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smdp
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THURSDAY
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Volume 15 Issue 55

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Future of Civic Auditorium up for debate

BY MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

Final recommendations have been released for the future of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium and City Council will debate the issue at its Feb. 9 meeting.

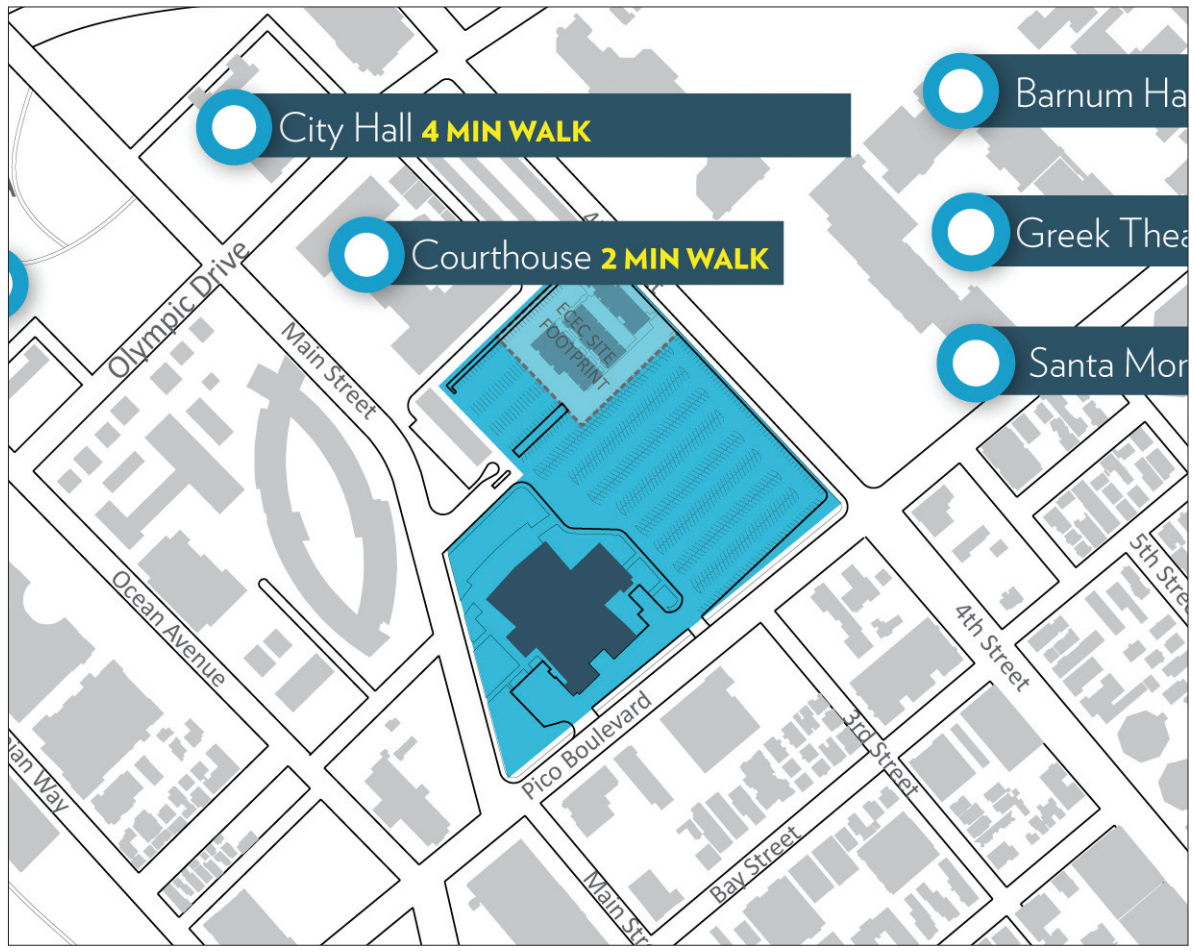
A draft of the report was released last year and the final version adheres closely to those recommendations. The Civic Working Group, a panel appointed by council to evaluate options for the property, recommends an entertainment/arts complex with a private operator as the best option for rehabilitating the building and meeting the community's desire for a professional performing arts venue.

The recommendation said the facility as proposed would have capacity for about 2,600 attendees and would draw high-end commercial entertainment. The preferred option had the lowest capital cost ($93 million) and was the only option without a required annual operating subsidy.

Two alternate ideas are included in the report although both required an annual subsidy of between $2.2 million and $3.4 million per year.

"Given the Civic's historic character and role, and the lower estimated capital and operating costs to the City, the CWG recommends pursuing the Civic 1 option. This would allow the landmarked Civic to be sensitively rehabilitated and reopened as a professionally managed performing arts venue that retains its form and use while enabling it to function at today's state-of-the-art efficiency," said the report.

The report does not make other specific recommendations. Instead it presents options and provides a philosophical framework for decision-making. The report does provide information on the preferences expressed during a series of public workshops.



Courtesy Image

NEARBY: Staff are recommending City Council focus on the Civic building and delay a decision on the larger site.

The CWG discusses other arts and cultural features on the site. The report says those uses should create activity day and night and according to the report, of 1,698 total responses to an interactive trade-off tool used in the workshops, the most popular uses were a flexible event space (323), small music venue (238), and educational/maker facility (221). Less popular were an artist incubator space (68), fine art museum (102), and experiential museum (102).

The use of private options on the land is considered in the report as a means of generating revenue and contributing to the overall use of the site. The most popular private land uses based on the workshops were small café or restaurant (104), storefront restaurants (88), retail options (73), and a boutique hotel (73). Housing, office, and hotel uses in general garnered the least support.

Open space on the site has become a controversial topic.

The report provides information on two athletic field options, one for young children and the second, a full-size soccer field. The report acknowledges strong community support for the field but recommends against an athletic field on the site, arguing that open space should contribute to the cultural focus of the site. While a full-size field is not supported by the CWG, the report does recommend council study the possibility of a field at the Civic.

"To establish a vibrant, mixed-use cultural district, any open space on the Civic Auditorium campus would have to have a significant amount of year-round programming that provides a venue for local talent, contributes to the cultural district's energy, and draws visitors from around the community and Los Angeles," said the report. "The CWG recommends that the Civic site include open space that encourages cultural, recreational, and athletic uses consistent with a vibrant cultural campus. However, the CWG,

SEE CIVIC PAGE 3

An opportunity for outreach

Social service providers use El Niño rains to connect with homeless

BY JEFFREY I. GOODMAN
Daily Press Staff Writer

When it rains, more homeless people seek cover at Santa Monica shelters. But that doesn't necessarily mean there's space for them.

"It's not like we have a bunch of empty beds waiting for winter rains," said John Maceri, executive director of OPCC. "The need always outstrips the availability of beds."

But where some might find a capacity problem, Maceri and other social service providers see

SEE NINO PAGE 3

SMASH officials contest state designation

Alternative K-8 campus included on list of low-performing schools

BY JEFFREY I. GOODMAN
Daily Press Staff Writer

When Jessica Rishe gives tours of Santa Monica Alternative School House to prospective parents, she regularly explains that students don't receive grades. There are narrative report cards, family conferences and end-of-unit celebrations, the principal tells them, but no traditional performance metrics.

It's a major differentiating variable for SMASH, a K-8 campus in the Santa Monica-Malibu school

SEE SCHOOL PAGE 6

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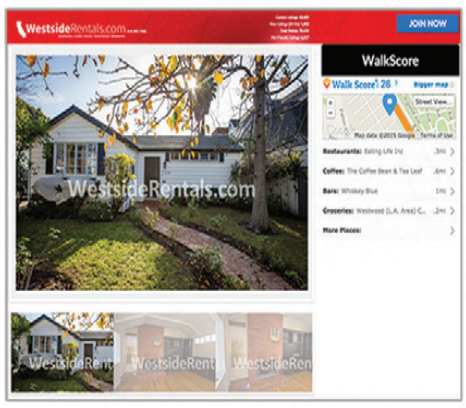
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WISE & Healthy Aging is a nonprofit social services organization.

What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Thursday, Jan. 21

Homework Help

Get help with your homework! This drop-in program offers a separate study area, basic supplies, and friendly volunteers to assist with homework questions. For students in grades 1-5 only. Pico Branch Library, 2201 Pico Blvd., 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

LEGO Block Party @ Main Library

Use your creativity to make something remarkable. They provide the Legos, you provide the fun! Ages 4 and Up. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Housing Commission Meeting

Regular meeting of the Santa Monica Housing Commission. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 4:30 p.m.

GED Prep Class

Get prepared to take the Reasoning Through Language Arts subject test of the GED. Class will be held in the Annex, next to Pico Branch Library. Pico Branch Library, 2201 Pico Blvd., 6 - 8 p.m.

Steve Hodel and Most Evil II

Author and former LAPD detective Steve Hodel presents his most recent investigation and decryption of the 1970 Zodiac Killer Cipher. A book sale and signing follows. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 7 - 8 p.m.

Recreation & Parks Commission

Meeting of the Recreation & Parks Commission. City Hall, 1685 Main St., 7:30 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 22

Internet Security

Learn how to protect yourself and your computer from threats such as viruses, spyware, and scams. Advanced level. Seating is first come, first served. For more information, please visit the Reference Desk or call (310) 434-2608. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 3 - 4 p.m.

Coding for Teens

Learn coding at the Library! Join organizers for this basic JavaScript workshop, only for teens. All levels are welcome. Space is limited, call the branch to register. Pico Branch Library, 2201 Pico Blvd., 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Drumming with Rhythm Child

Develop your drumming skills, confidence, and coordination at this energetic workshop. Limited space; free tickets available 30 minutes before program. For families. Montana Avenue Branch Library, 1704 Montana Ave., 4 - 4:45 p.m.

Beach=Culture: Reception for 'Unspooled'

Celebrate the opening of Unspooled with the artists Lynne B. Clark, Maria E. Piñeres, and Jenny Hart and exhibit curator Stacey Ravel Abarbanel, with music by Wages. Light refreshments provided. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 PCH, 6 - 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 23

SMPL 125th Anniversary Celebrations: My Life Above the Carousel in Santa Monica

Author and former Santa Monica resident, Elaine Stevenson, discusses her younger years living above the famous Santa Monica Carousel with her family as well as the book she wrote about this period. Copies of the book will be available for sale and signing following the discussion. Ocean Park Branch Library, 2601 Main St., 2 - 3:30 p.m.

SEE **LISTINGS** PAGE 3

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

NINO

FROM PAGE 1

an opportunity. In essence, it's an extra chance to connect homeless people with a variety of social services in and around Santa Monica. Perhaps they meet with a case manager and pursue substance abuse counseling. Maybe they find out more about transitional shelter options in Los Angeles county.

"It's more of an incentive for people to come inside," Maceri said of wet El Niño weather. "When their clothes and socks and shoes get wet, it's really challenging because it's hard to dry out. ... The people who come indoors have a greater opportunity to be connected to ongoing housing and services."

Social service groups aren't the only ones engaged in outreach to homeless people. Volunteers will comb Santa Monica the evening of Jan. 27 for the annual homeless count, which attempts to capture a snapshot of the issue and gather data to help officials plot and analyze trends.

Volunteers are still needed for the upcoming initiative, according to Brian Hardgrave, administrative analyst with the city Human Services Division. Registration can be completed at www.santamonicahomelesscount.com. No prior experience is necessary.

Volunteers counted 738 homeless people in Santa Monica last year, down slightly from 742 tallied in 2014. The 2015 total across the county was 44,359.

Maceri said earlier this month that he's curious to see how winter rains impact the local homeless count.

In inclement weather, he said, his organization's outreach teams try to be proactive in finding people where there are potential hazards.

"We don't really have any flood zones in Santa Monica, but we still encourage them to come inside," he said. "The opportunities are greater for people to get connected to longer-term services because they're already indoors."

Venice-based St. Joseph Center staffers in recent weeks have also targeted particular spaces in the area, including several homeless encampments. The nonprofit organization serves about 6,000 people each year, providing emergency assistance, vocational training and a variety of other services.

"Our hope is for us to do the outreach to save people who are out there," executive director Va Lecia Adams Kellum said. "It's an opportunity to meet people we haven't met, and it's an opportunity to translate these relationships into people staying indoors because they don't want to be out there in the rain. This is that moment where coordination is supreme."

An example came a couple weeks ago, when St. Joseph Center workers met a youngster at the Venice library who was seeking refuge from the storms.

Wet weather has the potential to decrease the visibility of homelessness on the Westside as people look for shelter, Adams Kellum said, but the issue persists.

"People can die on the streets during this time of year," she said. "They're at great risk, and El Niño is putting all of this on our minds. This is a moment for us to respond as a community and help as best we can."

Visit www.santamonicahomelesscount.com to volunteer for the 2016 count.

jeff@smdp.com

CIVIC

FROM PAGE 1

understanding the urgency of the need just as City Council did in 2005, also recommends investigating plans that would allow for a full-size, multi-use playing field on the site, given the strong community preferences expressed during the planning process."

There have been plans to redevelop the Civic site for more than 20 years. The most recent plan was created in 2005 but funding for most of its recommendations evaporated when voters disbanded redevelopment agencies. At the same time, decreasing demand for the building, deferred maintenance and increasing costs forced the city to shutter the building and the CWG was formed to consider a new future for the site.

While the recommendations do consider the entire civic facility, staff is recommending council limit their initial discussion to saving the actual Civic building and postpone discussion of other elements.

"This approach would allow the City to begin implementation of the vision articulated by the CWG relatively quickly with a modest investment of staff and other resources. It would defer decisions about the broader site including the addition of a sports field to a time when other planning processes have been completed and additional information is available, for example the campus development plan for improvements to the Santa Monica High School campus which is underway, the Downtown Community Specific Plan, and expansion of the field space at the Santa Monica Airport," said the report.

Karen Ginsberg, Community and Cultural Services Director, said a limited scope might unearth a fiscal backer that could foot the bill for the project.

"I can't predict at this time how entertainment companies or philanthropists might respond, and that's what we need to see," she said.

Nina Fresco, chair of the CWG, said she supported the idea of focusing on the building.

"It could revitalize the Civic and relieve financial pressure on the rest of the site for funding that," she said.

editor@smdp.com

LISTINGS

FROM PAGE 2

Living a Long, Healthy Ageless Life

Author and chef Mimi Kirk will talk about how to improve health and well-being in the new year through the food we consume, exercise, and positive thinking. A juice demonstration and Q & A will follow her lecture. Montana Avenue Branch Library, 1704 Montana Ave., 2 - 3:30 p.m.

Watercolor Monotype Screenprinting with Patricia Mitchell

Apply watercolor/gouache to a screen using painterly techniques to create a monotype and several ghost prints. Monotype process is great for building and layering images and creating the unique "multiples" that are intrinsic to this technique. 1450 Ocean, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. cost is $5. Register at https://apm.activecommunities.com/santamonicarecreation/Activity_Search/48725 or call (310) 458-2239.

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BREAKING GROUND

Courtesy Photo

Campaign Co-Chair Jim Hornstein, Los Angeles Councilmember Gil Cedillo, Executive Director Silvia R. Argueta, building namesake Ron Olson, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Campaign Co-Chair Brad Brian, Board Member Rita Tuzon and Campaign Co-Chair Glenn Pomerantz all break ground at Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles' new headquarters this week. The new headquarters will be in the Pico-Union neighborhood at 1550 W. 8th St. in Los Angeles. Legal Aid has a Santa Monica office located at 1640 5th St.

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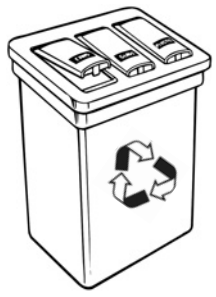
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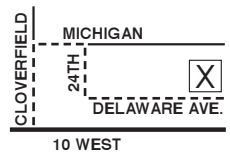


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The Santa Monica Daily Press publishes Monday - Saturday with a circulation of 10,000 on weekdays and 11,000 on the weekend. The Daily Press is adjudicated as a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Los Angeles and covers news relevant to the City of Santa Monica. The Daily Press is a member of the California Newspaper Publisher's Association, the National Newspaper Association and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. The paper you're reading this on is composed of 100% post consumer content and the ink used to print these words is soy based. We are proud recipients of multiple honors for outstanding news coverage from the California Newspaper Publishers Association as well as a Santa Monica Sustainable Quality Award.

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Culture Watch

Sarah A. Spitz Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Beating the odds in KooKooLand

"IT WAS ALL ABOUT FINDING THE RIGHT voice," Gloria Norris said at a recent book party celebrating her new memoir "KooKooLand," published this month by Regan Arts. It's a dazzling feat of writing, a riveting personal history and an impressive story about overcoming long odds.

For a long time, it was her father's voice that echoed in her head. Jimmy was the domineering force in her life, her mother's (Shirley) and her half-sister's (Virginia). A misogynist, bigot, anti-Semite, anti-anything that wasn't of Greek heritage, he was physically, emotionally and psychologically abusive.

Equally hard and violent, his best friend Hank murdered his own wife. Later, Hank's daughter Susan - who was Gloria's idol - murdered Hank. That's a lot to experience, absorb and emerge from.

But Gloria did.

Raised in the projects of Manchester, New Hampshire, Norris is a 20-year Santa Monica resident who's had a successful career as a screenwriter and filmmaker, working with such luminaries as Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese and Brian de Palma. And when she set out to write her life story, the voice she finally found belonged to her 9-year-old self.

Gloria tried hard to prove she was tough.

She introduces Jimmy in the opening chapter of "KooKooLand," as he's taking "his girls" to see "Blood Feast," a brutally gory slice-and-dice film, his favorite genre. She writes that he reached behind the driver's seat with his right hand, "the Hairy Claw" to grasp at "any part of us that it could get." So Gloria "lunged forward and chomped down hard on the Hairy Claw," and Jimmy responded proudly, "Get a loada that kid. She's got a lotta frickin' moxie for a nine-year-old."

Writing the memoir "was like channeling how I thought as a kid," Gloria told me during an interview at her Sunset Park home. "I was able to access that in a deep way. I remember how I thought about things, my sense of humor, my way of speaking like Jimmy. The thing that makes me happiest about the book is that I was able to grow the voice, and take the whole journey to find my own voice and thoughts and overcome his dominating influence."

"KooKooLand" is Jimmy-speak for California, "'cause all the people out there were surfing ding-dongs," she writes. A blue-collar laborer, he trimmed trees for rich folks but wanted more, so he also trafficked in black-market goods, bet on horses, peddled porn and even drugs. No matter how shady his dealings, however, he held the females in his family to a strict standard.

"There's such a separation between what's acceptable for men and what's acceptable for women," Gloria told me. "Growing up in the Greek culture felt very much like what I've read about women growing up under the Taliban; wearing your clothes below your knee, the women always standing the corner, feeding the men first, the yayas with their head scarves on, that feeling that you must always cover yourself."

Jimmy particularly kept Shirley under his thumb.

Virginia was Jimmy's daughter from his first marriage to Doris, but when Doris left he made sure they never saw each other again. Shirley was a naïve Canadian farm girl on a boat trip to Massachusetts, the one Jimmy worked on. When they first met, she was nearing spinster age, he was newly divorced with a child and on the hunt for a wife to take care of her. He wooed her with his charismatic side; she chalked up his rougher side as a characteristic of American men.

But it only got worse after marriage. Jimmy bullied Shirley. Gloria said of her, "I don't think with these kinds of men that there was any great choice. Doris left and she paid the price. If Shirley had left, there was a very good chance the same thing would happen to her. She was afraid of what that would do to me, so that made it her only choice, to stay."

Gloria credits her mother with giving her the drive to get out. "I always knew that my mother loved me, so it gave me a core of strength that, even if she missed me, I knew she really wanted the best for me and that meant to get away from Jimmy."

But Jimmy gets credit too. He tried to stop her from going to college, and she went despite him. Yet at her lowest moment, questioning whether she'd ever belong ("I didn't even know what a bagel was"), Jimmy came and told her she was as good as any of the people around her.

"He was instrumental in getting me out of that bed, otherwise I was feeling like I would drop out. That's the part I got from him. He taught me how to be tough and roll with the punches."

Even if he was doing the punching.

"The part of it I can't believe," she said to me, "is that usually people who've had a father like mine would not have made such a wonderful choice in a husband." She's speaking of respected journalist and author James Greenberg, editor of DGA Quarterly at the Directors Guild of America. "We've been married for 19 years, and he's so supportive and kind."

Gloria Norris' prose is straightforward, clean, visually and verbally vibrant, and yes, cinematic. There are incantatory moments that heighten the impact of her hard-charging story. She writes about the drama of the murders, Virginia's difficult life choices, Susan's rise, fall and demise, Jimmy's psychiatry, her family, her own success and Shirley's ultimate release.

The book is a triumph of will over circumstance. All the main characters have died, so Gloria Norris now stands alone, paying tribute in her own unique voice.

SARAH A. SPITZ spent her career as a producer at public radio station KCRW-Santa Monica and produced freelance arts reports for NPR. She has also written features and reviews for various print and online publications.

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Tales From Hi De Ho Comics

Eddie deAngelini
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

A galaxy far away

YOU ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR FIRST TIME. Mine was in 1977 at a drive-in in the back of my parent's station wagon. I was eight years old and it was the first time I saw Star Wars, snug in my pajamas with my parents in the front seats. I was enthralled by the now legendary space opera but my parents, two old world salt-of-the-Earth Italian immigrants, were not as equally thrilled. Their suggestions of leaving early were met with cries and wails of protest from a pile of warm pillows and blankets in the back seat. My parents suffered through to the end of the movie and witnessed the birth of their little boy's childhood obsession with all things Star Wars.

Like every kid of that era, I had to have all of the Kenner Star Wars Action Figures which my parents reluctantly bought if all my homework and house chores were done. With no ship for my figures, I begged my parents for a Millennium Falcon for Christmas, then quickly assured them that no, I don't want a bird and yes, I understand that pets are not allowed in our apartment. I didn't get a Millennium falcon that year. I'm pretty sure I got socks and school supplies. The one word that describes my parents at Christmastime is 'practical'.

Around this time, I began to realize my parents were not like other parents. They spoke a weird language that my friend's parents didn't speak, they never bought the foods that I wanted, like hot dogs and Lucky Charms. I could only get those at my friend's house after school because my parent's only served that 'weird food' of theirs. These days, dinner at my parents always makes me wonder how I could have ever hated homemade Italian food as a child. As I write this, I'm sure I'd do anything legal or illegal for one more taste of my grandmother's lasagna.

The following year, I got my Millennium Falcon and it was the year that I figured out there was no Santa. I woke up early Christmas morning and ran to the living room to find a big box under the tree. I ripped open the wrapping paper to find the ship that made the Kessel Run in twelve Parsecs. The cookies that I left for Santa were gone and a card was there instead. The card said, briefly and plainly, "Merry Christmas. Ho ho ho." What struck me right away was that I clearly recognized my mother's handwriting. Pursuing this mystery further, I asked my parents how Santa got into our apartment since we don't have a chimney. They told me they left the door unlocked. I didn't buy it. My parents were and still are paranoid about locking every door and window at night. Although we were never robbed, they perpetually lived in fear of losing what little they had. I didn't let on that I knew the truth until years later and when I did they were relieved at not having to continue 'this American tradition' of Santa Claus and pretending.

As a child, I didn't understand my parents. In my teens, it was clear that they didn't understand me either. When I declared that I wanted to be an artist, they didn't see how anyone could make a living and told me that I should go to a trade school to learn auto repair, a field I've never expressed interest in or aptitude for. I felt like screaming "Do you even know who I am?!"

Upon reaching adulthood, I learned the way to make my parents understand me would be to learn who they are and where they came from. I asked about their younger years and what they experienced growing up during and after World War Two in a country right in the middle of the chaos. Most of the city where my family is from was destroyed by repeated bombings, leaving my parents and siblings growing up in rubble. My aunt tells the story of being a child playing in a nearby field, looking up and watching a bomb fall from the sky and land a few feet from her. She's able to tell this tale from sheer luck that the bomb failed to go off. At the end of the war, the Germans were out and the Communist army rolled in, drafting all young men. Friends and neighbors of my parents began to disappear and were never heard from again. My family's only option was escape, stowed away in the back of trucks and car trunks. Left homeless, my parents grew up in refugee camps made up of abandoned bunkers of U.S. soldiers.

They made it to the United States in their early adult years and the experiences they lived through formed their beliefs, opinions and also their faults. After learning their story, I'm able to understand them and also respect both the good and bad of who they are. In turn, they see and accept who I've become having been born in their adoptive country. In getting to know my parents, I've discovered that great stories of daring escapes standing up to evil empires don't always happen a long time ago in a galaxy far away. Sometimes they're as close as a homemade Italian dinner.

To learn more about all things comic books, visit Hi De Ho Comics, 1431 Lincoln Blvd., in Santa Monica.

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SCHOOL

FROM PAGE 1

district, and one that Rishe believes offers important context in understanding how the school stacks up against others in the district and across California.

SMASH is on a list of 1,000 low-performing schools in the state, a registry mandated by the Open Enrollment Act. The list allows parents to transfer their children from schools on the annual list to other campuses.

SMASH is the only SMMUSD school on the list, which is based on 2013 tests. The state education department is using old data for this year's list as it begins making calculations based on results from newly implemented state tests. The state recently ditched the STAR system for the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress.

Parents reviewing the list of low-achieving schools "should know that many changes have occurred" since its creation and that caution should be used in decisions made based on it, according to the state education department.

SMASH landed on the list for its Academic Performance Index score of 812, better than the state figure of 790 but significantly below the district's score of 865. Rishe noted that her school's score is merely an estimate due to its small student population (228 in 2013-14, according to state data) and low rates of participation in state testing.

"SMMUSD officials are confident that SMASH is an excellent school that is surpassing the academic and social-emotional needs of our students," Rishe said.

According to the new state testing system, the results of which were released last year, SMASH students are performing well relative to their peers in the district and across California.

About 77 percent of SMASH test-takers met or exceeded the standard on the English language arts section of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, better than the rates for SMMUSD (68 percent) and the state overall (44 percent). And 62 percent of SMASH students met or exceeded the math standard, outperforming children in SMMUSD (57 percent) and California (34 percent).

Founded in 1973, SMASH aims to incorporate alternative and unconventional approaches to education and assessment. Students engage in project-based learning, side-by-side reading evaluations and analyses of written work as well as mindfulness sessions and other social-emotional development exercises. The curriculum "builds upon student interest," according to the school's website.

Prospective parents can sign up for tours by contacting SMASH office manager Janice Wold at (310) 396-2640 or jwold@smmusd.org. Applications are handed out after tours and due March 18. The school uses a computerized lottery and wait lists for admissions because interest exceeds capacity, Rishe said.

jeff@smdp.com

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Robert Lemle

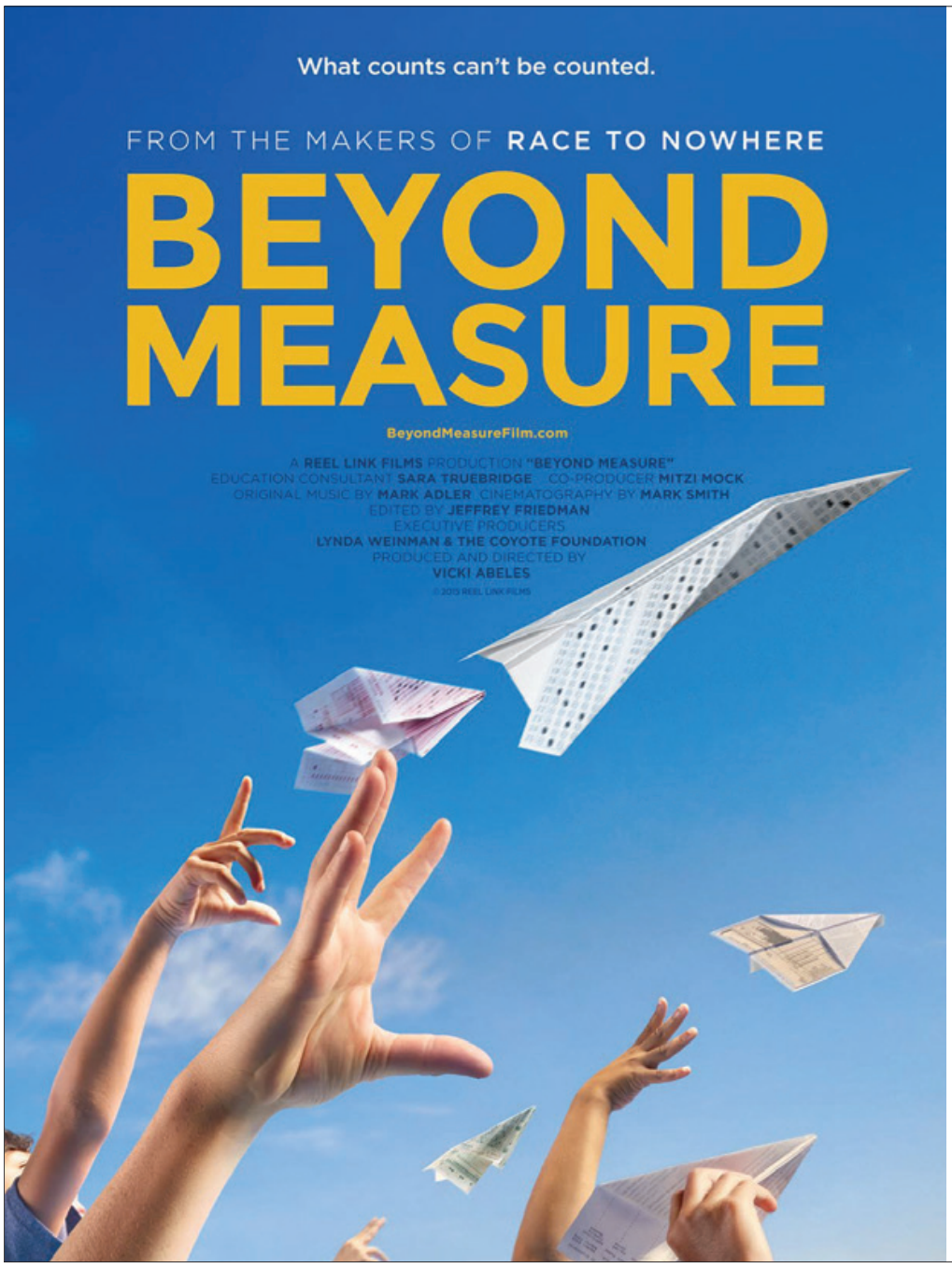
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Play Time

Cynthia Citron
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

"The Big Short": Exploding The Housing Bubble

MANY YEARS AGO, AS I TRIED TO KEEP UP with each of my kids as they breezed through "the new math" and learned to multiply fractions, I realized with dismay that if I had to go through grammar school again I would probably flunk the third grade.

So you can imagine how I felt about "The Big Short", the film made from Michael Lewis' powerful book that chronicles in intricate detail how the Wall Street moneymen manipulated the housing market until the credit bubble exploded, plunging much of the world into bankruptcy and the depression of 2008. I left the theater dazed and bewildered. Frankly, they lost me at "bundled subprime mortgage loans."

But when I saw the film for the second time and was able to watch it without panicking, I realized what a fine expose it really is. As it guides you, step by step, through the fraudulent manipulations of the Wall Street bankers, brokers, and hedge fund managers who believed that prosperity would go on forever, it introduces the men who outsmarted them and made billions from their own ingenious transactions. Real men. True story.

The names, of course, have been changed to protect the guilty. Except for one man: Dr. Michael Burry, a quirky doctor with many of the dysfunctional behaviors of a man with Aspberger syndrome (think Dustin Hoffman in "Rain Man"). Burry crunched the numbers and figured out that the market could not sustain the ever-ballooning cost of homes and that the banks would not be able to supply indefinitely the loans that were needed. And so he bet against them, anticipating the moment when home-owners would run out of money and begin defaulting on their mortgage payments.

Burry is played with great intensity by Christian Bale, who pads around his office in a tee shirt and bare feet and bangs a set of drums to overcome his anxieties. Bale is magnificent, and he has been nominated (and won) many prestigious awards for the role. (But not the Golden Globe, as this appears to be Leonardo DiCaprio's year.)

Also nominated for a Golden Globe was Steve Carell, who is named Mark Baum in the film and represents the real-life Steve Eisman, who was at that time a money manager at a company affiliated with Morgan Stanley. Carell, however, plays the cranky owner of a small brokerage firm and runs away with most of the funny scenes. (The film is classified as a comedy/drama, after all.)

Meanwhile, Ryan Gosling, as a rather unscrupulous trader called Jared Vennett, hears about Burry's predictions and comes to the conclusion that they are true. He is joined by Carell as they invest heavily in the credit default swap market, which swaps their stock holdings in a massive bet that homeowners will default on their bank loans.

Carell, after researching the situation himself, believes Burry's predictions too. But in the end, when the housing market collapses, he is loath to unload his swapped stock, knowing that the inevitable debacle will result in people losing their jobs, their homes, and their way of life.

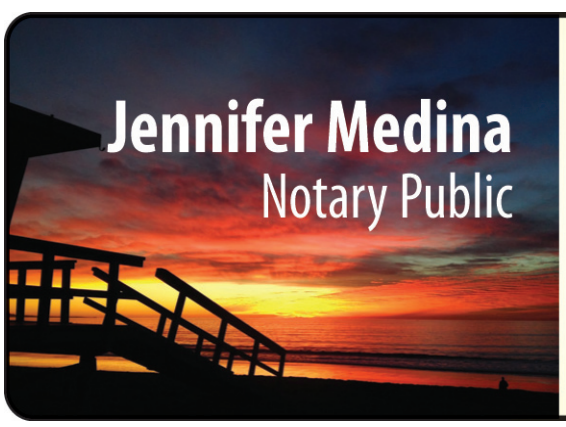
Gosling, in addition to his role as Vennett, breaks the fourth wall and talks directly to the movie audience, explaining much of the nitty gritty of the complicated transactions that the stock market is engaged in. He is reminiscent of the Stage Manager in Thornton Wilder's classic play "Our Town" who gently guides the audience through the every-day events in Grover's Corners.

There are many outstanding cameo roles in this spectacular 20-person cast, including one by Brad Pitt (whose Plan B Entertainment Company produced the film) as a retired banker who comes out of seclusion to help John Magaro and Finn Wittrock, two entrepreneurial but underfunded traders, get in on the action.

In addition, four celebrities appear in the film as Themselves to illustrate some of the activities covered in the film. Chef Anthony Bourdain, aproned in his massive kitchen, demonstrates how he converts three-day-old fish into a tasty stew. Actress/singer Selena Gomez, filmed at a craps table in Vegas, demonstrates how bets (and debts) can accumulate when bystanders support a player who appears to be perpetually winning. Australian actress Margot Robbie reclines in a thick cloud of bubble bath and drinks champagne as she elaborates on the benefits of investing. And Richard Thaler, a theorist in behavioral finance, who bears the formidable title of Ralph and Dorothy Keller Distinguished Service Professor of Behavioral Science and Economics at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, gives a brief dissertation on a subject I didn't understand and don't remember.

All of this tragic craziness is directed by the screenplay's coauthor (with Charles Randolph), Adam McKay. McKay keeps the action and the actors moving at an appropriately frantic pace, and if you can keep up with what's going on, you'll get a sizable bang out of "The Big Short". Especially if you never invested in mortgage loans.

CYNTHIA CITRON has worked as a journalist, public relations director, documentary screenwriter and theater reviewer. She may be reached at ccitron66@gmail.com.

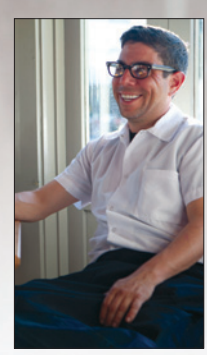


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SURF REPORT



SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: **59.9°**

THURSDAY – **FAIR** – SURF: **2-3 ft** Knee to chest high occ. 4ft
Primary WNW swell slowly fading. Secondary SW swell starts to ease. Favorable AM winds, but starting out fat/slow early for most spots on the higher tide.

FRIDAY – **FAIR** – SURF: **2-3 ft** Knee to chest high occ. 4ft
BIGGEST LATE as a new/solid West-WNW swell builds in, peaking late. Old/minor SW swell fading. Front approaches region, but AM wind looks light.

SATURDAY – **FAIR** – SURF: **4-7 ft** shoulder high to 2 ft overhead occ. 8ft
New/solid West-WNW swell on tap. Minor SW swell. Front impacts region, but AM wind looks light. Deep high tide in the morning slows down most spots.

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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 JANUARY 13

Officers were called to the beach parking lot in the 1400 block of Pacific Coast Highway for male suspect trying to smash the window of a car with an unknown object. As the officers arrived, the suspect attempted to drive away in his SUV. The suspect was stopped; detained and identified by witnesses as the man they saw trying to smash the car window. Officers checked the lot and discovered a vehicle with a shattered window and a large steel crowbar on the ground. The suspect was placed under arrest. Officers conducted a search of the suspect's vehicle and found it displayed a stolen license plate that did not match the vehicle. A check of the VIN revealed the SUV was stolen out of San Diego on Nov. 8, 2015. During a search of the inside of the vehicle, officers found a large amount of methamphetamine indicative of being transported for sales. The suspect was additionally charged with vehicle theft and narcotics possession for sale.
David Torres, 43, homeless has bail set at $35,000.

DAILY POLICE LOG

The Santa Monica Police Department responded to 326 calls for service on Jan. 19.

HERE IS A SAMPLING OF THOSE CALLS CHOSEN BY THE SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS STAFF.

Public intoxication, Lincoln/Interstate 10, 12:06 a.m.
Disturbance, 1000 block Hill, 2:31 a.m.
Trespassing, 300 block Civic Center, 2:34 a.m.
Trespassing, 1200 block 7th, 3 a.m.
Trespassing, 900 block Santa Monica, 5:41 a.m.
Disturbance, 2600 block Pico, 5:47 a.m.
Auto burglary, 1900 block 22nd, 7:08 a.m.
Theft of recyclables, 25th/Arizona, 7:27 a.m.
Trespassing, 1100 block Lincoln, 8:06 a.m.
Car crash, Ocean/Wilshire, 8:18 a.m.
Petty theft, 500 block Strand, 9:08 a.m.
Disturbance, 600 block Pico, 10:03 a.m.
Trespassing, 1200 block Franklin, 10:21 a.m.
Battery, 1100 block Santa Monica, 10:35 a.m.
Auto burglary, 2700 block 2nd, 10:57 a.m.
Disturbance, 1700 block Ocean, 11:09 a.m.
Vandalism, Ocean/Arizona, 12:10 p.m.
Kidnapping, 300 block SM Pier, 12:30 p.m.
Disturbance, 5th/Colorado, 12:40 p.m.
Petty theft, 3400 block Ocean Park, 12:46 p.m.
Disturbance, 1300 block Wilshire, 2:20 p.m.
Public intoxication, Main/Pico, 2:56 p.m.
Death investigation, 2000 block 14th, 3:20 p.m.
Stolen vehicle, 2100 block Wilshire, 3:32 p.m.
Strongarm robbery, 600 block Wilshire, 3:48 p.m.
Battery, 600 block Wilshire, 3:52 p.m.
Petty theft, 1400 block Harvard, 3:56 p.m.
Disturbance, 7th/Santa Monica, 3:57 p.m.
Hit and run, 1400 block 7th, 4:04 p.m.
Trespassing, 1700 block 12th, 4:20 p.m.
Petty theft, 200 block Ocean Park, 5:01 p.m.
Defrauding innkeeper, 1300 block Wilshire, 5:06 p.m.
Battery, 900 block 9th, 5:14 p.m.
Auto burglary, 2200 block Colorado, 5:32 p.m.
Battery, 2600 block Broadway, 5:52 p.m.
Attempted suicide, 1000 block 5th, 6:19 p.m.
Person down, 2200 block Santa Monica, 6:41 p.m.
Public intoxication, 2100 block Pico, 7:04 p.m.
Grand theft, 1300 block Princeton, 7:23 p.m.
Disturbance, 1300 block Wilshire, 7:39 p.m.
Overdose, 200 block Georgina, 8:11 p.m.
Car crash, 16th/Wilshire, 8:13 p.m.
Burglary, 500 block 19th, 10:59 p.m.
Disturbance, 200 block Montana, 11:32 p.m.

DAILY FIRE LOG

The Santa Monica Fire Department responded to 45 calls for service on Jan. 19.

HERE IS A SAMPLING OF THOSE CALLS CHOSEN BY THE SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS STAFF.

Emergency Medical Service (EMS), 2400 block Pearl, 1:04 a.m.
EMS, 1200 block 6th, 4:15 a.m.
Public assistance, 1400 block Ocean Park, 6:53 a.m.
EMS, 1500 block California, 7:01 a.m.
EMS, 1100 block Euclid, 8:17 a.m.
EMS, Ocean/Wilshire, 8:28 a.m.
EMS, 1100 block 4th, 10:10 a.m.
EMS, 1000 block Grant, 10:42 a.m.
EMS, 2600 block Ocean Front Walk, 11:59 a.m.
Public assistance, 2200 block 4th, 12:51 p.m.
EMS, 1100 block 7th, 1:15 p.m.
EMS, 3000 block Main, 1:42 p.m.
EMS, 2200 block Lincoln, 1:57 p.m.
EMS, 1600 block Colorado, 2 p.m.
EMS, 1200 block Berkeley, 2:57 p.m.
EMS, 2000 block Pico, 3:11 p.m.
EMS, 2000 block 14th, 3:23 p.m.
EMS, 500 block Olympic, 3:42 p.m.
EMS, 1200 block 15th, 3:45 p.m.
Automatic alarm, 2400 block Centinela, 3:48 p.m.
EMS, 2100 block Lincoln, 4:05 p.m.
EMS, 2400 block Wilshire, 4:44 p.m.
Elevator rescue, 1700 block Ocean, 5:02 p.m.
EMS, 1500 block 5th, 5:37 p.m.
Automatic alarm, 200 block Washington, 5:47 p.m.
EMS, 1300 block 17th, 5:55 p.m.
EMS, 1000 block 5th, 6:20 p.m.
EMS, 2200 block Santa Monica, 6:37 p.m.
EMS, 900 block 17th, 6:44 p.m.
EMS, 2100 block Pico, 7:06 p.m.
EMS, 900 block 3rd, 7:10 p.m.
Hazardous materials, 1600 block Cloverfield, 7:47 p.m.
EMS, 500 block Wilshire, 7:54 p.m.
EMS, 500 block Wilshire, 7:58 p.m.
EMS, 200 block Georgina, 8:11 p.m.
Automatic alarm, 1200 block Ocean, 8:14 p.m.
Elevator rescue, 1700 block Ocean, 8:28 p.m.
Automatic alarm, 1600 block Stewart, 9:59 p.m.
EMS, 500 block Olympic, 10:12 p.m.
EMS, 1500 block Colorado, 10:49 p.m.
Hazardous materials, 1300 block 2nd, 11:02 p.m.
Automatic alarm, 1600 block 26th, 11:06 p.m.
EMS, 1900 block Euclid, 11:10 p.m.
EMS, 3100 block Pico, 11:23 p.m.
Injuries from assault, 600 block Wilshire, 11:41 p.m.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Brewery need
5 Word separator
10 Grad, for short
11 Cochise's people
12 Nautilus commander
13 Soup veggie
14 Field's end
16 Newspaper concern
20 Winter showers
23 Young fellow
24 Contented sounds
25 Irritate
27 "Exodus" hero
28 Nonprofessionals
29 It may have a V shape
32 Vital supply route
36 Stand up to
39 Revered one
40 Hollywood workers
41 Cubicle fixture
42 Memos
43 Declares

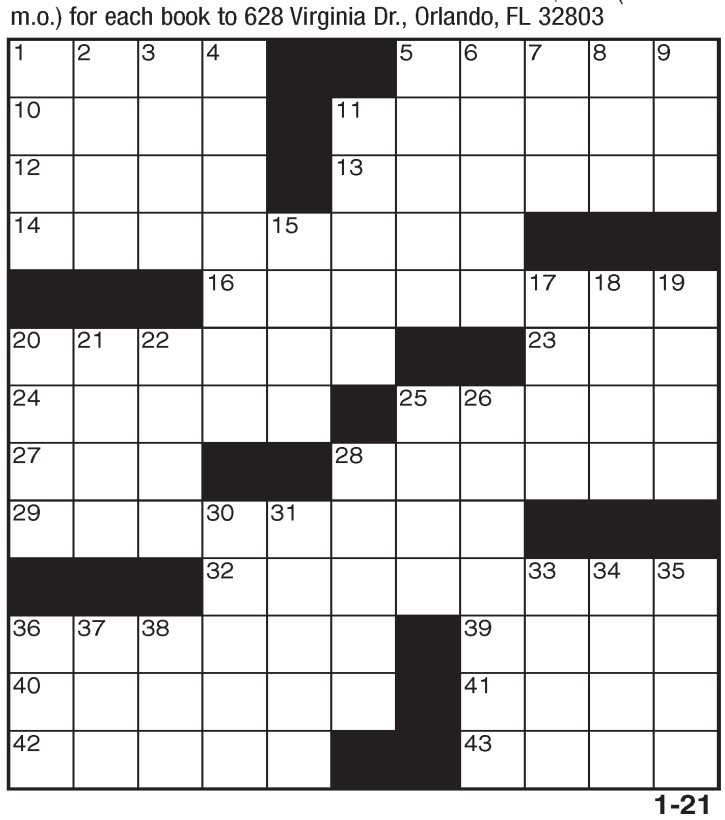
DOWN

1 Put up
2 Toast topper
3 Mountain cat
4 Do a slow burn
5 Forgo frugality
6 Comic strip unit
7 Drama division
8 Greek X
9 Snaky swimmer
11 Rap sheet info
15 "Why don't we!"
17 Article
18 Cathedral center
19 First place
20 Cross
21 Attract
22 Leif's dad
25 Window section
26 Peeper protectors
28 Boosts
30 "Sophie's Choice" co-star
31 Catalogs
33 Creative germ
34 Prone to prying
35 Fraternal group
36 Galloped
37 Freud topic
38 Determined

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

Yesterday's answer

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1-21

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Matthew Hall *matt@smdp.com*



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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. The difficulty level ranges from (easiest) to (hardest).

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

GETTING STARTED

There are many strategies to solving Sudoku. One way to begin is to examine each 3x3 grid and figure out which numbers are missing. Then, based on the other numbers in the row and column of each blank cell, find which of the missing numbers will work. Eliminating numbers will eventually lead you to the answer.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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3 51 52 61 64
Power#: 6
Jackpot: 50M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 1/19
2 17 31 39 47
Mega#: 9
Jackpot: 39M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS
Draw Date: 1/19
10 11 26 28 47
Mega#: 9
Jackpot: 9M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 1/19
7 14 36 37 38

DAILY 3
Draw Date: 1/19
MIDDAY: 8 8 2
Draw Date: 1/19
EVENING: 7 4 8

DAILY DERBY
Draw Date: 1/19
1st: 07 Eureka
2nd: 09 Winning Spirit
3rd: 06 Whirl Win
RACE TIME: 1:49.82

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at **http://www.calottery.com**

WORD UP!

aposiopesis

1. Rhetoric. a sudden breaking off in the midst of a sentence, as if from inability or unwillingness to proceed.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1981 - Production of the iconic DeLorean DMC-12 sports car begins in Dunmurry, Northern Ireland.

1997 - The U.S. House of Representatives votes 395-28 to reprimand Newt Gingrich for ethics violations, making him the first Speaker of the House to be so disciplined.

1999 - War on Drugs: In one of the largest drug busts in American history, the United States Coast Guard intercepts a ship with over 4,300 kilograms (9,500 lb) of cocaine on board.

2000 - Ecuador: After the Ecuadorian Congress is seized by indigenous organizations, Col. Lucio Gutiérrez, Carlos Solorzano and Antonio Vargas depose President Jamil Mahuad. Gutierrez is later replaced by Gen. Carlos Mendoza, who resigns and allows Vice-President Gustavo Noboa to succeed Mahuad.

2003 - A 7.6 magnitude earthquake strikes the Mexican state of Colima, killing 29 and leaving approximately 10,000 people homeless.

2004 - NASA's MER-A (the Mars Rover Spirit) ceases communication with mission control. The problem lies in the management of its flash memory and is fixed remotely from Earth on February 6.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Approaching Maximum Capacity: The Smoking Gun website suggested in December that the Fairbanks, Alaska, counterfeiting arrest of Chelsea Sperry, 31, might have set a woman's "record" for orifice-concealed contraband. Her vaginal inventory included 16 counterfeit bills (face value $890), one genuine $10 bill (in a different orifice), two baggies of meth, another containing seven morphine pills, two baggies of heroin and 40 empty baggies (apparently anticipating further sales, although it was not reported why the empty baggies -- and the $10 bill -- were not stored openly, for example, in her pocket).

■ London Fashion Week usually brings forth a shock or two from cutting-edge designers, but a September (2011) creation by Rachel Freire might have raised the bar: a floor-length dress made from 3,000 cow nipples (designed to resemble roses). Initial disgust for the garment centered on implied animal abuse, but Freire deflected that issue by pointing out that the nipples had been discarded by a tannery and that her use amounted to "recycling." Freire, 32, distracted by the animal-abuse angle, was spared having to explain the other issue -- why anyone would want to wear a dress made with cow nipples.

Get some much-needed personal time, Aquarius

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★ You might want to stay close to home. You tend to switch between extremes without intending to, and you're comfortable with what's happening. Tap into your imagination in order to understand the events around you and the reactions of others. Tonight: Happy to head home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★★ You'll have a lot to share. Someone says the right words, which allows you to open up with ease. You could see the end of a long tunnel you have been traveling through. At first you might not believe the clarity you gain, but you will after a while. Tonight: Visit with friends.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ You'll think that you're ready to go on a strict budget; however, you could decide at the last minute to justify one more indulgence. You might go overboard, but you will enjoy every moment. The time is coming when you'll need to use more self-discipline. Tonight: Pay bills.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★★ You are on top of the world and ready for nearly anything to happen. You might decide to share a fantasy or a long-thought-about idea. The feedback you get will establish the validity of the idea as well as give you the motivation to work with it. Tonight: Find a special person.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★ You might have intended to be more forthright, but you could decide to pull back instead. You need to listen to your inner voice in order to make a solid decision. A loved one starts to share more of what is on his or her mind. Tonight: Keep the partying to a minimum.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ A get-together or a meeting could be more important than you realize. In a sense, you have pushed someone away. You might need to rethink an interaction you have had recently, as it could be weighing on you. Clear the air by having a discussion. Tonight: Where the fun is.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Take charge of an important matter. Others look to you with admiration. Someone wants to demonstrate his or her caring. Honor this person by making a kind gesture in return. Your sixth sense will come through if you allow it to. Tonight: Be aware of a need to please others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★★ Let your mind drift, and ideas will come to you. It will be even more effective to work with several friends who process things the same way. You will see your resourcefulness and confidence evolve. Tonight: One-on-one relating can only add to the positive vibes.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Be direct in how you deal with others. The best way to proceed, especially if you really care about the results, is to initiate a one-on-one conversation. Share the outcome with a close friend. Make sure that you both are on the same page. Tonight: In the limelight.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ You have the unique opportunity to open up a situation. You might need to use flattery to break someone's resistance to having a conversation. You will realize that the two of you simply are on different pages. State your thoughts clearly. Tonight: The world is your oyster.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★ Your ambitious agenda could be waylaid by a need to be more self-indulgent. Be sure to schedule breaks -- and take them. Your effectiveness will be enhanced as a result. Use extreme caution with your financial dealings. Tonight: Get some much-needed personal time.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ You are inspired because of your ability to daydream and fantasize. Don't be surprised if you hear others wondering about where these ideas have come from. Make time for a child or a new friend. This act alone will make your life easier. Tonight: Let your imagination lead the way.

Thursday, January 21, 2016

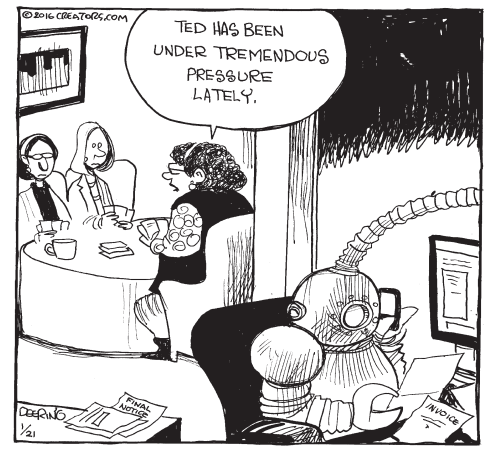
JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS
The stars show the kind of day you'll have:
★★★★★Dynamic ★★ So-So
★★★★ Positive ★ Difficult
★★★ Average

This year you find that your adventurous spirit is renewed, and you feel the desire to have more fun. Others witness a newfound zest for living. If you are single, you enjoy your dating life now more than ever before. You might opt not to commit and to just have a good time dating. If you are attached, the two of you act like wild things. Others will wonder what you're both really up to. Remember, you don't need to tell them anything; your smile says it all. CANCER is always emotional.

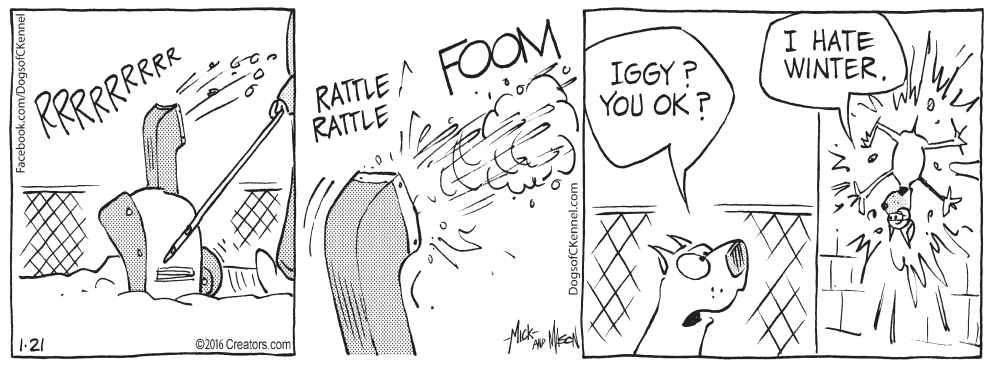
Speed Bump
By Dave Coverly



Strange Brew
By John Deering



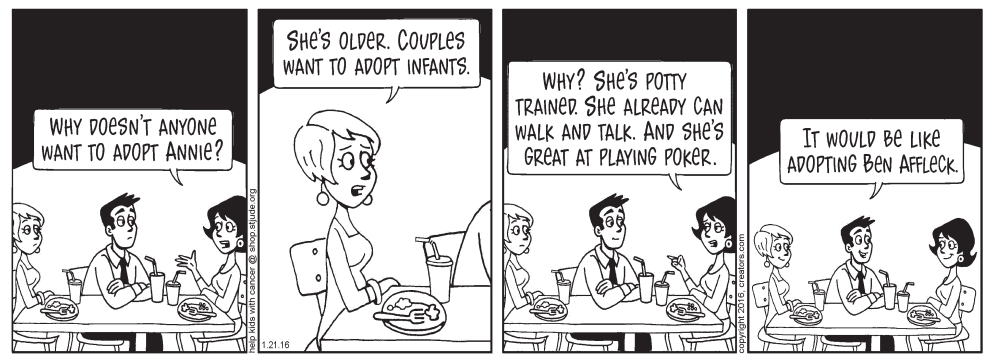
Dogs of C-Kennel
By Mick and Mason Mastroianni



Garfield
By Jim Davis



The Meaning of Lila
By John Forgetta & L.A. Rose



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