

2
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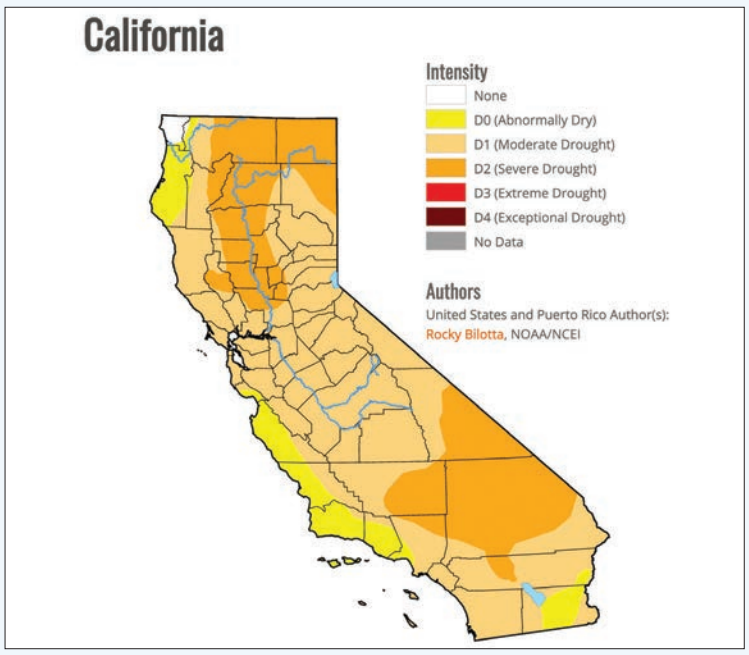
FRIDAY
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More water for cities



Courtesy photo

DROUGHT: Public water agencies in California will be getting more water from the state because of recent heavy rain. State water officials on Thursday said public water agencies will be getting 30% of what they asked for, up from the 5% state officials had announced in December. A series of powerful storms dumped an estimated 32 trillion gallons of water on California in just three weeks helping lesson the ongoing drought crisis. The deluge has helped replenish the state's reservoirs that had been at dangerously low levels but state officials warned that dry conditions could return.

Pressure mounts for SMMUSD to transition to 100% renewable energy

GRACE INEZ ADAMS
SMDP Staff Writer



Courtesy image

SOLAR: The expense of renewable energy was too great for the district.

For one year, from March 2019 to March 2020, Santa Monica Malibu School District (SMMUSD) ran on 100% renewable energy.

The District reversed the move for cost reasons, but pressure is mounting from students, teachers and community members for SMMUSD to again make the commitment to fully green power–and this time, stick with it.

Samohi students Maya Williams and Willa Ross, both members of the school's Team Marine environmental activism club, addressed the Board of Education during a discussion on the matter at their meeting last week. Williams noted that the sustainability plan the Board adopted in 2019 had set a goal to transition to fully renewable electricity by 2020.

"We've gone back on that decision," she said. "We feel the Board should show their climate commitment and decide to enroll in CPA's 100% renewable energy program."

SMMUSD is a customer of the Clean Power Alliance (CPA), an organization that offers a variety of power plans with differing levels of renewably-sourced energy. The District is currently on the lowest

SEE **RENEWABLE ENERGY** PAGE 6

Aging workforce seen as liability for future worker-compensation claims

GRACE INEZ ADAMS
SMDP Staff Writer

Claims against the city for job-related injury or illness are at their lowest levels in more than five years but the good news will likely be short lived as an aging workforce is predicted to file more costly claims going forward.

The City of Santa Monica pays millions of dollars every year in workers compensation to employees injured or sickened on the job. During the 2021-22 fiscal year, the exact amount was $14.8 million, an 8% increase from the previous year, according to a report released last week by Chief Financial Officer Gigi Decavalles-Hughes. However,

SEE **WORKERS** PAGE 7

While some eateries dine and dash, others make reservations for Downtown Santa Monica

SCOTT SNOWDEN
SMDP Staff Writer

The recent closure of the popular Flower Child restaurant in the heart of downtown Santa Monica is just one of several closures and openings in the area, suggesting even eateries owned by large corporations aren't immune to an uncertain economic future while some locals are hanging on.

From the moment it first opened in July of 2016, the Flower Child restaurant (at 1332 2nd St) proved popular with locals and tourists alike, with consistently high customer reviews on sites like Yelp. Then with little or no warning, it was closed in the first week of 2023.

The Daily Press reached out to the parent company, The Cheesecake Factory Inc, for an explanation, since the other two outlets in Southern California (Newport Beach, Orange County and Del Mar, San Diego County) remain open and unaffected.

"After seven unforgettable years in our Santa Monica location, we made the difficult decision to discontinue operations at this location only so we can focus on new growth. Our two other California

SEE **RESTAURANT** PAGE 8



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Trump impeachment leader Schiff joins California Senate race

MICHAEL R. BLOOD
Associated Press

Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff, who rose to national prominence as the lead prosecutor in President Donald Trump's first impeachment trial, said Thursday he is running for the Senate seat held by long-serving Democrat Dianne Feinstein.

The 2024 race is quickly emerging as a marquee Senate contest, even though the 89-year-old Feinstein, the oldest member of Congress, has yet to announce if she will seek another term, though her retirement is widely expected. Schiff is jumping in two weeks after Rep. Katie Porter became the first candidate to declare her campaign for the safe Democratic seat.

Schiff, a former federal prosecutor, made clear he intends to anchor his candidacy to his role as Trump's chief antagonist in Congress. In his campaign kickoff video, he said the "biggest job of his life" was serving as impeachment manager, and he promised to continue to be a "fighter" for democracy.

"If our democracy isn't delivering for Americans, they'll look for alternatives, like a dangerous demagogue who promises that he alone can fix it," Schiff said of Trump, who has announced his 2024 campaign for the presidency.

Feinstein, a former San Francisco mayor who joined the Senate in 1992, told reporters in Washington this week that she will make a decision about 2024 in the "next couple of months."

The jockeying for the seat has created a politically awkward dynamic for Feinstein, who has broken gender barriers throughout her decadeslong career in local and national politics. In recent years, questions have arisen about her cognitive health and memory, though she has defended her effectiveness in representing a state that is home to nearly 40 million people.

> "I want to make sure that everything I did was respectful of her and that I did so with her knowledge and her blessing
>
> - Adam Schiff Democratic Rep.

SEE **CALIFORNIA ELECTION** PAGE 4



Courtesy photo

SCHIFF: Adam Schiff is running for a Senate seat.



Trump's return to Facebook could be major fundraising boost

JILL COLVIN AND BARBARA ORTUTAY
Associated Press

The decision by Facebook's parent company to soon reinstate Donald Trump's account comes at a critical moment for the former president as he tries to build campaign momentum for a return to the White House.

Reclaiming his social media megaphone could open an important new stream of revenue for the 2024 contest's only declared candidate, whose campaign has faced criticism for its lackluster launch.

Trump is considering a return to Twitter, as well, rejoining both of the social media giants that he used to great effect to widely and personally connect with his supporters in previous campaigning.

He was banned from posting on both Facebook and Twitter, along with other social media sites, for his role in inciting violence in the deadly insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021,

In considering a return to the platforms that shunned him, Trump is essentially recognizing that the social media company he launched last year, Truth Social, pales in comparison to the reach of the highest profile platforms. He currently has 4.84 million followers on Truth Social, dramatically fewer than the 87.7 million who follow his account on Twitter, the 34 million who follow him on Facebook and the 23.4 million who follow him on Meta's Instagram.

> "I think first and foremost this is about fundraising for Trump"
>
> - Katie Harbath

Trump's Twitter account was unlocked in November, shortly after Elon Musk purchased the company, but Trump has refrained from using it, insisting that he is happier on Truth.

But while Twitter was long Trump's instrument for shouting his opinions — and received far more attention — for his new campaign, Facebook is ultimately about money.

The 2016 campaign of the business executive and reality TV star was a trailblazer when it came to harnessing the power of Facebook's digital advertising tools. And his 2016 and 2020 campaigns spent millions on ads that were key to his small-dollar fundraising efforts.

The decision on Wednesday by Meta, Facebook's parent company, to reinstate him, is likely to be a similar boon to his current campaign's efforts to raise millions, as well as to collect emails and identify voters.

"I think first and foremost this is about fundraising for Trump," said Katie Harbath, a fellow at the Bipartisan Policy Center who served as Facebook's former public policy director. "He wants to continue to have access to get emails and addresses for fundraising, which is something the platform was always really important to the campaign for."

During his suspension from Facebook, Trump's political operation continued to fundraise on the site but couldn't run ads directly from him or in his voice — appeals that Harbath said are much more powerful.

"Personal appeals are always the best," she said. "And folks haven't seen that in their feeds in a long time."

The reinstatement comes at an opportune time for Trump, who has struggled in the opening months of his 2024 White House campaign to reclaim the energy of his previous two bids. He's planning his first official campaign event Saturday, with plans to visit two early-voting states, New Hampshire and South Carolina.

But even as Trump and his team mull how best to harness the social media brands that helped power his initial rise, there could be significant hurdles.

The former president created Truth Social, a Twitter lookalike, after he was suspended from Twitter and Facebook. He usually posts on his social media site multiple times a day, sharing thoughts, insults and campaign videos and reposting messages from his supporters, just as he had on Twitter.

As part of his deal with Digital World Acquisition Corp. to take Truth Social public, Trump agreed — so he wouldn't compete against his own company — that it would be the "first channel" for "any and all social media communications and posts coming from his personal profile," according to a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission last May.

That includes an exclusivity clause in which the former president was "generally obligated to make any social media post on TruthSocial and may not make the same post on another social media site for 6 hours" for a period of 18 months, beginning Dec. 22, 2021.

It adds, however, that, Trump "may make a post from a personal account related to political messaging, political fundraising or get-out-the-vote efforts on any social media site at any time."

Some Trump allies believe that line gives him license to post political messages anytime he'd like, though he continues to abstain.

Former Republican Rep. Devin Nunes, CEO of the Trump Media & Technology Group, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the SEC filing makes Trump's obligations clear, but he declined to elaborate. Neither Digital World nor its CEO Patrick Orlando responded to requests for comment.

"I think this is less of a legal question than an ego question," said Harbath, who expects Trump to begin advertising on Facebook before he resumes messaging. "The man likes to put on a show."

Questions also remain about whether Digital World will get approval from federal stock market regulators to join with Truth Social and go public. Without the merger, Truth Social and its biggest owner, Trump, won't get shares in the combined company potentially worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

Since rumors began spreading of Trump possibly posting again on rival social media platforms, stock in Digital World has plunged. The potential Truth Social partner is down 30% since Twitter reinstated Trump's personal account last year even as the broader comparative market has barely moved.

Trump has so far insisted he is sticking with Truth, saying he prefers the engagement on the site, where fringe content dominates.

But Trump in recent weeks has been talking about returning to Twitter, according to two people familiar with the discussions who spoke on condition of anonymity to disclose private conversations. That has included discussing possible first tweets that would generate maximum impact, NBC News first reported.

A Trump campaign spokesperson declined to discuss Trump's social media plans including his plans for a possible return.

But as Meta mulled its decision, Trump's campaign lobbied for his reinstatement.

In a letter this month, lawyer Scott Gast pressed the company to allow Trump's return, arguing that continuing the ban "would basically constitute, in the words of Mr. Clegg, a deliberate effort by a private company to silence Mr. Trump's political voice."

That's Nick Clegg, Meta's vice president of global affairs.

"Moreover, every day that President Trump's political voice remains silenced furthers an inappropriate interference in the American political and election process," wrote lawyer Gast.

Trump also faces potential limitations on the content he can share on the platform.

In a post announcing Meta's decision, Clegg wrote that the "public should be able to hear what their politicians are saying — the good, the bad and the ugly — so that they can make informed choices at the ballot box."

At the same time, however, he said the company would be putting new "guardrails" in place and that Trump would face additional suspensions should he post "further violating content."

And if Trump or anyone else posts material that doesn't violate Facebook's rules but is otherwise harmful — such as content that tries to delegitimizes an upcoming election or is related to the QAnon conspiracy theory — Clegg said Meta will act to limit that material's reach.

It could also temporarily restrict Trump's access to its advertising tools.

Ortutay reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Bernard Condon in New York and Eric Tucker in Washington contributed to this report.

CRIME WATCH

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 15

Pac Sun, located on the 1400 block of 3rd Street reported a theft. Officers located a suspect matching the provided description and ordered the individual to stop. The individual, later identified as Jennifer Matoba, fled the area after recognizing the officers and hearing their commands. A foot pursuit ensued and Matoba was eventually handcuffed and taken into the custody. Once detained, Matoba provided a false name. Her real identified was not discovered until fingerprinted and booked into the Santa Monica Jail for stealing a pair of jeans valued at over $60. While conducting their investigation, an employee from the neighboring Burton store approached and stated Matoba had stolen items valued at over $70 from their location early that same day.

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WINNER

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CALIFORNIA ELECTION

FROM PAGE 2

Schiff, 62, said in an interview Thursday that he had spoken to Feinstein a day earlier to inform her about his plans.

"I want to make sure that everything I did was respectful of her and that I did so with her knowledge and her blessing," Schiff told The Associated Press.

Asked if he was aware of the senator's plans, Schiff said, "I don't want to presume to speak for Sen. Feinstein, and I think she's earned the right to announce her decision when she's ready to make that announcement."

Schiff was first elected to Congress in 2000 and represents parts of Hollywood. He has been a frequent target of conservatives — Trump in particular — since the then-GOP-led House Intelligence Committee he served on started investigating Trump's ties to Russia in the 2016 election. Schiff appeared frequently on television to question Trump's actions.

That criticism intensified when Democrats took the House majority in early 2019 and he became the committee chair, and it reached a full-on roar with his role in the impeachment investigation of Trump's dealings with Ukraine. Trump was impeached in December 2019 on charges he abused the power of the presidency to investigate rival Joe Biden and obstructed Congress' investigation.

In an impassioned plea to the Senate in early 2020, Schiff urged Trump's removal from office and framed the choice in moral terms. "If right doesn't matter, we're lost," he said at the time.

"You know you can't trust this president do what's right for this country," Schiff said. "You can trust he will do what's right for Donald Trump. He'll do it now. He's done it before. He'll do it for the next several months, he'll do it in the election if he's allowed to. This is why if you find him guilty you must find that he should be removed. Because right matters."

The Republican-led Senate acquitted Trump of both charges. In 2021, he became the first president in U.S. history to be impeached twice, this time for inciting the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol after he lost the 2020 election. He was again acquitted by the Senate.

Republicans are still angry about Schiff's starring role at the impeachment trial, with new House Speaker Kevin McCarthy accusing him of using his leadership position to "lie to the American public again and again." McCarthy, R-Calif., said this week that he intended to block Schiff from continuing his service on the House Intelligence Committee.

With the centrist Feinstein in the twilight of her career, the race in the heavily Democratic state already is shaping up as a showcase for an ambitious, younger generation on the party's left wing.

Both Schiff and Porter are nationally recognized — Schiff through his leading impeachment role and Porter, a favorite of the party's progressive wing, through her tough questioning of CEOs and other witnesses at congressional hearings. Each is also a formidable small-dollar fundraiser.

Neither has run statewide before, and each would face the challenge of becoming better known beyond their Southern California districts. Democrats are expected to dominate the contest — a Republican hasn't won a statewide race in California since 2006, and the past two Senate elections had only Democrats on the November ballot.

The field is expected to grow, with other possible contenders including Democratic Rep. Barbara Lee, a former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Asked how he would stand out in what is expected to be a crowded field, Schiff said he would emphasize his central role of national struggles over democracy and the economy.

"I think that record of leadership, that record of staunch defense of our democracy, and the way that I've championed an economy that works for everyone, I think are a powerful record to run on," he said.

In his announcement video, Schiff mixed shots of his family and highlights from the impeachment proceedings and clips of Trump and other Republicans.

He warns that the threat of extremism is not over.

"Today's Republican Party is gutting the middle class, threatening our democracy" Schiff says. "They aren't going to stop. We have to stop them."



COMMUNITY NEWS

Los Angeles

Phase 1 of LA County's $54 Million Economic Opportunity Grant Program Now Open for Microbusinesses

The Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) has announced the launch of the first phase of the Economic Opportunity Grant (EOG) program for small and microbusinesses, and non-profit agencies in LA County. EOG will award more than $54 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds across 6,800 grants in a phased rollout to regions and organizations adversely affected by COVID-19.

Eligible grantees may be awarded between $2,500 and $25,000 and can access on-demand application assistance, one-on-one online and in-person technical support, and pipelines to other County programs, grants, and contracting opportunities available to support post-pandemic recovery. DEO has partnered with Lendistry and the L.A. Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) to create a central application portal for this grant and future grant opportunities, and to facilitate direct concierge support.

During Phase One, LA County's smallest and most vulnerable businesses under $50k in annual gross revenue will be able to apply for grants of $2,500, funded by the State. Phase Two, funded by ARPA, will also be available to microbusinesses but will expand to include small businesses and nonprofits with grants ranging between $15,000 or $20,000 per grant for small businesses and $20,000 or $25,000 per grant for nonprofits. Phase Two is expected to launch in February. EOG will run at least through May 2023 or when available funds are expended.

"It is our responsibility to make sure that we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic better and stronger than before," said Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath. "By supporting owners and entrepreneurs throughout LA County, the Economic Opportunity Grants Program will promote and strengthen the small business community that makes Los Angeles County so unique."

> "It is our responsibility to make sure that we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic better and stronger than before
>
> - Lindsey P. Horvath Supervisor

Applicants can visit grants.lacounty.gov to apply or to see open and upcoming applications, access live webinars, instructional how-to-apply videos and demos, one-on-one application support and in-person support events across the County. Successful applicants will receive notice within 30 days of submission.

Multi-lingual application assistance and support will be provided by SBDC and partners, and will include the following languages: Arabic, Armenian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Farsi, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Thai, and Vietnamese. Potential applicants can call the EOG Call Center for general inquires and application assistance at (833) 364-7268.

In addition to Economic Opportunity Grant program, small businesses can also connect with DEO's Office of Small Business to access customized one-on-one business counseling, free legal assistance on topics including commercial tenancy, contract development, intellectual property and more, and specialized webinars, workshops, and trainings to help residents open and grow a business. Contact the Office of Small Business at 844-432-4900 or via email at OSB@opportunity.lacounty.gov.

LA County's Economic Opportunity Grant program is administered by the newly created Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), launched in July 2022. DEO helps job seekers, entrepreneurs, small businesses, and residents access life changing opportunities, and is home to Office of Small Business, LA County's one stop shop dedicated to prospective entrepreneurs and small business owners. Stay connected with DEO! Follow @EconOppLA on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, subscribe to our newsletter, or visit opportunity.lacounty.gov to learn about DEO services.

Hosted by Long Beach Community College District, the LA SBDC assists small businesses and entrepreneurs throughout the Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. SBDC helps businesses: launch, increase sales, obtain capital, streamline operations, recover from disasters, utilize new technologies, expand into new markets, and position for long-term growth. Our team of over 150 small business consultants provide no-cost business consulting and training programs in business operations and management, marketing, financing, business planning and more. The SBDC program is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development. SmallBizLA.org

SUBMITTED BY THE DEO

GET IT DAILY...

OPINION **LAUGHING MATTERS**

Jack Neworth

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Is George Santos a drag on the GOP



Courtesy image

SANTOS: The Congressman has tried to hide his past.

George Santos, the freshman GOP Congressman from Long Island's 3rd District, may soon be an ex-Congressman. He's under multiple investigations, including having confessed in Brazil to a $700 check forgery. But, as I write this, a bombshell here just broke, which I will get to later, that might make any of Santos' transgressions look like an overdue library book.

As Speaker McCarthy's trying to remove three Democrats from committee assignments, he has assigned "Scamtos" to the Small Business and Science Committees. On the latter, Santos will have jurisdiction over portions of the EPA, the Department of Energy, and NASA!

That in mind, I've compiled only a few of Santos' most outrageous "embellishments," as he calls them. For example, Santos has said he attended the private academy Horace Mann High School in the Bronx but left in his senior year because "my parents fell on hard times." (A spokesperson for Horace Mann told CNN he never attended the school.)

In addition to "earning" an MBA from NYU, Santos claims he graduated summa cum laude from Baruch College. But a Baruch representative confirmed there was no such award. Maybe it was a summa cum latte? (Sorry about that as I can already hear the groans.)

Santos brags he "was a star" on the Baruch volleyball team but recently "Vanity Fair" published that he never even attended Baruch. Later, Santos admitted to the New York Post, "I didn't graduate from any college." (Santos makes Honest Abe look like Pinocchio!)

As for his "drag days," two acquaintances told Reuters that Santos participated in the drag queen circuit in Brazil aspiring to be Miss Gay Rio de Janeiro. Santos labeled the accusations as "categorically false." That is until this past Saturday when he acknowledged he had dressed in drag under the name Kitara Ravache, adding angrily, "So sue me for having a life."

Other Santos aliases, include Anthony Devolder which is how he introduced himself in 2019 at a New York City LGBT event. And he used Anthony Zabrovsky for a Go Fund Me page for a homeless veteran whose dog was dying, saying, "Jews will give us more with that name." The fund raised $3,000 for the surgery but Santos disappeared with the cash and the dog died.

House Speaker McCarthy desperately needs Santos' vote but sheepishly admitted "I did have some questions about his resume." And yet he insists "the voters elected him and I'm not going to override the constitution."

Finally, now the bombshell. When Santos first filed for the election he checked the box that the $700,000 donation was a personal loan, legal only if the money was his. But when he just amended his filing, he suspiciously unchecked that box. And worse, he listed as his treasurer Thomas Datwyler, a veteran campaign treasurer, except Datwyler says Scamtos did so without his consent!

So where did the $700k come from? Fox News of all outlets, reports Santos has business ties to the cousin of a sanctioned Russian oligarch, meaning the GOP likely has a pathological liar and confessed forger in a position of leadership. (John McCain must be spinning in his grave.)

As for the Dems, I'm reminded of Will Rogers' quote, "I'm not a member of any organized political party...I'm a Democrat!" Clearly the Dems dropped the opposition research ball as many of Santos' fraudster fiascoes were on the Internet.

I also fault myself for enjoying the humiliation McCarthy suffered through the 15 ballots it took to elect him speaker. This sounds naive, but what if the Dems had offered McCarthy the votes he needed in return for his not putting the likes of anti-Semite Marjorie Taylor Greene in

SEE **LAUGHING MATTERS** PAGE 7

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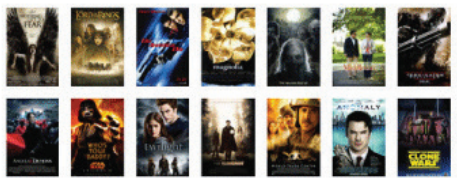


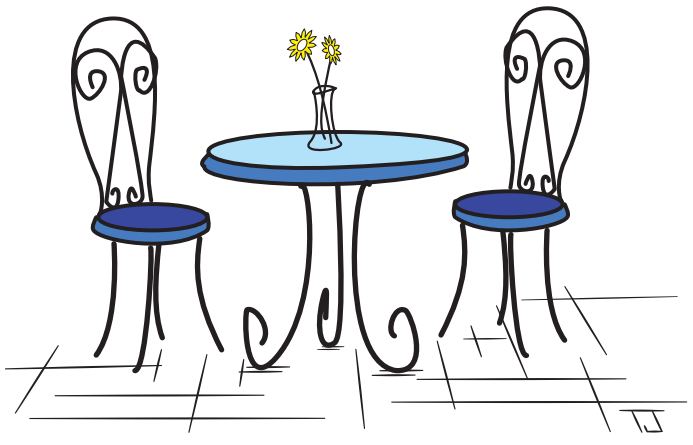
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RENEWABLE ENERGY

FROM PAGE 1

plan, receiving only 40% of its energy from carbon-free sources.

To upgrade to the 100% renewable plan, SMMUSD Sustainability Manager Austin Toyama said that it would initially cost the District an additional $109,000 per year on top of the $884,000 that they currently pay. However, he added that this would be offset in the next few years as multiple new solar projects come online that will allow the District to generate 28-30% of its own energy. This would reduce the total net added cost of switching to the 100% renewable plan to $30,000 a year.

> When we tried clean power for the highschool before, it increased our cost immediately by 40-50%, so that's where we sort of pulled back
>
> - Carey Upton SMMUSD Chief Operations Officer

SMMUSD Chief Operations Officer Carey Upton told the board he feels recent efforts, such as the new solar panel installations – particularly at Samohi which is one of the largest energy consumers in the District– put the District in a good place to now be able to follow through with the clean energy transition.

"When we tried clean power for the highschool before, it increased our cost immediately by 40-50%, so that's where we sort of pulled back," he said. "But we believe that we're now, with those systems fully online, we're getting good information that's telling us it's just that funding [the $30,000]."

Scientist, Samohi teacher, SMC professor and parent Benjamin Kay added his voice to those showing support for the move at the recent Board meeting.

"My deep hope is that the Board of Education makes a strong and unified recommendation to the school district leaders to adopt the 100% green power option of the Clean Power Alliance..." he said. "Not doing so would show a lack of responsibility and commitment in addressing environmental degradation and adverse human health effects, environmental injustice and economic instability."

His son, a student at Will Rogers Elementary School, also took to the mic.

"I want SMMUSD to use earth-friendly energy. I do not want us to use energy from fossil fuels, instead I would use wind and solar energy – now who's with me?" he asked.

At least 800 others appear to be on board and have signed an online petition organized by Team Marine to commit to the transition to 100% renewable energy.

"Santa Monica is already a leader in sustainability and we, as Santa Monica residents, should continue that leadership by bringing our schools into the next phase of our climate commitment with 100% renewable energy" Ross said. "We hope that you will stand with us and the 872 people that signed our petition, and take this first crucial step towards protecting our planet earth."

The topic was brought before the Board as an informational item, meaning no action could immediately be taken, but Interim Superintendent Mark Kelly and board members unanimously agreed to instruct District staff to look into the budget implications of upgrading the plan and bring it back for a vote at a future meeting.

"At the end of the day we're talking about a $30,000 investment every year, which is really nothing compared to what we spend," Board Chair Maria Leon-Vasquez said. "But more importantly than anything, as we're looking at the world and what we already have suffered in California with climate change, I think this is... the direction the board should take, moving forward on this."

grace@smdp.com



Courtesy Photo

POWER: Students and teachers want the board to transition to green power.

WORKERS

FROM PAGE 1

the total value of all open claims against the city fell from $31.6 million in the 2020-21 year, to $28 million in the 21-22 year

"The reduction in open claim inventory is due to a very large increase in claim settlements via compromise and release agreements, which allow the City to close out settled claims completely," the report stated.

The increase in expenses in the 2021-22 year is reflective of more claims being settled, the report explained. It showed a decrease in the total number of open claims to 588, down from 612 the year before. While the city paid out more per claim last year than the year before, the report explains claim specifics are highly variable.

"The number and value of settlements tend to fluctuate from year to year due to the severity and timing of injuries, and the willingness of injured employees to settle claims," it said.

The City was also able to offset some costs in the most recent fiscal year by recovering $296,573 from third parties responsible for city employees' work-related injuries.

The City is required to provide benefits to workers who are hurt or become ill as a result of the job and file compensation claims with the city in lieu of suing. This can include coverage of medical costs and payments to make up for lost wages or any ongoing physical impairment.

The report also noted a "concerning" trend in an increase of a certain type of claim that has the potential to be more costly.

"A significant number of new claim filings are for cumulative trauma injuries that are the result of performing repetitive physically and/or mentally demanding tasks over long periods of time," it stated. "The cumulative trauma injury claims are common in an aging workforce, and typically involve several body parts and legal representation, making them extremely costly"

The report said that as Santa Monica's current workforce ages and is made up of a higher proportion of older individuals, these types of injuries will likely become more prevalent and more expensive to the City.

"The cumulative trauma claims are nearly impossible to avoid given that under California workers' compensation regulations, the employer is responsible for a physical injury if the job contributed to at least one percent of the injury," said the report.

Cumulative trauma injuries accounted for 53% of news claims filed during 2021-22 fiscal year, compared to 35% during 2020-21, and 27% during 2019-20.

The City has several programs in place with the aim of reducing the cost of workers compensation claims, including providing case management services and opportunities for work placements tailored to injured employees physical capabilities.

> "The cumulative trauma claims are nearly impossible to avoid given that under California workers' compensation regulations, the employer is responsible for a physical injury if the job contributed to at least one percent of the injury
>
> - Worker-compensation report

The number of new claims filed with the City did not change from the previous fiscal year, remaining at 261, its lowest point in ten years.

grace@smdp.com

LAUGHING MATTERS

FROM PAGE 5

positions of power?

Currently we are facing the debt ceiling crisis. The GOP will likely take it to the wire and possibly cause a recession. And if they shut down the government, it would devastate veterans, federal workers and those who depend on Medicare and Social Security. (The most popular two government programs in our history.)

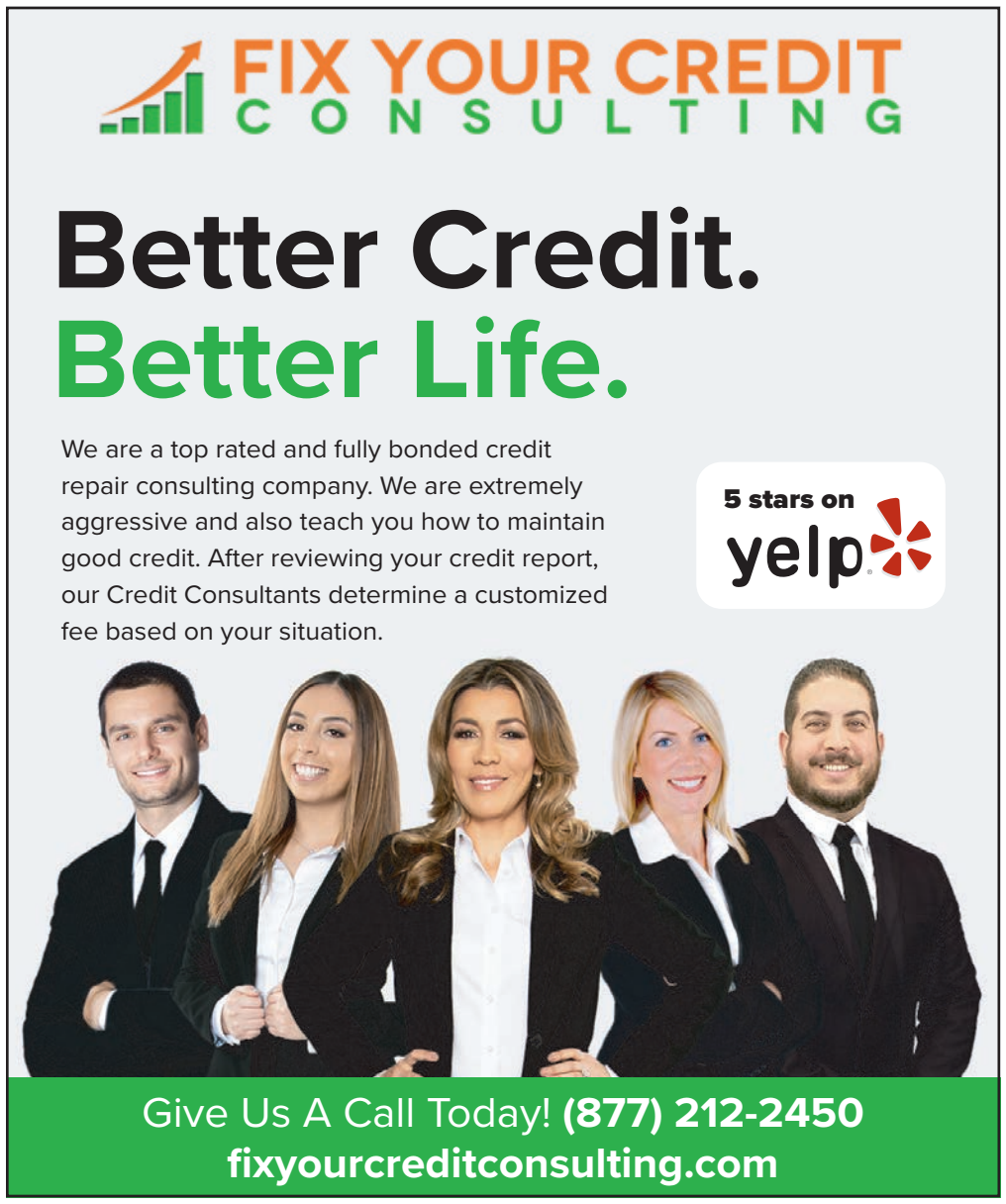
To summarize Santos' past: Check forger; lies he worked for Goldman Sachs and Citigroup; his mother died in 9/11 when she died in 2016; his grandparents survived the holocaust, except they lived in Brazil. He said he was Jewish but meant "Jew-ish"; he survived an assassination attempt and also a mugging that included robbing his wallet, watch and shoes but didn't file a police report; and claims he will donate his Congressional salary to charity. (How about buying the homeless vet a new dog?)

There are an estimated 170 House GOP election deniers including Santos and his new found influence over NASA on space and science where he has zero experience. Then again, assuming he's not in jail or extradited to Brazil, maybe George Anthony Devolder Ravache Santos will claim he was once an astronaut. (That is if he hasn't already.)

Jack is at: jackdailypress@aol.com

LET US KNOW YOUR OPINION

Santa Monica Daily Press editor@smdp.com





Santa Monica Daily Press
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RESTAURANT

FROM PAGE 1

locations, and 30 restaurants across the US, will be business as usual," said Anita Walker, Vice President of Marketing, Fox Restaurant Concepts, a subsidiary of The Cheesecake Factory Inc.

Joining Flower Child in our fading memories were two more recent closures, the Santa Monica outlet of Heroic Italian (at 516 Santa Monica Blvd) and Pink Daisy Cafe (at 321 Santa Monica Blvd). While the former has other outlets in Beverly Hills, Berkeley and San Francisco, the latter was an independent eatery. Flower Child currently has 31 outlets in 11 states.

> Restaurants are an important component for tourism and also for locals and people in the region who love all of the dining options Santa Monica has to offer. I believe we would benefit from having more restaurants
> - Andrew Thomas, CEO, Downtown Santa Monica, Inc.

"Restaurants are an important component for tourism and also for locals and people in the region who love all of the dining options Santa Monica has to offer. I believe we would benefit from having more restaurants," said Andrew Thomas, CEO, Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. "I do know that turnover is sometimes an unfortunate reality of business in any area, not just Santa Monica," he added.

One independent local restaurant still surviving in Santa Monica is Rita's Gate of India (at 1450 5th St) and its owner Rita Huda is no stranger to struggle. This is the third location on the Westside and Huda has survived two economic recessions, the Covid pandemic and even fire, which is why she had to relocate from her former site at Santa Monica Blvd and Ocean Ave to this one six years ago.

"When I found this location, it was not a restaurant, it was an empty space, so I had to put all my money in and take out a loan against my house. I built this place from scratch, kitchens and everything," Huda said.

However, despite her persistence, Huda continues to fight an uphill battle for the restaurant's continued existence.

"Whenever we cook, the aroma fills the street, everyone tells me that. And I do not compromise with any of my ingredients, not with my spices and not with the quality, but it gets harder to find the right ingredients and more expensive, always more expensive" said Huda. "It is absolutely getting harder every year," she added.

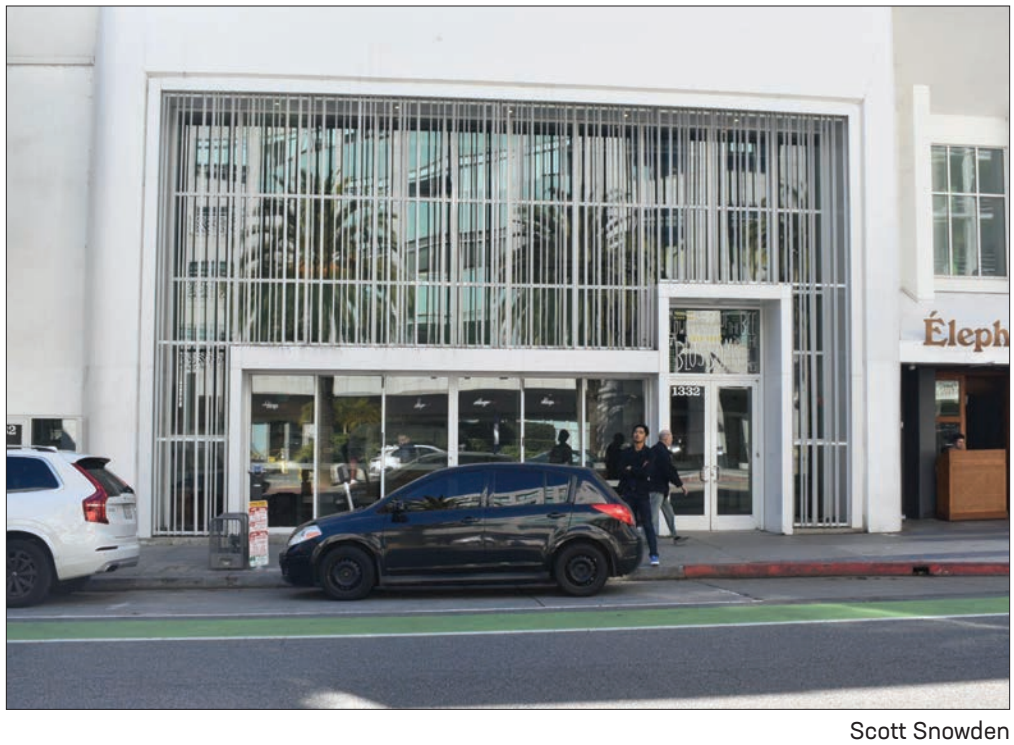
However, there are five new restaurants arriving in the Downtown area. Tacos 1986 (at 135 Colorado Ave) and Bar Monette (at 109 Santa Monica Blvd) are already open, with Ugo (at 1237 3rd St), Kitchen United (at 1315 3rd St) and Impasta (at 413 Santa Monica Blvd) due to open soon.

"Of course every business has its own set of challenges to overcome to be successful," said Thomas. "That said, increased foot traffic is something we need if we're going to sustain our economy and help our local businesses survive a potential recession.

"This brings people to our Downtown area and, hopefully in addition to dining, they're seeing a movie or theater, a magic show, buying clothing, jewelry and so on. Obviously traditional retail is also a destination, but we've seen the impacts to this sector as a result of online shopping.

"I believe we can overcome a downturn and be a great place for businesses to open and thrive for years to come," Thomas said.

scott.snowden@smdp.com



Scott Snowden

CLOSED: The former site of popular restaurant Flower Child, in the heart of Downtown Santa Monica.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 27

What you do to establish your legacy is also a joy in the moment. You'll learn, read and travel widely. The more you learn about the wide world the sharper your intuition becomes. Other highlights: dancing to your heart's content, a secret gift or creation that you eventually share with the world and the closing of a big deal. Libra and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 24, 17, 28 and 19.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Fears are not facts on which to base ideas about your abilities or worth. The gentle work you're doing will resolve fear, heal defensiveness and help you gain a greater appreciation of your needs and strengths.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). It is a great pleasure of life to surpass where you expected to end up. You will enjoy this pleasure now as you recall your early ideas about what you were capable of and realize how limited and wrong they were.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Some of your experiments give you enough information to come to a conclusion and some won't. Either way, life is more exciting when you try new things, and you're much further along in your journey of knowledge.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You connect better when you see a bit of yourself in the other person. Arguably, all connection is built on this kind of resonance to some degree. You'll meet someone new and find a point of relation straight away.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Often you bring out the best in people and they you. But if the chemistry goes another way and people bring out the worst in each other, it's dramatic, though not necessarily bad for personal growth. At least it's interesting.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The road to happiness doesn't start with wanting to be happy. Wanting itself is in opposition to happiness. The first signs of joy often come with noticing, admiring and the like. Your glad heart fills as your senses do.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It is said that the best leaders are often reluctant to take power. It's not that you want to be the leader today, but it might be the case that no one else is stepping up so it naturally falls to you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There are sights that go unseen but that doesn't mean they didn't happen. This is what security video and instant replay is for, should you be so lucky. Today it may come down to whether or not you believe the witness.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You prefer to live and let live, so it's hard for you to relate to people who feel the need to control the expression of others. Whether people agree or disagree with you, it says more about them than you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It will not be enough to read part of the situation. Get the whole story from every person's point of view. Illumination will happen little by little. It will be so satisfying when this all comes together.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Let nothing dampen your enthusiasm for possibilities hovering on the horizon, even if you seem to be the only one seeing them. It's better to spend your time working on your passion than discussing or defending it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If only there was always time to think about the best way to react and practice it until it's smooth. Alas, you never know what the day or the conversation will bring. Your reactions reveal humanity. That's better than being cool.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

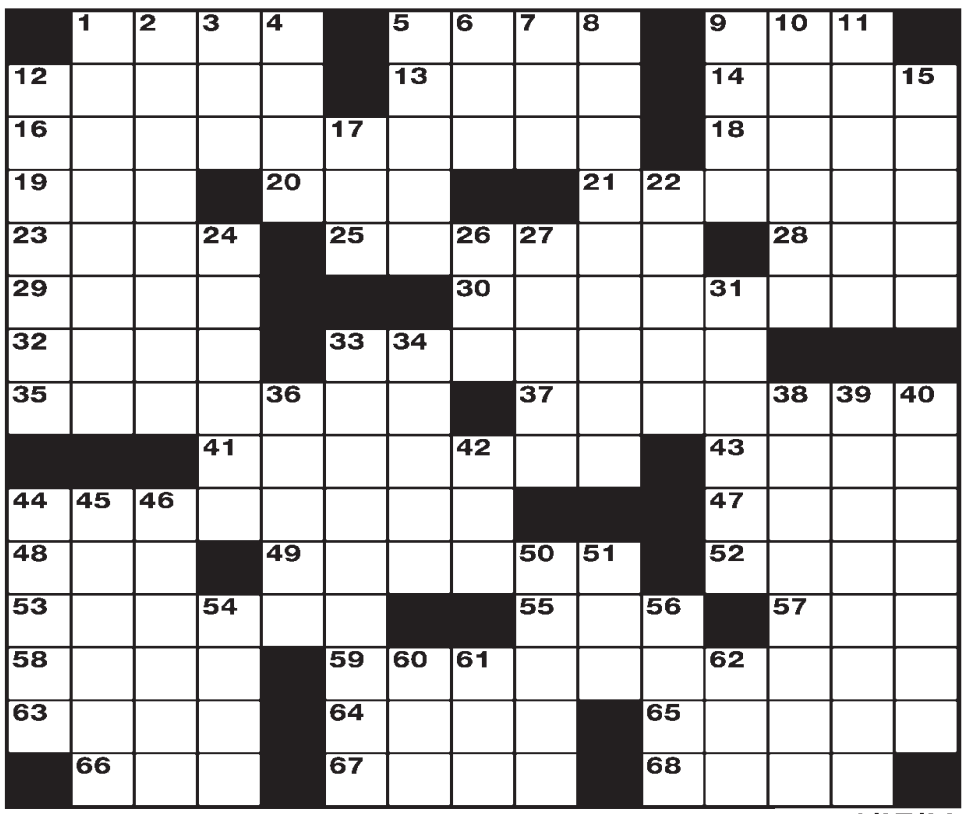
		2			8		3	6
8		6						
	3		4				2	7
4		5		8		9		
	8		1	3	9		5	
		3		5		1		2
9	6				3		4	
						3		9
3	5		9			7		

Newsday Crossword

FACIAL FINISHES by Chris Gross
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Card brand
5 Typical Azerbaijani
9 Office routing no.
12 Frustration exclamation
13 Describe as
14 Conquest for Caesar
16 Cape north of San Francisco
18 Fee for all
19 Pollster's no.
20 It's not part of SOS
21 Currently
23 Be boisterous
25 Hardest human tissue
28 French noble
29 Tuscan island
30 Wine for cocktails
32 Edible rock
33 Cast aside
35 Village high point
37 Quilt's fabric strips
41 Sled race participants
43 Wind with keys
44 "San Diego" anagram
47 Biblical conjunction
48 What a ring lacks
49 Spice mix for meat
52 Stalactite creator
53 Steffi Graf's spouse
55 Read Across America sponsor
57 Where many keep their money
58 What Minifigures are made with
59 Cuddly companions
63 Move effortlessly
64 Order from a menu
65 "The Devil and Daniel Webster" author
66 Drapery support
67 Guy on California's quarter
68 Backup introducer

DOWN
1 *Mousse* flavor
2 Worthy of emulation
3 Color like buff
4 Really loving
5 By-the-book
6 "I object!"
7 Red state
8 Heineken's headquarters
9 Dr. Watson exclamation
10 Idyllic place
11 Reproachful remark
12 Subject to tyranny
15 Parasite
17 Weep over
22 *Stand and Deliver* star
24 For all to see
26 #5 baby girl's name for 2021
27 Smart outfit
31 Not progressing
33 Problem-solving procedure
34 Nickname like Liz
36 Where to find frogs
38 Two-country contingent
39 Firm rejection
40 Overlook or overcome
42 Ending like -ist
44 Buyouts, for instance
45 Ready to drive
46 Slow pace
50 Submerged
51 Pop superstar, for short
54 Dealt in
56 French cleric
60 Word on some Chanel bottles
61 506, to Cicero
62 Exotic leather

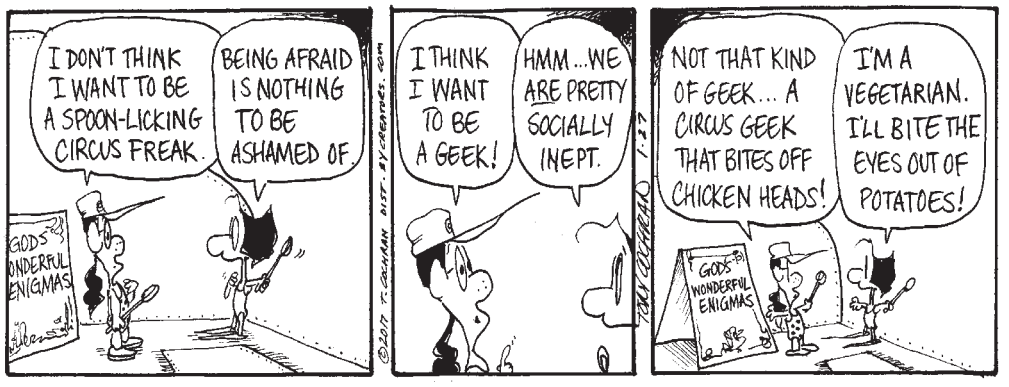


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MORE OF STAN'S CROSSWORDS! Play FREE from Stan's archives of Easy, Hard and Sunday puzzles at: tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords

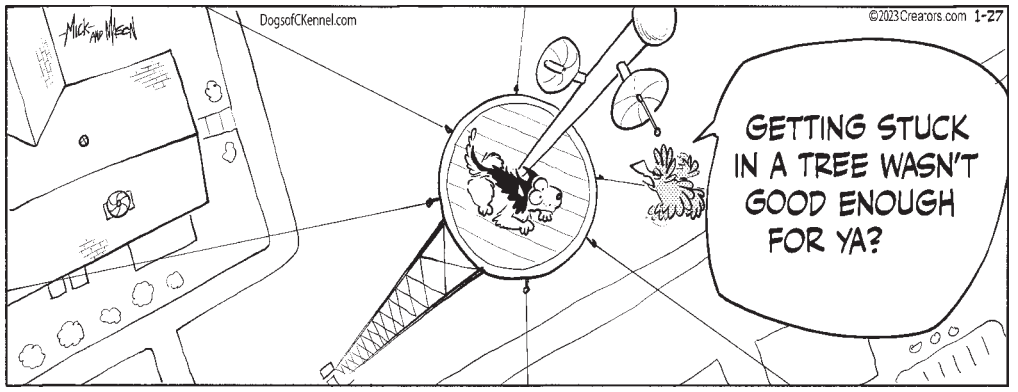
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



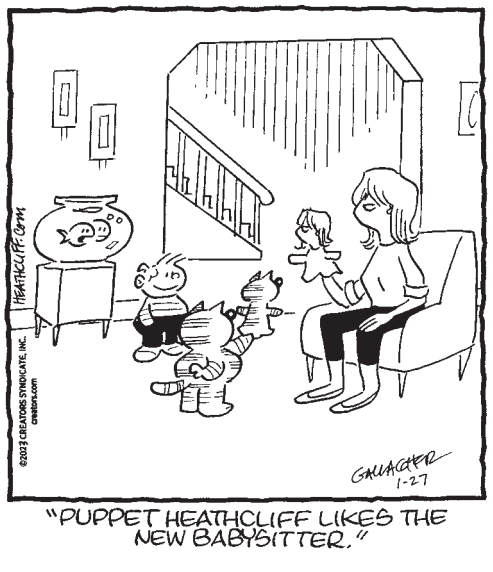
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

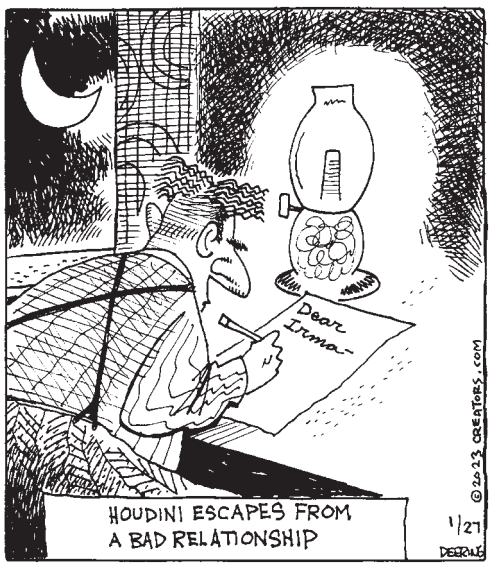
By PETER GALLAGHER



"PUPPET HEATHCLIFF LIKES THE NEW BABYSITTER."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



HOUDINI ESCAPES FROM A BAD RELATIONSHIP

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

© australianwordgames.com.au 5737

Ouch!

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

Bees	Fleas	Injury	Ouch	Spider
Bite	Flies	Insects	Pain	Swat
Black	Garden	Itch	Pale	Sweat
Bugs	Gnat	King	Pets	Symptoms
Coma	Grey	Leech	Rash	Teeth
Deadly	nurse	Lice	Scary	Toad
Drown	Grub	Lotion	Scream	Tree
Earwig	Hiss	Mako	Shark	Wasp
Eels	Hornet	Midge	Shock	Yelp
Eggs	House	Moth	Sick	Yuck
Fire	Hurt	Nocturnal	Smell	

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
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smdp Santa Monica Daily Press

What's Up Westside

out and about in Santa Monica

FRIDAY | JANUARY 27

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) CONVERSATION, LOW

Santa Monica Public Library hosts an ongoing series of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes taught by Adult Education Center instructors. Classes are free and students must be 18 years or older to attend. Community parents and SMMUSD parents have priority enrollment. Learn more about California adult education at caladulted.org. Enrollment is through the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Adult Education Center, located at 2510 Lincoln Blvd., Room 203, Santa Monica, CA, 90405. Contact Olga Saucedo at (310) 664-6222, ext.76203 or osaucedo@smmusd.org to enroll. 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

SATURDAY | JANUARY 28

LUNAR NEW YEAR AT SANTA MONICA PLACE

Santa Monica Place welcomes visitors and shoppers to ring in the Year of the Rabbit with its free Lunar New Year Celebration on Saturday, January 28, 2023. After a two-year hiatus, Santa Monica Place's Lunar New Year programming returns with traditional Chinese lion dance performances, balloon and dough artists, and cherry blossom Wishing Trees for well-wishers to hang their wish for prosperity and renewal in the new year. Overhead red and gold lanterns will adorn Center Plaza and red envelopes with special deals from participating shops and restaurants will be provided to those in attendance. Santa Monica Place 395 Santa Monica Place Santa Monica, CA 90401, 2 to 5 p.m.

SUNDAY | JANUARY 29

MARION DAVIES BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Join the Santa Monica Conservancy in celebrating Marion Davies — silent film actress, famed party hostess and the original Beach House resident.

1 p.m. – Natalie Jacob & The Vintage Trio kick off the festivities!

1:30 p.m. – Enjoy the 1920's Dance Showcase with James Zimmer & Cynthia Harper

1:45 p.m. – Witness bedazzling sleight of hand by magician Tom Frank

2 p.m. – Dance to Natalie Jacob & The Vintage Trio, and keep the party going!

2-3 p.m. – Delight in the Charleston with James Zimmer & Cynthia Harper, the Cake Walk, the Group Photo, and wrap-up the fun with a rousing Happy Birthday to Marion!

Guests are welcome to come in their favorite Gold Coast era attire. Happy Birthday Marion! is a free, all ages event. Reservations are recommended.

The Annenberg Community Beach House is located at 415 Pacific Coast Hwy. Parking is available for $3 per hour or $8 per day. Please pay for parking at the machine upon your arrival. Cash and credit card accepted. Ample bike parking is available; please bring a lock.

MONDAY | JANUARY 30

CITIZENSHIP CLASSES

An ongoing series of citizenship classes taught by Adult Education Center instructors. Classes are free and students must be 18 years or older to attend. Community parents and SMMUSD parents have priority enrollment. The classes help students complete and submit their U.S. citizenship applications, and prepare them for the official review. Enrollment is through the SMMUSD Adult Education Center (310) 664-6222, ext. 76203 or osaucedo@smmusd.org.

TUESDAY | JANUARY 31

MAIN EVENT COMEDY SHOW

Bringing the new wave of stand-up comedy to downtown Santa Monica's historic Main Street the last Tuesday of every month! 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Library Alehouse, 2911 Main Street, $10, https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-main-event-comedy-show-tickets-520959522957

WEDNESDAY | FEBRUARY 01

KIDS CLUB AT SANTA MONICA PLACE

Come sing, dance, and play at Santa Monica Place for Kids Club hosted by Twinkle Time, a bilingual Billboard pop artist. All ages welcome. This event is free to attend for parents and children. Food Court, Level 3, 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

THURSDAY | FEBRUARY 02

WALK-IN TUTORING

Volunteer tutors provide help with basic reading and writing skills, using the Internet, filling out online and paper forms, using email, resume writing, and more. 1 to 3 p.m., Main Library, Tutoring Center.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONCERT AND DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING
WE GATHER FOR SANTA MONICA

An afternoon of music by Black American composers, performed by members of Calvary Baptist Church of Santa Monica and the Orchestra Santa Monica (OSM) Woodwind Quintet in the courtyard, as well as a screening of OSM's film We Gather: Black Life in Santa Monica Told through Music, Visuals, and Narrative in the MLK Jr. Auditorium. 5:30 to 7 p.m. / Main Library, MLK Auditorium.

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



SURF REPORT

WATER TEMP: **56.1**

FRIDAY *FAIR*	**SURF:**	2-3ft+ Thigh to stomach	Good combo. WNW swell eases as SSW swell builds. Should be a few nice waves to track down through the morning tide push — most size west of Dume but the points are in play. Offshore flow comes up a notch further, lasts all day.
SATURDAY *FAIR*	**SURF:**	3-4ft Waist to chest	Still peaky and probably pretty fun. Refresh of slightly smaller, long period WNW swell. Holding SSW swell. Morning tide push and conditions could still be nice.

WEATHER

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 69. Breezy, with a north wind 15 to 20 mph.
Friday Night: Clear, with a low around 48. North wind around 10 mph, with gusts as high as 15 mph.
Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 64. North northeast wind 5 to 10 mph
Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 47.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2023/01/27	Fri	01:35 AM	4.77	H
2023/01/27	Fri	08:03 AM	1.51	L
2023/01/27	Fri	1:39 PM	3.33	H
2023/01/27	Fri	7:28 PM	1.22	L
2023/01/28	Sat	02:30 AM	4.83	H
2023/01/28	Sat	09:53 AM	1.21	L
2023/01/28	Sat	3:38 PM	2.73	H
2023/01/28	Sat	8:19 PM	1.91	L
2023/01/29	Sun	03:31 AM	4.90	H
2023/01/29	Sun	11:24 AM	0.68	L
2023/01/29	Sun	6:02 PM	2.74	H
2023/01/29	Sun	9:37 PM	2.41	L
2023/01/30	Mon	04:32 AM	5.01	H
2023/01/30	Mon	12:28 PM	0.14	L
2023/01/30	Mon	7:30 PM	3.07	H
2023/01/30	Mon	10:59 PM	2.64	L
2023/01/31	Tue	05:28 AM	5.15	H
2023/01/31	Tue	1:15 PM	-0.27	L

DAILY LOTTERY

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

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 1/25
9 17 20 38 40
Power#: 18
Jackpot: 572 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 1/24
33 41 47 50 62
Mega#: 20
Jackpot: 20 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 1/25
2 17 20 37 41
Mega#: 9
Jackpot: 28 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 1/25
12 15 17 26 39

Daily 3
Draw Date: 1/25
EVENING: 8 9 3
Draw Date: 1/25
MIDDAY: 7 0 8

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 1/25
1st: 07 - Eureka
2nd: 11 - Money Bags
3rd: 04 - Big Ben
Race Time: 1:46.51

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