in a wealthy enclave along the Pacific Coast. Firefighters have made progress on both fronts in recent days, with the Eaton Fire roughly one-third contained.

The returning high winds could trigger explosive growth of the existing fires and new outbreaks in areas untouched so far, creating new challenges for firefighting crews already stretched thin.

Los Angeles County Fire Chief Anthony C. Marrone said 70 additional water trucks arrived to help firefighters fend off flames spread by renewed gusts. "We are prepared for the upcoming wind event," Marrone said.

Fire retardant dropped by aircraft will act as a barrier along hillsides, officials said.

A group of artists, musicians, and friends in Topanga Canyon banded together to stop fires breaking out in new areas by turning off gas lines and propane tanks.

"We helped hopefully save a couple houses and we put out a couple spot fires, Derek Mabra said as he drove along the coast looking at the destruction. "It's complete and total devastation."

RESIDENTS CHECK ON THEIR HOMES

Some residents have been able to return to their homes to survey the damage.

Jim Orlandini, who lost his hardware store in Altadena, a hard-hit neighborhood next to Pasadena, said his home of 40 years survived.

"Tuesday night we didn't sleep at all because we figured the house was gone," he said Sunday as he recalled the moment the fires spread to his neighborhood.

"The whole time I was thinking, I don't know what I'm going to find when I get back here and after 40 years, you know, you got a lot of stuff you forget about that would disappear if the house burned down. So we're thankful that it didn't."

Sixteen of the 24 deaths were attributed to the Eaton Fire and eight to the Palisades Fire, according to the Los Angeles County coroner's office.

> "There are still active fires that are burning within the Palisades area, making it extremely, extremely dangerous for the public"
>
> - Kristin Crowley, LA city Fire Chief

Twelve people were listed as missing within the Eaton Fire zone and four were missing from the Palisades Fire, Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said.

In the meantime, LA city Fire Chief Kristin Crowley urged people to stay away from scorched neighborhoods.

"There are still active fires that are burning within the Palisades area, making it extremely, extremely dangerous for the public," Crowley said Sunday. "There's no power, there's no water, there's broken gas lines, and we have unstable structures."

Officials warned the ash can contain lead, arsenic, asbestos and other harmful materials.

About 50,000 people in Los Angeles County remained under evacuation orders, with more than 700 residents taking refuge in nine shelters, Luna said. Officials said most of the orders in the Palisades area were unlikely to be lifted before the red flag warnings expire Wednesday evening.

"Please rest assured that first thing Thursday we will begin talking about repopulation," Marrone said.

FIREFIGHTERS CONTINUE TO BATTLE FLAMES

Crews from California and nine other states are part of the ongoing response that includes

SEE **WILDFIRE** PAGE 5



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **56.7**

TUESDAY — ***POOR*** — **SURF:** Shin to knee 0-1FT

Small scale NW swell mix. Potential for another round of Santa Ana winds.

WEDNESDAY — ***POOR*** — **SURF:** Shin to knee 0-1FT

NW swell mix nudges up slightly.

Weather

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 68. North northeast wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 46. North northeast wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 65. North northeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming west in the afternoon.
Wednesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 46.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2025/01/14	Tue	02:41 AM	2.04	L
2025/01/14	Tue	08:51 AM	6.46	H
2025/01/14	Tue	4:08 PM	-1.30	L
2025/01/14	Tue	10:39 PM	3.94	H
2025/01/15	Wed	03:24 AM	1.98	L
2025/01/15	Wed	09:30 AM	6.14	H
2025/01/15	Wed	4:42 PM	-0.98	L
2025/01/15	Wed	11:14 PM	3.98	H
2025/01/16	Thu	04:07 AM	1.98	L
2025/01/16	Thu	10:08 AM	5.66	H
2025/01/16	Thu	5:14 PM	-0.56	L
2025/01/16	Thu	11:48 PM	4.03	H
2025/01/17	Fri	04:52 AM	2.02	L
2025/01/17	Fri	10:45 AM	5.07	H
2025/01/17	Fri	5:42 PM	-0.06	L
2025/01/18	Sat	12:23 AM	4.07	H
2025/01/18	Sat	05:41 AM	2.08	L
2025/01/18	Sat	11:23 AM	4.38	H

Daily Lottery

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POWERBALL — Draw Date: 1/11 — 3 6 32 37 65 — Power#: 4 — Jackpot: 285 M

MEGA MILLIONS — Draw Date: 1/10 — 9 23 39 65 66 — Mega#: 22 — Jackpot: 95 M

SuperLotto Plus — Draw Date: 1/11 — 4 26 31 40 41 — Mega#: 11 — Jackpot: 16 M

Fantasy 5 — Draw Date: 1/12 — 3 13 19 21 36

Daily 3 — Draw Date: 1/12 — EVENING: 0 2 0 — Draw Date: 1/12 — MIDDAY: 7 2 6

Daily Derby — Draw Date: 1/12 — 1st: 04 - Big Ben — 2nd: 03 - Hot Shot — 3rd: 02 - Lucky Star — Race Time: 1:49.47

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Santa Monica Daily Press

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: **Proposed Extension of Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2796 (CCS) Exempting City Projects During a Declared Local or State Emergency from Temporary Use Permit Requirements.**

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to extend Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2796 (CCS) exempting City-authorized uses during a declared local or state emergency from temporary use permit requirements. The Council adopted Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2796 (CCS) on December 17, 2024 and will expire unless extended by Council.

DATE/TIME: **TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025 AT 7:00 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: Extension of Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Exempting City-authorized Uses from Temporary Use Permits

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 pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si desea más información, favor de llamar a Ana Fernandez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-2201 ext. 2431 o envíe un correo electrónico a ana.fernandez@santamonica.gov

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Beyoncé donates $2.5 million to fire relief and Meghan delays show launch due to the disaster

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Weaker winds and intense firefighting efforts over the weekend boosted containment of fires burning in and around Los Angeles, but the effects of the blazes on the entertainment world continue.

The Oscar nominations have been delayed and the film academy announced Monday that it would cancel a gathering of nominees due to the fire. It's the latest shift to Hollywood's awards season and other projects are also being delayed. Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, announced Sunday she would not launch a Netflix lifestyles program as planned this week and would wait until March.

Celebrities and entertainment organizations are pledging millions to help those who have been displaced or lost their homes, with Beyoncé directly millions to help families in the Eaton fire area.

While firefighters over the weekend were able to push the flames away from several populated areas, strong winds are expected to resume this week and last through Wednesday.

Thousands of homes have been destroyed, and 24 people have died as a result of the fires. More are reported missing and officials expect that number to increase.

Here's more on how the fires are affecting celebrities and the entertainment world.

BEYONCÉ DONATES $2.5 MILLION TO LOS ANGELES-AREA WILDFIRE RELIEF

Beyoncé has contributed $2.5 million to a newly launched LA Fire Relief Fund created by her charitable foundation, BeyGOOD.

The announcement arrived via the BeyGOOD foundation Instagram account on Sunday. "The fund is earmarked to aid families in the Altadena/Pasadena area who lost their homes, and to churches and community centers to address the immediate needs of those affected by the wildfires," the caption read.

Founded in 2013, the BeyGOOD foundation concentrates on economic equity, by "supporting marginalized and under-resourced programs," according to its mission statement.

Last week, Beyoncé's mother Tina Knowles shared that her Malibu bungalow was destroyed in the Los Angeles-area fires. "It was my favorite place, my sanctuary, my sacred happy place. now it is gone," she wrote on Instagram. "God Bless all the brave men and women in our fire department who risked their lives in dangerous conditions."

The Screen Actors Guild announced over the weekend it would commit $1 million to help members affected by the fires. While a lot of attention has been paid to stars who have lost homes, numerous less-famous industry workers have also lost homes or been displaced by the fires.

MEGHAN DELAYS LAUNCH OF NETFLIX SERIES

The Duchess of Sussex has pushed back the release of her new Netflix series due to the wildfires that have ravaged the LA-area.

"With Love, Meghan" was set to debut Wednesday, but the streaming service said Sunday that it supports her request to push the premiere to focus on helping those affected by the fires.

The Duchess was born and raised in Los Angeles and now lives in Montecito, California, with Harry, the Duke of Sussex and their two children.

On Saturday, the royal couple visited Pasadena to hand out food and water to fire victims and thank first responders.

"With Love, Meghan" is a lifestyle program featuring the Duchess chatting with celebrity pals and demonstrating tasks like floral arrangements and baking. "I've always loved taking something pretty ordinary and elevating it," Meghan says in the trailer. The show will now drop March 4.

COMPOSER ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S ORIGINAL WORK LOST IN FIRES

The publisher of Arnold Schoenberg's works says original manuscripts and scores from the composer were lost in the Los Angeles wild fires.

Belmont Music Publishers, located in the Pacific Palisades neighborhood, made the announcement Sunday.

"We have lost our full inventory of sales and rental materials," the company said in a statement. "We hope that in the near future we will be able to 'rise from the ashes' in a completely digital form. ... There are some scores and performing materials for which we have digital scans."

Born in Austria, Schoenberg moved to the U.S. when the Nazis took power and settled in Los Angeles, where he died in 1951.

Schoenberg gained attention for a 12-tone technique of composition and along with his students, including Alban Berg and Anton Webern, became known as the Second Viennese School. Among his most-known works are "Ewartung," " Gurre-Lieder," " Verklärte Nacht " and "Pierrot lunaire."

BROADWAY SENDING ITS LOVE

The nonprofit fundraising group Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS has awarded $500,000 in emergency grants to help Los Angeles-area residents and first responders with meals, shelter, medical care, clothing and emergency financial assistance.

Broadway Cares has sent $250,000 to the Entertainment Community Fund, $100,000 to the California Fire Foundation Wildfire & Disaster Relief Fund, $100,000 to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank and $50,000 to longtime Broadway Cares grantee Project Angel Food.

"These wildfires have left deep scars, but they've also ignited a powerful wave of support from Broadway to the West Coast," said Robert E. Wankel, Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS Board of Trustees president and chairman and CEO of The Shubert Organization.

Entertainment Writers Maria Sherman and Mark Kennedy and Writers Alicia Rancilio and Ron Blum contributed to this report.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Countywide

As Coordinated Wildfire Response Efforts Continue, FEMA Encourages Californians to Apply for Aid

If your primary home was affected by the fires, FEMA may be able to help you cover certain costs – like paying for essential items, finding a place to stay, replacing personal property or making basic repairs to your home. However, FEMA assistance is designed to help you if you do not have insurance or if your insurance policies don't cover basic needs. If you have insurance, you should file a claim as soon as possible and be ready to provide your coverage information when applying to FEMA.

There are several ways to apply for FEMA assistance:

Online at DisasterAssistance.gov and in Spanish language at DisasterAssistance.gov/es.

Calling the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-3362 for assistance in multiple languages.

On the FEMA App for mobile devices.

FEMA and the federal government remain steadfast as disaster response continues

In addition to helping individuals and families recover, FEMA is supporting the state and local governments by funding 100 percent of the cost of debris removal and lifesaving and life sustaining activities – including fire suppression efforts — for 180 days.

The entire federal government is committed to supporting response activities in California and helping the community recover. FEMA is the lead federal coordinating agency for the state-led response and relies on the expertise of the federal interagency for this historic response and recovery mission.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is providing engineering and public works expertise on the ground to assist with the planning and coordination among its disaster response partners.

More than 880 National Guard members from California, Nevada and Wyoming are activated and engaged in multiple air and ground firefighting efforts.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced that small businesses, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters can apply for federal disaster loans to offset losses from physical damage caused by the wildfires. People should not wait on the decision for a FEMA grant to apply for an SBA loan. To apply online and learn more, sba.gov/disaster.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) declared a public health emergency for California, providing health care providers and suppliers greater flexibility to meet emergency health needs of Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. The HHS Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response is supporting regional and state operation centers and monitoring state and local public health and medical needs.

The U.S. Department of Defense has 500 active-duty troops stationed in California ready to support state and federal requests for route clearance, commodity distribution, search and rescue, airlift and other activities.

The California National Guard is supporting law enforcement efforts in the region and is adding two Modular Air Firefighting System units while two more are being readied by the Nevada National Guard.

Free mental health support and other forms of care are available for wildfire survivors and their loved ones

Anyone feeling overwhelmed or in distress because of the fires can call or text the Disaster Distress Helpline 24/7 at 1-800-985-5990 to receive free crisis counseling.

State and nonprofit partners like the American Red Cross and others are providing a safe place to stay, meals and emotional comfort to people. To find a shelter, text SHELTER and your ZIP code to 43362, visit redcross.org/shelter or call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767). You can also call this number if you need assistance locating a missing loved one because of the fires.

Anyone can help, here's how:

The best way to help the affected communities is by donating cash directly to recognized disaster relief organizations. Organizations on the ground know what items and quantities are needed, often buy in bulk with discounts and if possible, purchase through businesses local to the disaster, supporting economic recovery. People can also connect with trusted organizations operating in the affected area to know where volunteers are needed.

SUBMITTED BY FEMA

WILDFIRE

FROM PAGE 3

nearly 1,400 fire engines, 84 aircraft and more than 14,000 personnel, including newly arrived firefighters from Mexico.

Firefighters over the weekend managed to fight back flames in Mandeville Canyon, home to Arnold Schwarzenegger and other celebrities near Pacific Palisades not far from the coast, where swooping helicopters dumped water as the blaze charged downhill.

ARRESTS FOR LOOTING

Looting continued to be a concern, with authorities reporting more arrests as the devastation grew. Those arrested included two people who posed as firefighters going into houses, Los Angeles Police Department Capt. Michael Lorenz said.

With California National Guard troops on hand to guard properties, Gov. Gavin Newsom posted on X: "California will NOT allow for looting."

HISTORIC COST

The fires that began Tuesday just north of downtown LA had burned more than 12,000 structures. No cause for the largest fires was determined.

AccuWeather's early estimates suggest the fires could be the nation's costliest ever, topping $250 billion including what's to come in the next days.

REBUILDING WILL BE A CHALLENGE

Newsom issued an executive order Sunday aimed at fast-tracking rebuilding by suspending some environmental regulations and ensuring that property tax assessments were not increased.

"We've got to let people know that we have their back," he said. "We want you to come back, rebuild, and rebuild with higher quality building standards, more modern standards."

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said Sunday that she had spoken with President-elect Donald Trump's incoming administration and expected that he would visit the city.

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press. Ramer reported from Concord, New Hampshire. Associated Press journalists Julie Walker in New York, Sophia Tareen in Chicago, Ben Finley in Norfolk, Virginia, and Mead Gruver in Cheyenne, Wyoming, contributed.

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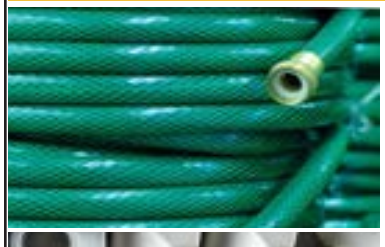


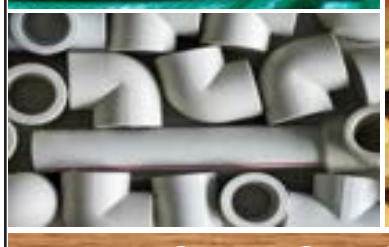
Builder's Supply

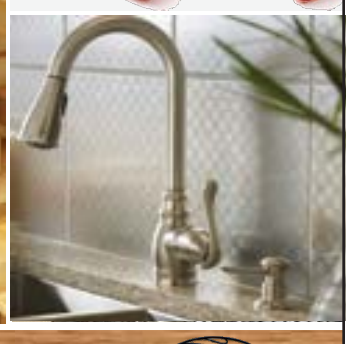




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LOOTING

FROM PAGE 1

were arrested for other violations, including curfew, drug possession, driving violations, outstanding warrants, parole and probation violations. Two of the individuals were in possession of concealed handguns.

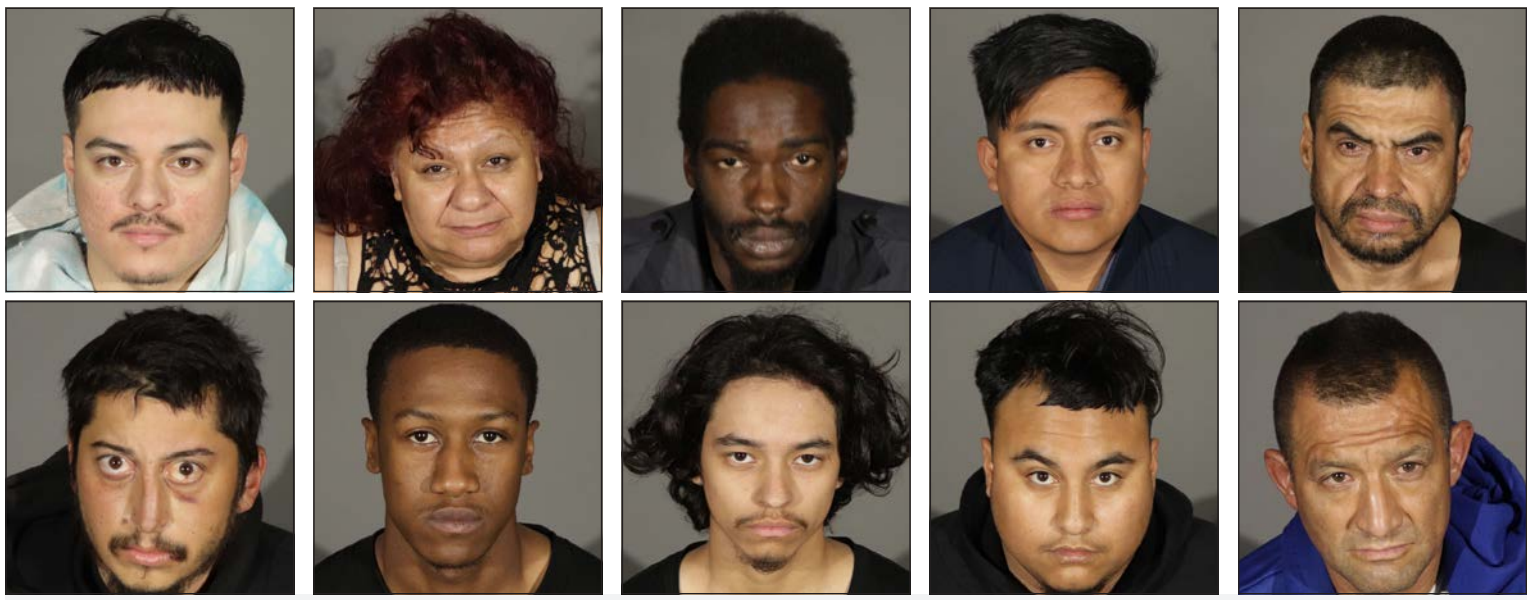
None of the suspects arrested are from Santa Monica.

Santa Monica Police Chief Ramon Batista said in a statement, "I am grateful for the unwavering dedication and professionalism of all the officers and professional staff in the SMPD. Over the past seven days, while the fires in Palisades tested the resilience of many, each of them stood strong, ensuring that the city of Santa Monica remained safe and secure.

"I am also grateful for the collaboration with our mutual aid partners who supported us on the front lines and the National Guard for helping us secure the evacuation zones and maintain entry and exit points to the closed areas," Batista said.

"With over 200,000 Angelinos cooperating with evacuation orders in order to make sure that they get out of harm's way and allow firefighters, first responders and law enforcement to do their business, there have been certain people that we have given a warning to because we anticipated that this was what was going to happen. And these are the criminals. These are the people who are seeking to exploit this tragedy for their own benefit. These are people who have engaged in looting, arson," Hochman said.

Hochman also announced felony charges against several suspects arrested for looting countywide. Those individuals are facing burglary and grand theft charges, in some cases carrying decades in prison.



SMPD photos

LOOTING: The Santa Monica Police Department made a series of arrests over the past few days inside the city's evacuation zone.

One suspect was arrested in the Palisades Fire zone for attempting to impersonate a firefighter and subsequently burglarize a home. When asked by the Daily Press at the press conference held at the Hall of Justice in downtown Los Angeles, how the suspect was able to obtain a firefighters' jacket and helmet, Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said, "We're not going to disclose those parts of the investigation this time, as the prosecution moves forward at whatever level it moves forward to, we will be releasing additional information, especially after we confirm which charges are going to be filed."

However, FBI Assistant Director Akil Davis, added, "This has been a very, very chaotic scene for everybody right now, and we have a lot of areas right now where residents have not been able to go back … think, for example, with regards to the individuals [that were] arrested with fire uniforms, we're pleading with the public, if they have any information that they may have seen these individuals in other parts of the Palisades, we need that information because … this investigation is not closed. It's still going."

He stressed the need for any video, from cellphone to Ring cameras, of any suspicious activity be given to authorities to assist in their ongoing efforts.

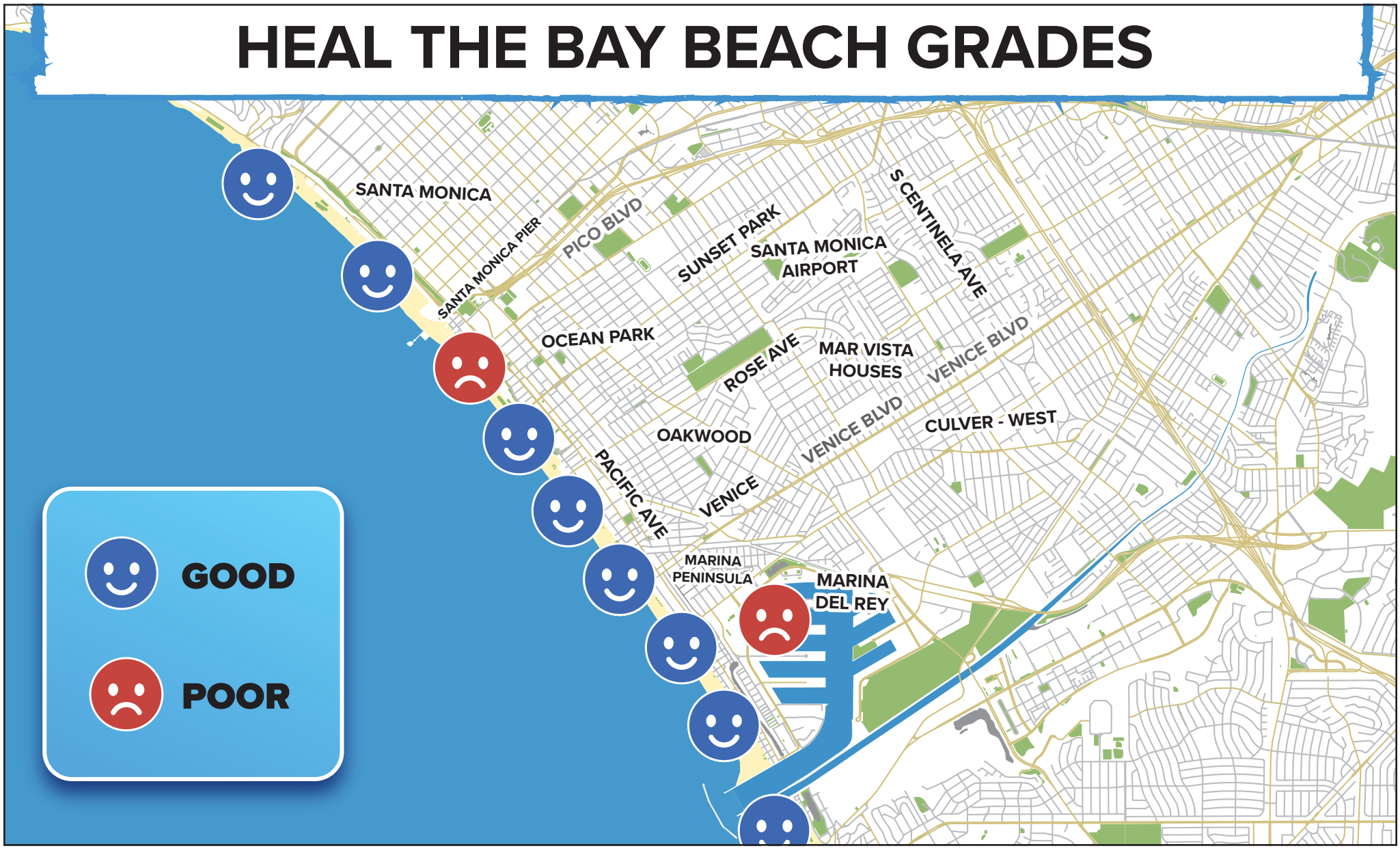
Following the much publicized incident where a civilian drone struck one of the two CL-415 "Super Scooper" firefighting planes on January 9, a total of three suspects have been arrested for two illegal drone incursions into restricted airspace.

"We are coming across probably 20 incursions a day now," Luna said, adding, "Our numbers vary a little different than what the fire department puts out [but it's] probably between 20 and 30. There are that many drones in the air at any given time, and that's why we continue to stress to the public, stop flying your drones over these fires. Let us do our job. Let us save lives."

He repeated a phrase that has been used a number of times now in these daily press conferences, "If you're in the air, we can't be."

Anyone with any information about any of these incidents or any other crime is asked to reach out to the Santa Monica Police Department.

scott.snowden@smdp.com



RUBIO

FROM PAGE 2

suspect in a corruption investigation if they didn't think they could convince a jury of his or her guilt.

"If federal prosecutors are putting that level of detail — especially in a public corruption matter — into a public-facing document, they are fairly confident that information is 120% correct," said Carrie H. Cohen, a former assistant U.S. Attorney in New York and former chief of the public integrity bureau at the New York State Attorney General's Office.

Mark D. Chutkow, the former chief of the U.S. Attorney's public corruption unit and criminal division in Detroit, said "it would appear that there is more due to drop in this case."

Chutkow said when it comes to public corruption cases, federal prosecutors typically have their sights on the "highest-ranking public officials and not necessarily on … middle persons and the bribers themselves."

"This Person No. 20 would be a higher-ranking (official) and the more important target of the federal investigation," he said. "So one would think that they would want to finish the job."

Last week, Rubio declined to be interviewed by a CalMatters reporter as she departed the Senate after the first floor session of the new year. Instead, her office responded with an emailed statement.

"It's unfortunate that Senator Rubio continues to receive questions based on a case that she is currently not involved with," her spokesperson, Matthew Z'berg, said in an email. "Senator Rubio's focus is on serving the constituents of the 22nd Senate District and addressing important issues affecting California families."



Photo Courtesy of CalMatters

PROBE: Sen. Susan Rubio has been questioned in a federal corruption probe.

SPOKESPERSON SAYS RUBIO DIDN'T WANT INSURANCE CHAIR

Rubio did respond to Senate Pro Tem McGuire's decision not to give her a committee leadership post when he recently announced his assignments for the two-year session that kicked off last Monday.

Last session, Rubio chaired the Senate Insurance Committee. The post was listed as a "vacancy" on McGuire's list.

Z'berg said that Rubio told McGuire she wasn't interested in being the insurance committee chair any more. She "encouraged (McGuire) to appoint a new chair to be announced with all other assignments.

"She also conveyed to him that by leaving the position open, he would be feeding into false narratives and speculation," Z'berg said.

Rubio also took a thinly-veiled shot at McGuire, suggesting that he's playing politics by leaving the seat vacant due to speculation McGuire is eying a run for California Insurance Commissioner when he terms out in 2026.

"Insurance issues affecting consumers across the state are of particular interest to him," the statement read. "It is a critical issue that he has been very vocal about in the past, and will likely continue to do so."

In a statement emailed Friday, McGuire said "we've been leading on consumer-focused insurance reform for years — it's personal for me because of the wildfires that have devastated the communities I represent. And this year will be no different.

"The Southern California fires make it all the more clear how critical this issue is. Any premise that any legislation would be delayed is unequivocally BS," he said. "A committee has been formed and we will name an insurance chair in the very near future."

The Insurance Committee is not scheduled to meet until March. Bills need to be in print for at least 30 days before legislators can act on them, so any new insurance-related legislation introduced this week wouldn't be heard until at least February.

IS SEN. RUBIO "PERSON 20"?

The recently released federal documents are a plea agreement signed by former Baldwin Park City Attorney Robert Tafoya. Federal officials released the agreement late last year. In the agreement, Tafoya says he helped facilitate bribes to local officials from companies seeking marijuana permits.

The Los Angeles Times was the first news outlet to report that Rubio matched the description of "Person 20." The plea agreement describes Person 20 as a public official, in a position to be able to fire the city attorney, who won a primary for state office in 2018. No other local officials match the description.

The plea agreement says Person 20 sought $240,000 from a marijuana company seeking a city permit, but the company refused to pay that much so the deal fell through. Person 20 also sought and received $30,000 from Tafoya in a scheme to drum up support for Person 20's 2018 state campaign, the documents say. Tafoya said he agreed to pay Person 20, in exchange for assurance he'd keep his city job and get state work from Person 20 after the election, according to his plea agreement.

Tafoya admitted to federal tax evasion and bribery charges in 2023, but prosecutors kept the plea agreement secret until last month since Tafoya had agreed to participate in the ongoing investigation.

"I have no idea who Person 20 is, but I am completely confident that the U.S. Attorney's Office would not include these declaratory statements about Person 20's actions unless they were very confident they could prove the truth of those statements in a court of law," said McGregor Scott, a twice-appointed former U.S. Attorney based in Sacramento.

Rubio has not directly answered whether she's "Person 20." She told the LA Times in a statement that she "volunteered hours of her time" aiding the authorities in their investigation and that she "has no reason to believe that she would be included in any criminal allegations."

SENATE REVIEWING ETHICS COMPLAINT

Bill Essayli, a Republican Assembly member from Corona, requested the Assembly and Senate ethics committees to take up investigations after the LA Times report last month.

Essayli spent about four years as a federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office that unsealed Tafoya's plea agreement.

Essayli said he has no first-hand knowledge about this case since he left that job in 2018, but he said the allegations outlined in the plea agreement are troubling enough for the Legislature to act on its own without waiting for prosecutors. His ethics complaint also doesn't identify Rubio by name.

"When the Biden DOJ actually makes specific allegations like that against a sitting legislator, I don't think we can wait as a public body for that investigation to play out – criminal investigations can take years to develop," Essayli told CalMatters. "Meanwhile, this individual is still sitting in office. They still wield power in the name of the public, and they could be engaged in the same activity."

Erin V. Peth, the chief counsel for the Senate Ethics Committee, told CalMatters Essayli's complaint is under review, but provided no other details.

No woman California legislator has ever been indicted on public corruption charges while in office. Several male Assemblymembers and senators have been charged with such crimes over the years.

In 2010, state charges were filed against Los Angeles County Democratic Sen. Roderick Wright for voter fraud, perjury and other crimes stemming from him lying about actually living in his district. Then-Gov. Jerry Brown later pardoned Wright.

In 2016, a federal judge sentenced San Francisco's Democratic Sen. Leland Yee to five years in prison for doing political favors in exchange for campaign cash.

Also in 2016, a federal judge sentenced Sen. Ron Calderon of Montebello to 42 months in federal prison for receiving over $150,000 in bribes. His brother, Assemblymember Tom Calderon, was sentenced to a year in prison for laundering his brother's bribe money.

Following the Yee and Calderon indictments, voters in 2016 approved Proposition 50, which gives legislators the authority to suspend a disgraced colleague without pay. Doing so requires a two-thirds vote of the lawmaker's chamber.

This article was originally published by CalMatters.

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Santa Monica Daily Press
Classifieds

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Countywide

Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity Launches Emergency Resources Webpage for Workers and Businesses Impacted by the Wildfires

The Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) has launched an emergency resources webpage (https://opportunity.lacounty.gov/how-we-help/emergency-resources) for workers and businesses to aid those impacted by the devastating wildfires. Designed as a one-stop hub, the page provides resources, assistance, and up-to-date information to support businesses and workers as they navigate recovery and rebuilding efforts.

"We know that our economy and our community are greatly impacted by the wildfires and will be for some time. As the lead agency for economic recovery in Los Angeles County, DEO is focused on connecting our businesses and workers to the resources they need to respond to the ongoing emergency and start to rebuild and recover," said Kelly LoBianco, DEO Director.

The Emergency Resources for Workers and Businesses webpage will include:

Up-to-Date Information on recovery efforts, emergency programs, and available support.

Support for Businesses, including assistance for those experiencing structural losses, closures, or revenue disruptions.

Support for Workers, such as unemployment benefits, job placement services, and loss of wage assistance.

Details on Upcoming Webinars and Events to guide businesses and workers through recovery and preparedness efforts.

A Submission Form allows residents and organizations to share events or resources.

In addition to online resources, DEO's 18 America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs) and the East LA Entrepreneur Center are open to provide in-person support. The centers offer labor market information, job readiness workshops and 1:1 support, no-cost skills training, supportive services like Unemployment Insurance and healthcare coverage, and connection to hiring employers. There are 40 job centers throughout the County operating Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, offering direct services such as job placement assistance.

The East LA Entrepreneur Center, located at 4716 E Cesar Chavez Avenue, Building B, Los Angeles, CA, 90022, operates Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The center offers a concierge service for small businesses, referrals to capital and legal assistance, and certification for County and other public sector contracting.

Due to the wildfire emergency, the Veterans AJCC at Bob Hope Patriotic Hall has been repurposed as an emergency evacuation shelter. As of Sunday, January 12, 2025, all in-person services are temporarily suspended with offsite or virtual services available.

As part of ongoing recovery efforts, LA County and DEO are mobilizing resources, partners, and programs to ensure rapid response and recovery for local businesses, workers, and communities impacted by the wildfires. Additionally, DEO is working closely with State and local agencies to ensure affected businesses and workers can access all available resources.

SUBMITTED BY LARA ARSINIAN

Countywide

Fannie Mae Reminds Homeowners, Renters, and Mortgage Servicers of Disaster Relief Options for Those Affected by the Southern California Wildfires

Fannie Mae (FNMA/OTCQB) is reminding homeowners and renters impacted by natural disasters, including those affected by the ongoing wildfires in Southern California, of available mortgage assistance and disaster relief options. Mortgage servicers also are reminded of options to assist homeowners under Fannie Mae's guidelines during these circumstances.

"We are monitoring the Southern California wildfires, and we urge those in the path of the fires to focus on their safety," said Cyndi Danko, Senior Vice President and Chief Credit Officer, Single-Family, Fannie Mae. "We are committed to supporting homeowners, renters, and communities in need during this challenging time. If homeowners have been impacted by the fires, we encourage them to call their mortgage servicer for assistance as soon as possible. Homeowners and renters can learn more about disaster relief resources, including personalized support, by contacting Fannie Mae's free disaster recovery counseling services."

Homeowners and renters should call 855-HERE2HELP (855-437-3243) to access Fannie Mae's disaster recovery counseling* or visit the Fannie Mae website (https://yourhome.fanniemae.com/get-relief/disaster/resources) for more information.

Under Fannie Mae's guidelines for single-family mortgages impacted by a disaster:

Homeowners may request mortgage assistance by contacting their mortgage servicer (the company listed on their mortgage statement) following a disaster.

Homeowners affected by a disaster are often eligible to reduce or suspend their mortgage payments for up to 12 months by entering a forbearance plan with their mortgage servicer. During this temporary reduction or pause in payments, homeowners will not incur late fees and foreclosure and other legal proceedings are suspended.

In instances where contact with the homeowner has not been established, mortgage servicers are authorized to offer a forbearance plan for up to 90 days if the servicer believes the home was affected by a disaster.

Following a forbearance plan, there are a number of options available to potentially help homeowners resolve the delinquency without paying a lump sum, including Disaster Payment Deferral and Fannie Mae Flex Modification.

Homeowners and renters looking for disaster recovery resources may visit the Fannie Mae website to learn more about addressing immediate needs. Fannie Mae also offers help navigating the broader financial effects of a disaster to homeowners and renters through disaster recovery counseling at 855-HERE2HELP (855-437-3243).* Assistance is provided free of charge by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-approved housing counselors who are trained disaster-recovery experts that provide:

A needs assessment and personalized recovery plan.

Help requesting financial relief from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, insurance, and other sources.

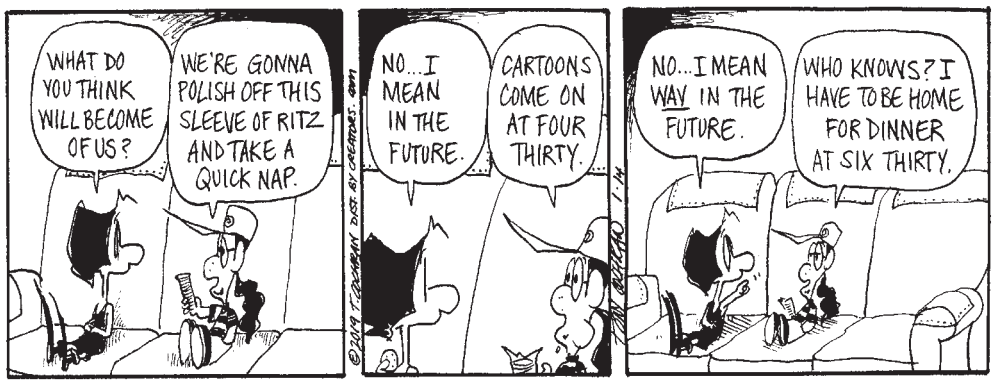
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SUBMITTED BY LOUIE WEIN

Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



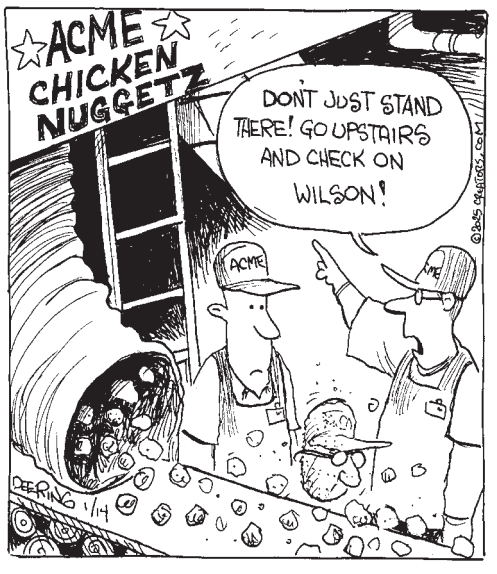
Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 23 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 6455

Snap happy

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

Beach	Eager	Mates	Remember
Bellows	Export	Megabyte	Shots
Bike	Film	Mirth	Silly
Blur	Flash	Mode	Sunny
Bokeh	Highlights	Noise	TIFF
Brother	Home	Optical	Tone
Camera	Instant	Party	Trophy
Card	Joyful	Pets	Unit
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Close	Kids	Post	Zoom
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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 14)

You walk around with pockets full of potential, ready to take the right spontaneous risk. You'll know it when you see it and win big. More highlights: Your education continues, formally, informally and playfully. You'll often be in lively and heart-fortifying company, but your alone time is just as magical as you apply yourself to deepening a fond interest. Libra and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 13, 20, 28 and 1.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Something about this interaction feels slightly off. Take a moment to make a mental note and reflect on it during your private contemplations. Your intuition is picking up on something, even if the time hasn't yet come to act on it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). To get a comprehensive understanding of your scene, you'll have to step outside of it in one way or another. Time with a stranger could do the trick. It allows you to view things the way they do - with no prior assumptions about what's going on.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). While many of your relationships bring sweetness to life, some bring a good amount of stress. The sweet ones keep you going and the stressful ones keep you strong, as long as you take them in manageable doses.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). None would guess the amount of work you put into a seemingly low-key interaction. All the "pre-production" you do helps. And though you don't seek or need reward, you will be rewarded anyway, with the high regard of anyone lucky enough to witness you in action.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). To get what you need, you'll first have to get someone's attention, which involves offering up what's more interesting or urgent than their original plan. You've a keen sense for entertaining and you'll use it to charm and disarm.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Loving qualities like warmth and empathy can sometimes be mistaken as signs of weakness. But your kindness comes with boundaries. Help people set reasonable expectations of you by making your preferences and limits known.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The happy ending is not a one-size-fits-all scenario. There is no generic version of success. Keep working toward the specific result you want - it's worth it, and it's yours to define.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Perspective shifts based on distance, speed and context. It's encouraging to step back and consider how their viewpoint might be distorted - either by being too close to a situation or too far removed from it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're no stranger to supercharged feelings, but you'll find ways to use your emotions instead of letting them boss you around. Big feelings are best invested in big endeavors.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll receive a stellar endorsement followed by an invitation. This recognition affirms your unique talents and the value you bring to the table. The opportunity that follows will be as exciting as it is well deserved.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). If you could only focus on one thing today, you'd do well to focus on making sure that people know how much you appreciate them. Positive interactions will make lasting impressions.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're sensitive to the feelings zinging around the rooms you're in, and if the vibes are off, you'd do well to exit. You'll miss the drama, and that's the luckiest thing you can do for yourself today.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

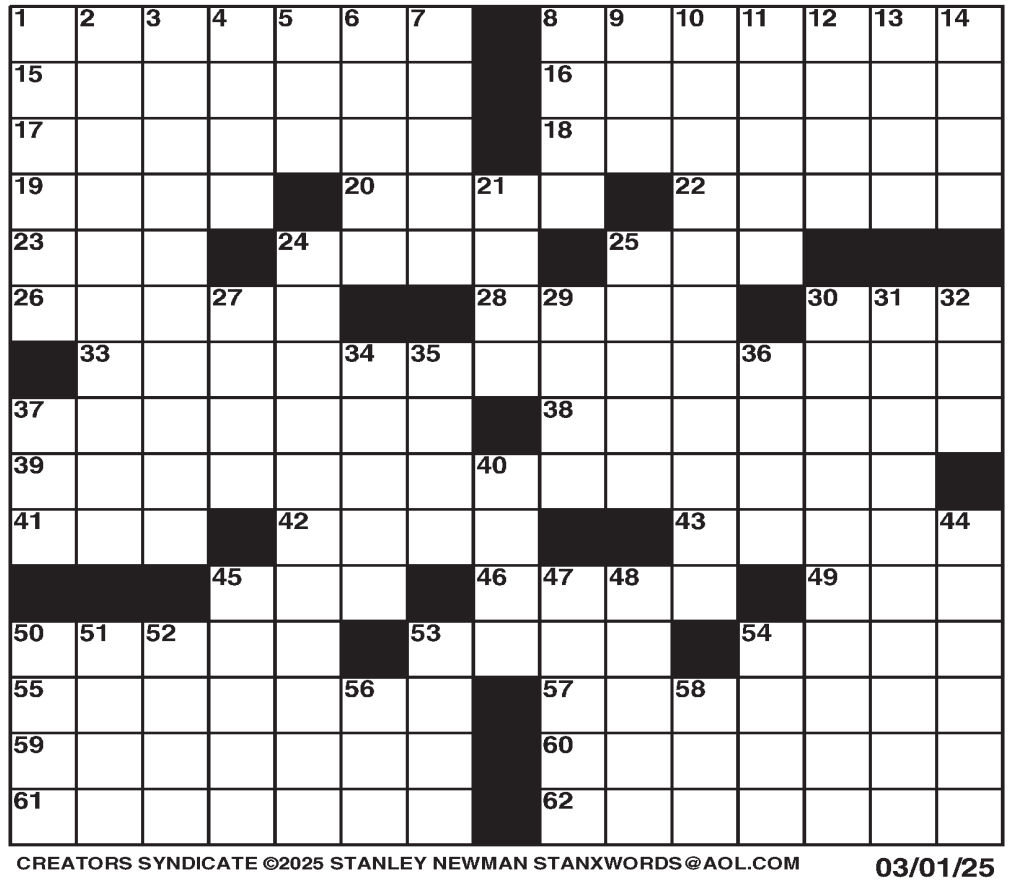
SATURDAY STUMPER by Doug Peterson
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Chiefs' group
8 Jumbles
15 Home of the Queen Elizabeth $3 bill
16 Xanadu-like
17 Curling venue
18 Word on some Simpsons paraphernalia
19 Buck
20 Front __
22 Dawning
23 Comic Con costuming
24 *Scientific American Frontiers* host
25 Net-neutrality agcy.
26 One with tablet recommendations
28 Run off
30 Draft choice
33 Guide for gardening
37 Teacher of Beethoven and Schubert
38 Literally, "prompt answer"
39 Wishful thinker's phrase
41 Crossed, as a box
42 Too indulgent
43 "In me thou __ the twilight of such day": Shak.
45 Suiting
46 Lab reports?
49 NAACP creation
50 Jacob's second son
53 Flanged girder
54 Is light
55 In type
57 Cinema's first Spider-Man
59 Above it all, in a way
60 Worked up
61 1972 "Match of the Century" loser
62 Weed whacker alternatives

DOWN

1 Bore
2 Opposite of "remote"
3 Starter with eggs
4 Guarded
5 Producer of the Beatles' first single
6 CD purveyor
7 Expressed impatience, perhaps
8 He lets Louis win at roulette
9 Bridge maintenance org.
10 Navigation device
11 Merrie Melodies mainstay
12 Third Pillar of Islam subject
13 Sly dig
14 Run off
21 Reason for a timeout, perhaps
24 Organizations banned by Costa Rica and Kiribati
25 Acid found in spinach
27 Cork's spot, literarily
29 Wing, ding, or sting
30 Not working against
31 Napoleon's place
32 Top club
34 Field trip?
35 *"À coeur vaillant __ d'impossible"*
36 Superior
37 Caret neighbor
40 Not much
44 Nitrogen-powered devices
45 Takes down
47 Original head writer of *SCTV*
48 Capital of Cameroon
50 Does their part
51 What some flakes are made of
52 *Conversación* starter
53 Very small opening
54 Cashier
56 Sue (for)
58 Chipper



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

EVACUATION

FROM PAGE 1

Residents under an evacuation warning should be prepared to leave in an emergency but are allowed to remain in their homes.

While the area north of San Vicente has been under an order since the start of the fire, the area between Montana and San Vicente went from a warning, to an order and then back to a warning before having that warning lifted Monday morning.

Residents who do return to their homes north of San Vicente are still under a boil water order.

Santa Monica and Los Angeles have independent water sources but some residents on the City's northern edge have Santa Monica address but take all their services from Los Angeles Department of Water & Power.

LADWP customers north of San Vicente Boulevard on Woodacres Road, Esparta Way, and Ermont Place, in zip code 90402 in Santa Monica, are under LADWP's do not drink notice. Residents in that area should follow LADWP's guidance on water use. All other water quality in Santa Monica is NOT impacted by the fires.

NORTH OF SAN VICENTE BOULEVARD: EVACUATION WARNING

All areas north of San Vicente Boulevard are under an Evacuation Warning. Residents may voluntarily return to this area but should remain prepared with gathered essentials and be ready to leave the area if conditions worsen. This area was previously under Evacuation Order.

NORTH OF MONTANA AVENUE TO SAN VICENTE BOULEVARD: EVACUATION LIFTED

The evacuation zone has been lifted for this area. All evacuated residents may return. There are no active fire threats to this area. This area was previously under Evacuation Warning.

Santa Monica officials have stressed that while residents can return to their Santa Monica homes, all entry points into the city of Los Angeles from Santa Monica and Pacific Coast Highway remain closed. The public is not allowed to enter Los Angeles evacuation zones, as they are still under evacuation orders.

"Thank you to all Santa Monica residents who were impacted by the evacuations for your patience and understanding as we worked in coordination with public safety and Palisades Fire incident leaders to protect the community amid a dynamic emergency situation," said the city in announcing the change. "We are grateful that Santa Monica did not experience any damage to homes and that our community is safe, when so many are not as fortunate."

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SMMUSD

FROM PAGE 1

morning, there have not been any reports of damage to Malibu schools, aside from prior damage to Webster Elementary School that "still needs some work." Webster took some damage from December's Franklin Fire, with students returning to the campus for one minimal day on Jan. 6 before closing again the following day.

In a Sunday message to the district, Superintendent Dr. Antonio Shelton stated that recent upgrades to windows, doors, and heat, ventilation and air conditioning systems "have made a tremendous positive difference in the condition of (SMMUSD) indoor spaces during this nearby fire."

Campuses will have masks available for students that request them, but will not make masking indoors mandatory, following current guidelines from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

"We deeply appreciate the patience, understanding, and resilience of our Santa Monica and Malibu communities during this challenging time," Shelton added.

Pinsker stated that transportation issues have not been reported Monday, with special education students who take buses to their campuses running normally.

For such a trying time, the district has put together a list of school and community-based mental health support systems, including a free Zoom support workshop for families Wednesday evening. To register, visit: https://chapterevent.ypo.org/event/e7e98d79-62cb-4ebe-aefa-424cdaff3b57/summary.

Free therapy support for students and families include North Star Families, with Dr. Wendy Denham and team available via phone or zoom. The North Star phone line can be reached via text at 310-431-1935. In addition, The Boys & Girls Club of Malibu Wellness Center has free counseling, case management and resource referrals, with the contact line being 310-457-6801 ext. 74141 or wellnessinfo@bgcmalibu.org.

> We deeply appreciate the patience, understanding, and resilience of our Santa Monica and Malibu communities during this challenging time
>
> - Dr. Antonio Shelton, Superintendent

"We are very watchful of our students," Pinsker said. "Their mental health and their social-emotional wellbeing is of the utmost importance right now with the return to school."

Saint Monica Preparatory returned to in-person classes Monday, with regular transportation and lunch services also resuming. At the collegiate level, Santa Monica College resumed on-ground classes, services and business operations on Monday at its Main Campus and all satellite campuses, with the exception of SMC Malibu which will remain remote.

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TUESDAY | JANUARY 14

BIG READ BOOK DISCUSSION

6:30 p.m. Westchester - Loyola Village Branch Library, 7114 W. Manchester Ave., Los Angeles. Join to discuss the Big Read Book of 2025, "The House on Mango Street" by Sandra Cisneros.

BINGO TUESDAY

8 - 9:30 p.m. Tiny's Hi-Dive, 12012 West Pico Blvd., Los Angeles. Drag Queen Bingo is live and free at Tiny's. Ten games with prizes, fun chill environment, delicious drinks and food. No tickets required, arrive early as seating is limited.

MUSICAL ACTS

8 p.m. The Venice West, 1717 Lincoln Blvd., Venice. Alternative artist Orion Shoals, alternative rock artist Casino Breakfast and Americana artist Nick James take the stage at The Venice West. This event is 21 and over. Tickets $18.76, to purchase visit: https://www.ticketweb.com/event/orion-shoals-casino-breakfast-the-venice-west-tickets/14090903.

WEDNESDAY | JANUARY 15

YOGA FOR EVERYONE

12:30 - 1:30 p.m. Venice Branch Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd. Through body awareness, movement, and breath, you will be guided on how to bring your body, mind, and spirit back into balance for overall well-being. All levels are welcome. Generously funded by the Friends of Venice Library.

LIVE COUNTRY MUSIC

8 p.m. The Venice West, 1717 Lincoln Blvd., Venice. Westside Western Presents an evening of live country music, featuring country folk artist Matt Michienze, alternative rock artist Western Medicine and country artist The Sea Monks. For ages 21 and up. Tickets $18.76, to purchase visit: https://www.ticketweb.com/event/an-evening-of-live-country-the-venice-west-tickets/14078013.

THURSDAY | JANUARY 16

OAKWOOD ROOTS FARMERS AND WELLNESS MARKET

11 a.m. - 6 p.m. 685 Westminster Ave., Venice. Oakwood Roots Venice Farmers' and Wellness Market is a hub for local foods, wellness classes, and holistic healing. Join in creating a healthier and more connected neighborhood. This is part of a larger effort to revitalize the abandoned parking lots across the street from the park into a community hub, in partnership with Community Corporation of Santa Monica and Hoopbus.

LUNCHTIME LINE DANCE

12:30 p.m. Venice - Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd., Venice. Get fit and meet new friends learning line dances on your lunch break. Learn new and old dances to various styles, including country, disco, Latin, soul and more. All levels are welcome.

MYSTERY BOOK DISCUSSION

1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Palms - Rancho Park Branch Library, 2920 Overland Ave., Los Angeles. Join for engaging conversation about whodunnits, thrillers, and cri-fi. Light refreshments will be provided by Friends of the Palms Rancho Park Library. January's selection is "Devil in a Blue Dress" by Walter Mosley.

COVERED CA EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

4 - 5 p.m. Palms - Rancho Park Branch Library, 2920 Overland Ave., Los Angeles. Covered CA program facilitators will go over how the Covered CA insurance marketplace works. Covered CA eligibility, financial support and steps to enroll will also be discussed.

TODDLER PLAY

4:15 - 5:15 p.m. Palms - Rancho Park Branch Library, 2920 Overland Ave., Los Angeles. An hour of free play, exploration and socializing for children and their caregivers, with toys and books. Recommended for ages 0-2.

WILL BRAHM

7 p.m. Sam First, 6171 W. Century Blvd. Jazz guitarist Will Brahm, with a signature band sound rooted in strong melodic songs and decorated in lush sonic landscapes, evokes the compositional depth of Pat Metheny Group and the singing captivating melodic sense of guitarists like Jeff Beck and David Gilmour. For more information, visit: https://www.bandsintown.com/e/105548658.

FRIDAY | JANUARY 17

MLK FREEDOM CELEBRATION & BREAKFAST

8 - 9:30 a.m. Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, 1343 Ocean Park Blvd. This inspiring event brings together community members to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s enduring legacy of love, equity, and social justice. Reverend Carolyn Baskin-Bell, a long-time member of our interfaith council and the first female pastor of the historic First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Santa Monica, will serve as our keynote speaker. For more information, visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mlk-freedom-celebration-and-breakfast-tickets-1091789865879.

SHABBAT DINNER AT THE BEACH

5 - 10:30 p.m. Shul on the Beach, 505 Ocean Front, Venice. Watch the sunset over the ocean and embrace the warmth of Shabbat with the Shul on the Beach Community along with fellow Jewish professionals, for a joyous evening filled with delicious food, fine wine, uplifting conversation, heartfelt singing, and inspiring Torah insights. Tickets $39-$44, for more information visit shulonthebeach.com.

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