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smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

Volume 23 Issue 63 TUESDAY 2/13/24 smdp.com

Legion averages 100 "engagements" a day during first month of downtown Santa Monica patrols

SCOTT SNOWDEN
SMDP Staff Writer

The newly hired private security company patrolling Downtown Santa Monica reported more than 3,000 interactions during its first month on patrol and while local businesses say the systemic problems persist, some say they've seen signs of improvement recently.

During the first meeting of the Downtown Santa Monica Inc., (DTSM) Board of Directors for 2024, security company Legion Corporation, presented a report on its first month of operations.

"Legion has completed our first full month of partnering with DTSM and we continue to be approached daily by our local business employees and local and out-of-town visitors who express how pleased they are with our presence," said Joseph Shelley, Founder and CEO of Legion Corporation. "Daily, we encounter individuals whose behavior detracts from the welcoming, safe and pleasant experience DTSM wants to be known for," he added.

"We have also had multiple conversations with members of Santa Monica's cleaning and maintenance teams, as well as Block by Block, who have praised our team's work and the positive impact that their work has had. This includes the fact that they are noticing less trash on the streets, which they believed was due to our constant interaction and approach to safety," Shelley said.

The Daily Press recently spoke to business owners in the downtown area and many were still upset and annoyed by the ongoing homelessness crisis.

"We had another window smashed a month ago," said Dympna Madeley, Manager of Ye Olde King's Head and the adjacent British-themed gift shop. "They stole one of the iPads that we use for DoorDash and it's all on camera. The woman spent ages trying to climb in through the window. And then someone smashed two windows in the middle of the day. She just threw something through the window and of course we have to pay to get it fixed."



Scott Snowden

LEGION: The team are very much on the front line and the gathered data shows that the first four weeks was unquestionably eventful for the security company.

However, there was a general consensus that while the situation remains largely unresolved, the Promenade and nearby retail area does in fact feel both cleaner and safer.

"I think it's getting a little bit better than last year, just because there's more police presence, they hired a private security company and they're enforcing more city ordinances," Luis Vega, General Manager of Blue Plate Taco told the Daily Press.

According to Shelley, his team has had over 3,000 engagements during this one month period and he was keen to make clear that this first round of data is actually incomplete since not every member of his team was using the tracking management software from the first day of the first week. Within this period though, there were — among many additional incidents — six arrests, 11 burglaries, 20 assaults and 63 reports of indecent exposure.

Shelley also stressed that out of the shockingly high 537 mentally disturbed engagements — approximately 17 each day — very few actually resulted in arrests or detention of any kind.

"If we were engaged and there was an outcome [that's recorded in the tracking software] sometimes we'll call the ambulance, sometimes they'll get up and they'll walk away," Shelley said, adding, "Sometimes it's just an engagement and we might ask 'Hey, are you okay? Is everything okay? Is there something we can do for you? Can we get in an ambulance or something?'"

He also pointed out that many engagements were with repeat individuals. "Sandra, for example, we have incidents with her and

SEE **LEGION CORPORATION** PAGE 6

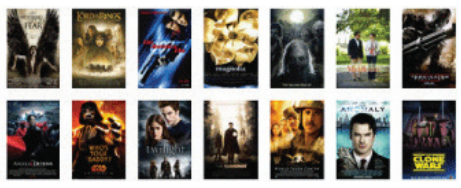
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Mariners continue perfect run into playoffs

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

Now that Super Bowl parties are out of the way, Santa Monica residents can turn their attention from national sports to local ones, as playoff action continues for two Saint Monica squads. Both the Mariners' girls' soccer and basketball teams remain alive in the 2024 CIF Southern Section championship hunt, with the soccer unit not just chasing the trophy, but also chasing a perfect season.

The Mariners are 19-0 in the 2023-24 campaign, with the team's next test being a CIF-SS Division 7 quarterfinal matchup against Oakwood on Wednesday. The Santa Fe League champions rolled through the first two playoff contests, routing Hawthorne 10-0 on Feb. 8 before eliminating La Reina on Feb. 10, 6-0.

"We thought they had a pretty bright outlook in terms of what they could do this season, and they went out there and won a bunch of games," Saint Monica Athletic Director Jason Bowers said of the soccer squad. "It's been exciting to watch ... there's a lot of love between the girls on the team, they seem to get along great ... they're just a pleasure to go out and watch."

A team that Bowers said does well "in all facets" of the game, the Mariners' strength is a stingy defense that has allowed just 11 goals all season long. Out of the team's 19 contests, 12 have ended in shutout victories, a credit to a defensive unit led by freshman Keilani Ordonez. The Ordonez trio of Keilani, senior Liliana and sophomore Maile have been top contributors throughout 2023-24, along with high-level scorers Sanaa Pitter and Paige Blum.

The Mariners' girls' basketball team is also in the hunt for CIF-SS glory, competing in the Division 3A quarterfinals Wednesday evening against Jordan. The squad went 19-9 in the regular season, including 10-2 in Camino Real league play, and is riding a 10-game win streak after dispatching Heritage Christian and Godinez Fundamental in the first two playoff contests.

"It's a team that needed to learn how to play together ... that's been a really fun process to see," Bowers said of the unit. "They've matured, they've grown, and are definitely playing like a unified team now."

Two other Mariners playoff runs were cut short this past week, as the boys' basketball unit lost a first-round playoff contest to West, 43-40, while the boys' soccer team lost its opening playoff bout 5-0 against Covina. Samohi playoff runs also ended early, as the boys' basketball unit dropped its first round game 71-49 against Westlake, and the girls' soccer team fell to Harvard-Westlake, 4-0.



Photo Courtesy Raul Ordonez

SOCCER: The Saint Monica girls' soccer Ordonez sister trio of freshman Keilani (#6), senior Liliana (#4) and sophomore Maile (#11) have helped guide the squad to an undefeated regular season and two playoff victories.

SPORTS SCORES:

SANTA MONICA BOYS BASKETBALL:

Wednesday, February 7:

Vikings at Westlake, CIF Southern Section Boys' Basketball Championships- Division 2A

Westlake win 71-49

Vikings Final 2023-24 Record: 16-13 (4-6 Bay League)

SANTA MONICA GIRLS SOCCER:

Thursday, February 8:

Lady Vikings at Harvard-Westlake, 2024 CIF Southern Section Girls' Soccer Championships- Division 1

Harvard-Westlake win 4-0

Lady Vikings Final 2023-24 Record: 9-9-2 (2-7-1 Bay League)

SANTA MONICA BASEBALL:

Saturday, February 10:

Vikings vs South

Vikings win 2-1

Batting/Baserunning:

Aaron Heirigs: 1-2, BB, K

Blue Hunter: 2-3, RBI, 3B

Bobby Munoz: 0-3, 2 K

Brady Satinover: 1-2, R, BB, SB

Isaac Liberman: 1-2, R, 3B, BB

Jacob Myrow: 0-3, 3 K

Manny Lares: 0-3

Sage Douglass: 1-3, RBI, SB, 2 K

Spencer Levin: 1-3, K

Pitching:

Blue Hunter: 2 IP, 1 H, 1 R, 1 ER, 1 BB, 2 K, 3 HBP, 3.50 ERA

Jackson Klein: 4 IP, W, 3 H, 5 BB, 5 K, 0.00 ERA

Ton Ponce: 1 IP, 1 BB, 0.00 ERA

Vikings Record: 1-0

Next Game: Tuesday at Loyola, 3:15 p.m.

SAINT MONICA BOYS BASKETBALL:

Wednesday, February 7:

Mariners vs West, 2024 CIF Southern Section Boys' Basketball Championships- Division 3A

West win 43-40

Mariners Final 2023-24 Record: 18-11 (6-2 Camino Real League)

SAINT MONICA GIRLS BASKETBALL:

Thursday, February 8:

Mariners vs Heritage Christian, 2024 CIF Southern Section Girls' Basketball Championships- Division 3A

Mariners win 59-23

Saturday, February 10:

Mariners at Godinez Fundamental, 2024 CIF Southern Section Girls' Basketball Championships- Division 3A

SEE **SPORTS** PAGE 11

District voting system sparks more contentious debate



Photo by Thomas Leffler

VOTING: A hearing held by the Los Angeles County Office of Education Committee on School District Organization was packed with proponents and opponents of district trustee voting areas within Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD).

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

A stacked Saturday morning of public comment was heard at the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) offices, with supporters and opponents of district-based voting for the SMMUSD Board of Education fiercely arguing their positions.

The Board of Education meeting room was filled to the brim with Santa Monica and Malibu residents having their say to the Los Angeles County Office of Education Committee on School District Organization. The committee's public hearing was the second focusing on the legality of the voting map submitted as part of a petition aiming to establish trustee districts, specifically the petitioners' map which would make non-contiguous districts merging parts of Malibu and Santa Monica. Two of the map's seven proposed "trustee areas" would make mergers, including one combining the eastern half of Malibu with Santa Monica's Sunset Park neighborhood, and another fusing the western half of Malibu with Santa Monica's North of Montana (NOMA) and Wilmont neighborhoods.

Presenting first to the committee was attorney Kevin Shenkman, who initially submitted the petition in 2022 on behalf of residents, claiming that the district's current at-large voting system is unfair to minority voters. Echoing points made at the Jan. 31 committee hearing on the Malibu campus of Santa Monica College, Shenkman said that a trustee area split that includes six Santa Monica districts and one district encompassing all of Malibu is not "advisable" because it would be underrepresenting Malibu residents, instead proposing the two non-contiguous districts.

Shenkman further stated that a trustee area voting split with just one Malibu district would be "regionalism," the creation of population deviation allowing board power to be held by Santa Monica residents "to a degree disproportionate to their population." Demographer David Ely added that the petitioners' maps, the one initially submitted as well as two alternates unveiled at the Jan. 31 hearing, were drawn to "respect neighborhoods as much as possible," particularly the Pico neighborhood, which many pro-map commenters believe has been underrepresented on the SMMUSD board.

One of the commenters was Santa Monica City Councilmember Oscar de la Torre, who also served on the SMMUSD board for 18 years. He noted that it has been a "lengthy struggle" for fair elections in the district, and that the major lesson he learned on the board is that the "people in power" will "rarely" come from communities "that have the most to lose when public education fails to deliver on its promise."

"It should be very clear to everyone by now that those in power support the status quo and want nothing to change," de la Torre said. "They support the at-large election system … at-large elections (have been) used as a tool to marginalize voters of color throughout the country, and this is also true for the city of Santa Monica."

In response, attorney representing SMMUSD Dale Larson noted that a trustee area voting map "must be contiguous" if it is geographically possible and can comply with population equality, which he argued can be done with one trustee district encompassing all of Malibu, rather than having two non-contiguous districts. A hypothetical splitting of the SMMUSD population into seven districts, with one comprising Malibu and surrounding unincorporated areas, would fall within the 10% difference between the most and least populous district allowed by the United States Constitution that still satisfies population requirements.

Larson called the petitioners' map the "Al Capone of maps" due to what he deemed numerous illegalities, including the map not respecting geographic integrity of neighborhoods, bypassing "geographical compactness" by being in favor of more distant populations, and discriminating against incumbents on the board. On the petitioners' demands for two non-contiguous districts, Larson said those two districts would gerrymander a majority Malibu population, and that the Malibu has actually been overrepresented on the SMMUSD board in the past relative to its population.

"I hear what they're saying about their concerns, (but) the law doesn't work that way … it's a non-contiguous gerrymander to increase Malibu power," Larson said.

SMMUSD representatives also responded to petitioner claims of being unfair to minority voters, stating that the last two times a Latino candidate lost a campaign for school board (1996 and 2004), the candidate lost out to other Latino candidates.

SEE **VOTING** PAGE 6



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **58.8**

TUESDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

WNW swell slowly eases. Morning winds look light. Mind the mid day high tide.

WEDNESDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

WNW swell mix from the start of the week looks to level off with small but rideable waves on tap. Wind outlook is favorable across the region.

Weather

Tuesday: Patchy fog before 10am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 62. Northeast wind 5 to 10 mph.
Tuesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 48. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east northeast in the evening.
Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 62. East northeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south southwest in the afternoon.
Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 49.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2024/02/13	Tue	05:31 AM	0.73	L
2024/02/13	Tue	11:27 AM	4.63	H
2024/02/13	Tue	5:41 PM	0.20	L
2024/02/14	Wed	12:12 AM	5.16	H
2024/02/14	Wed	06:38 AM	0.77	L
2024/02/14	Wed	12:30 PM	3.65	H
2024/02/14	Wed	6:14 PM	0.99	L
2024/02/15	Thu	12:58 AM	5.14	H
2024/02/15	Thu	08:05 AM	0.78	L
2024/02/15	Thu	2:04 PM	2.82	H
2024/02/15	Thu	6:48 PM	1.76	L
2024/02/16	Fri	01:57 AM	5.04	H
2024/02/16	Fri	09:56 AM	0.55	L
2024/02/16	Fri	4:45 PM	2.58	H
2024/02/16	Fri	7:37 PM	2.42	L
2024/02/17	Sat	03:11 AM	4.96	H
2024/02/17	Sat	11:27 AM	0.09	L
2024/02/17	Sat	7:03 PM	2.98	H

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8 19 29 39 40
Mega#: 2
Jackpot: 9 M

Fantasy5
Draw Date: 2/11
7 15 16 32 35

Daily 3
Draw Date: 2/11
EVENING: 5 4 2
Draw Date: 2/11
MIDDAY: 9 4 4

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 2/11
1st: 11 - Money Bags
2nd: 05 - California Classic
3rd: 07 - Eureka
Race Time: 1:40.93

PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

PARTNER
Todd James
todd@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Matthew Hall
matt@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Charles Andrews,
Jack Neworth,
David Pisarra.

CIRCULATION
Guadalupe Navarro
ross@smdp.com

Keith Wyatt
ross@smdp.com

STAFF WRITERS
Scott Snowden
scott.snowden@smdp.com

Thomas Leffler
thomas@smdp.com

DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING
Cindy Moreno
cindy@smdp.com

MARKETING MANAGER
Dina Araniva
dina@smdp.com

PRODUCTION
Esteban Inchaustegui
production@smdp.com

Julio Davalos
julio@smdp.com

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OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
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Santa Monica Daily Press

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Letter: density is the future

Residential density is part of our transition to a sustainable future. As such, the proposed Lincoln Center Project is an excellent example of incremental upzoning. Adding density along major traffic routes is a measured approach to addressing our housing crisis.

Opponents of the project need to present a positive vision of how existing density is consistent with sustainable living. Existing research indicates that single-family zoning is wasteful of land, energy, and water; increases sprawl, travel times, and pollution; makes housing unaffordable due to the low number of housing units, increases homelessness, and hinders wealth formation for young families; reduces government services due to its low occupant/land ratio.

100 years ago, Sunset Park was mostly bean and alfalfa fields. The farmers were probably critical of greedy developers laying down streets and building ticky-tack homes – the same homes where citizens now live (and complain!). Would it have been better if the farmers in 1924 had prevailed, and kept their farming community intact?

Ed Salisbury, Santa Monica

Classifieds

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAMECase No. 24CMSP00671 Superior Court of California, County of Los AngelesPetition of Jeannette Sophie Draper Cartaya for Change of NameTO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:Petitioner or Attorney: Jeannette Sophie Draper Cartaya a petition with this court for a decree of changing names as follows: Jeannette Sophie Draper Cartaya to Sophie Jeannette Draper Cartaya The court orders that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Notice of Hearing: Date 02/23/2024 Time: 8:30 a.m, Dept: w Room: 610 The address of the court is SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA - COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES Santa Monica Courthouse 1725 Main St Santa Monica , CA 9041A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: Santa Monica Daily Press.

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City of Santa Monica

PUBLIC NOTICE

Please take notice that at its regular meeting of February 8, 2024, the Santa Monica Rent Control Board amended regulation Chapter 4, 4200, Rent Decrease Standards and 4400, Rent Decreases for Construction Impacts, to update housing service valuation amounts and adopt a formula for future adjustments.

These changes will become effective by promulgation the day after publication in the newspaper.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Decades of progress are at stake. California voters must reject mental health ballot measure



Photo by Fred Greaves for CalMatters

NO: Protestors Natalie Conrad and Debi Davis try to engage with people walking by during a “Vote No on Prop. 1” protest on the west steps of the Capitol on Feb. 1, 2024.

CLARE CORTRIGHT

California voters are deciding the fate of Proposition 1, a mental health funding reform and bond measure on the March primary ballot. Below, a mental health advocate says Prop. 1 is a taxpayer giveaway to private industry and will shrink proven programs. The opposing view: a parent who lost a loved one to severe mental illness says the measure can improve a failing system.

We are the people who live with serious mental illness. We are clients and providers in California’s public mental health system. We are voting “no” on Proposition 1, the mental health funding reform and bond measure on the March ballot.

Prop. 1 wipes out what this community has fought for and accomplished over the last 20 years. In 2004, we collaboratively wrote the Mental Health Services Act, or MHSA, and qualified it for the ballot by gathering more than 370,000 signatures and it passed. For the first time in California history, the public mental health system had a dedicated funding source for the services we wanted and we designed – and it exceeded what Medi-Cal covered.

Currently, the MHSA is controlled at the community level. Counties receive funds based on formulas with few restrictions and are required to design programs and spend the funds by involving people living with serious mental illness and their families, including those from marginalized communities. The MHSA funds highly effective and unique services, such as peer support where people who have recovered from serious mental illness act as providers for each other. Prevention and early intervention funds went toward community-defined services for those who do not have access through traditional pathways for behavioral health.

Now comes Prop. 1, which was crafted behind closed doors and all but decimates the MHSA with a plethora of new state mandates and top-down control. Hidden behind the campaign slogan “treatment not tents” are devastating cuts to voluntary mental health services for the most severely mentally ill and an unprecedented giveaway of taxpayer money to build privatized facilities.

California’s counties testified that if Prop. 1 passes, it will force counties to cut basic mental health services, including outpatient treatment, crisis services and peer support services that maintain stability for high-risk clients and save lives. Prop. 1 also asks counties to provide services to those with substance

SEE **VOTERS** PAGE 11

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

California's mental health ballot measure is the best chance in decades to change the system



Photo by Fred Greaves for CalMatters

YES: Kimberlee Booth, center, of San Luis Obispo marches with other supporters following speeches at a rally in support of Prop. 1 at the state Capitol on Jan. 31, 2024. The proposition aims to reform mental healthcare in the state.

ALISON MONROE

California voters are deciding the fate of Proposition 1, a mental health funding reform and bond measure on the March primary ballot. Below, the guardian of a woman who died after receiving inadequate treatment says Prop. 1 can help change a failing system. The opposing view: A mental health advocate says the measure will force major cuts and give public dollars to private industry.

For nine years, I begged Alameda County agencies to give my intermittently homeless and schizophrenic ward the care she needed to stay alive and well. Last September, some 12 years after I became her legal guardian, she fatally overdosed on meth and fentanyl.

The mental health system operating in California counties like mine could not save my daughter, and Proposition 1, the mental health funding reform and bond measure on the March ballot, is our best chance in many years to change it.

The Mental Health Services Act, the "millionaire's tax" of 2004, has generated tens of billions of dollars for California's counties to help people suffering from the most "serious, disabling and persistent" forms of mental illness. But unfortunately today's system fails to keep people with serious mental illness alive, well and out of jail.

Repeated audits, such as the Mental Illness Policy Org's 2013 report "Bait and Switch," showed how mission creep and waste were undermining the implementation of the MHSA. Money has been made available for health fairs, speakers' bureaus, support groups and advertising campaigns to "be aware of mental health," but not adequately for beds and homes – outside jail – for the seriously mentally ill.

Without actual places to live, stay and be treated, there is no continuum of care and no recovery for our family members, many of whom do not even know they are ill. We don't want them institutionalized – we want them to be treated right away when the illness appears, and before their brains are damaged by sustained psychosis and street drug use.

Early on in my nine-year struggle for my daughter, public facilities kept discharging her despite knowing she would immediately use meth and run away. I could not understand why so much MHSA money was being spent so freely while the county rationed hospital beds and supportive residences so strictly.

At one point, I didn't even want to eat the (excellent) ham sandwiches served

SEE **MENTAL HEALTH** PAGE 11

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LEGION CORPORATION

FROM PAGE 1

probably engage with her 30 or 40 times in a month," Shelley said, adding that there was even an incident when he himself was attacked and that perpetrator was later charged with assault with a deadly weapon. Since his team is very much on the front line, they are vulnerable to all sorts of unpleasantness and have had to deal with attempted assaults themselves.

Barry Snell, Vice Chair of DTSM, asked about whether the recent roll out of the Therapeutic Transportation teams was, or would have an effect.

"It is available, but it can only be requested by the police or fire departments. We're in constant communication with them, but they determine when it's needed," Shelley said, adding that was an element that he was hoping to be able to utilize more, especially when it was up to full operational capability.

Interestingly, Shelley said that so far, the majority of substance abuse problems are alcohol and not, as one might suspect, something far more illicit and potentially lethal. Another specific incident mentioned was that of the street performer who actually holds a permit, but frequently performs…er, au naturel.

"I think one of the primary things that we deal with, coming from a law enforcement perspective, is that you can't make them do anything. So once they get a certain criteria, they don't want to get treatment, there's no real way to make them have treatment. A lot of individuals, they don't want treatment, they want to go back," Shelley said, adding that there was very much a "revolving door" situation. He also added that when last he checked, Sandra was in fact accepting help.

"I have been impressed with how our security service is performing Downtown. We have gotten positive feedback about their effectiveness. I know of at least two businesses canceling their private security service because of the changes they have seen on the street. I anticipate more businesses following this lead," Andrew Thomas, DTSM CEO, told the Daily Press.

"Our team has responded to hundreds of calls in a short period. We are working to follow up with the businesses calling us so we can incorporate their feedback into the evolution of our program. Still, based on the number of calls and the reports I have seen, I believe the program is proving beneficial and to be a good investment of our resources," Thomas said.

Jeremy Ferguson, Operations & Placemaking Director for DTSM, presented new flyers that will be distributed to businesses all around the Downtown district and Third Street Promenade that provide all necessary contact details for anyone to call should they need to report anti-social behavior, aggressive panhandling, shoplifting or suspicious activity.

Legion began its official rollout on Dec. 1. Legion was awarded the contract after the abrupt departure of Covered 6 only a matter of hours after their contract had been signed at the end of September. Consequently, DTSM voted to move ahead with a search for a replacement. This unavoidable action essentially reset the process back to square one albeit with a significantly tighter deadline for companies to bid on the contract following weeks of uncertainty.

scott.snowden@smdp.com

VOTING

FROM PAGE 3

"As a member of a protected class myself, I want to be clear that I support the purposes of the (California Voting Rights Act) … I do not, however, support a transition to voting districts in this community, and especially do not support the illegal map that accompanies the petition," said SMMUSD Board member Alicia Mignano, a Latina member of the board from the Pico neighborhood. "In this community, we have a track record of protected class citizens successfully electing representation of our choice."

Both proponents and opponents of the map were invigorated in their arguments. Many proponents of the map echoed de la Torre's insistence that Pico residents were not fairly represented, including Pico Neighborhood Association Chair Brian O'Neil, who said the at-large election system has "systematically disenfranchised" the neighborhood. Other neighborhood groups outside of Pico pushed for trustee voting, including representatives of Santa Monica Northeast Neighbors and Friends of Sunset Park.

"Residents across the city are concerned about the lack of fiscal accountability by the current school board, which was elected at-large … it's time for the election of school board members to be conducted in a manner that gives representation to all neighborhoods," said Santa Monica Northeast Neighbors Chair Tricia Crane, who added that the at-large system is propped up by a "culture of intimidation" against those speaking out.

Map opponents pointed to several reasonings why the petition should be unsuccessful, such as the map being "textbook gerrymandering," the splitting up of communities of interest, the lack of logic behind the non-contiguous districts, and the fact that trustee districts would only be able to vote for one board member every four years.

The splitting of Santa Monica neighborhoods was a particular concern of Santa Monica City Councilmember Gleam Davis, who called the map an "abomination."

"It breaks up communities of interest within the Santa Monica city boundaries," Davis said. "North of Montana, Ocean Park, Sunset Park, Mid-City, all of these areas have very specific needs … and this map completely ignores (them) in the interest of promoting the interest(s) of some folks in Malibu. That is certainly within their prerogative, but it is not legal … I don't think you have any option other than to reject this map."

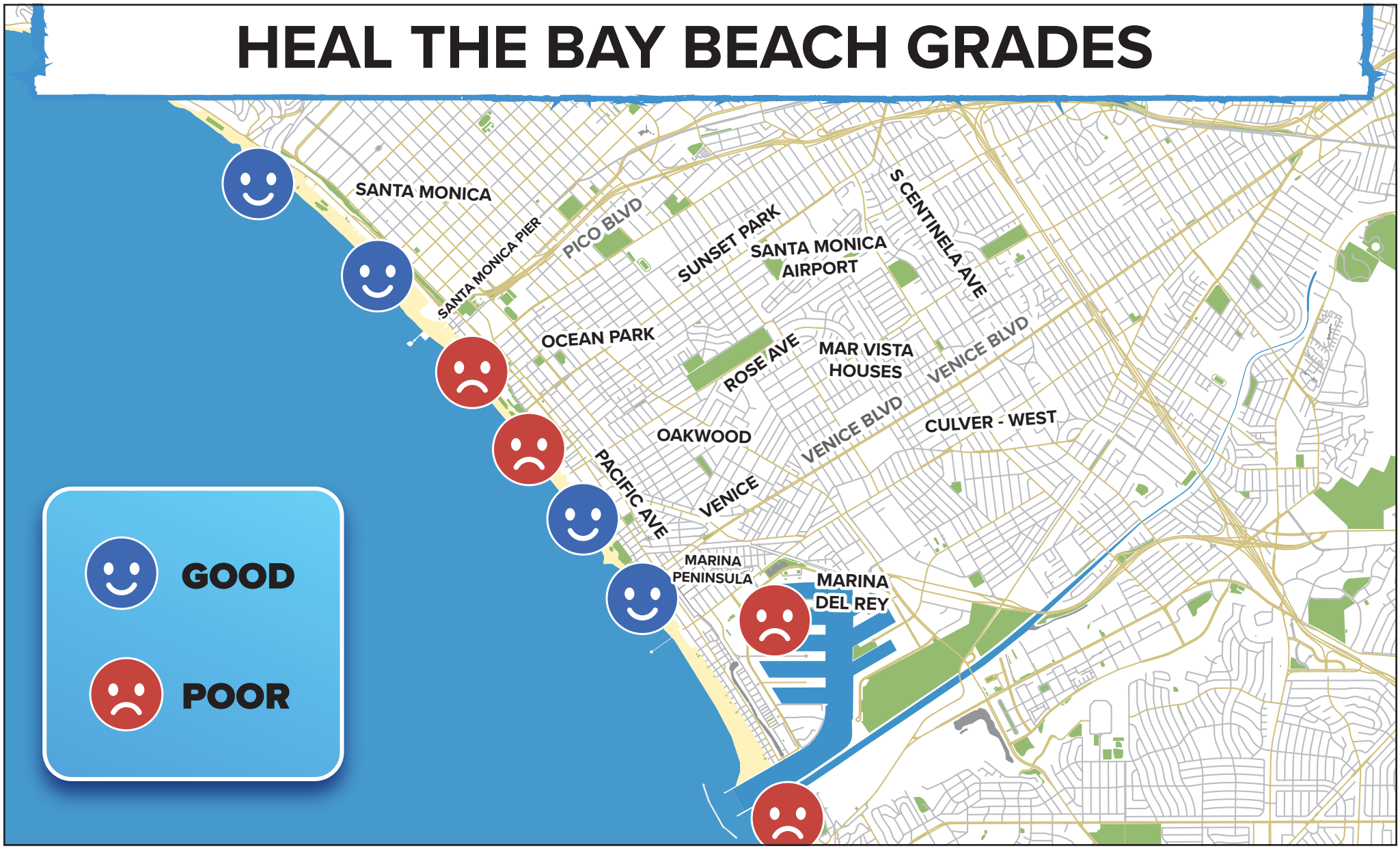
Others honed in on this point, as well as what they felt was gerrymandering, including Lincoln Middle School teacher Esther Andersen, who said that "no district is perfect" but that the proposed map "was created by limited interests" and was not developed "with community input."

SMMUSD Board President Jennifer Smith also commented on claims made by Malibu residents during the Jan. 31 hearing, accusing the board of using at-large voting to retain power in district matters.

"The truth is, during the entirety of my service on this board, as well as in my 15 years in volunteer service to our district … I have never seen the board make a decision that did not have the best interest of the students, staff and community as the primary guiding principle," Smith said.

The Feb. 10 hearing was the second for the committee, who will be making a decision on the petition.

thomas@smdp.com



A record amount went to lobbying California's government. Who were the biggest spenders?

JEREMIA KIMELMAN
Special to the Daily Press

Last year was a good year to be a lobbyist in California.

Advocacy efforts shattered records in 2023, with nearly $480 million poured into influencing legislation and regulatory decisions making their way through state government. That amount eclipsed the previous high $440 million spent in 2022, based on figures from the California Secretary of State.

The top three organizations who spent the most on lobbying last year were Chevron ($11.1 million), the Hawaiian Gardens Casino ($9.1 million) and the Western States Petroleum Association ($6.9 million). The same three organizations were already spending the most money on lobbying headed into the final quarter of the year.

But what about the other top spenders? The ten largest patrons of persuasion put a combined $57 million into trying to convince government officials in 2023, or 12% of the total spent on lobbying that year.

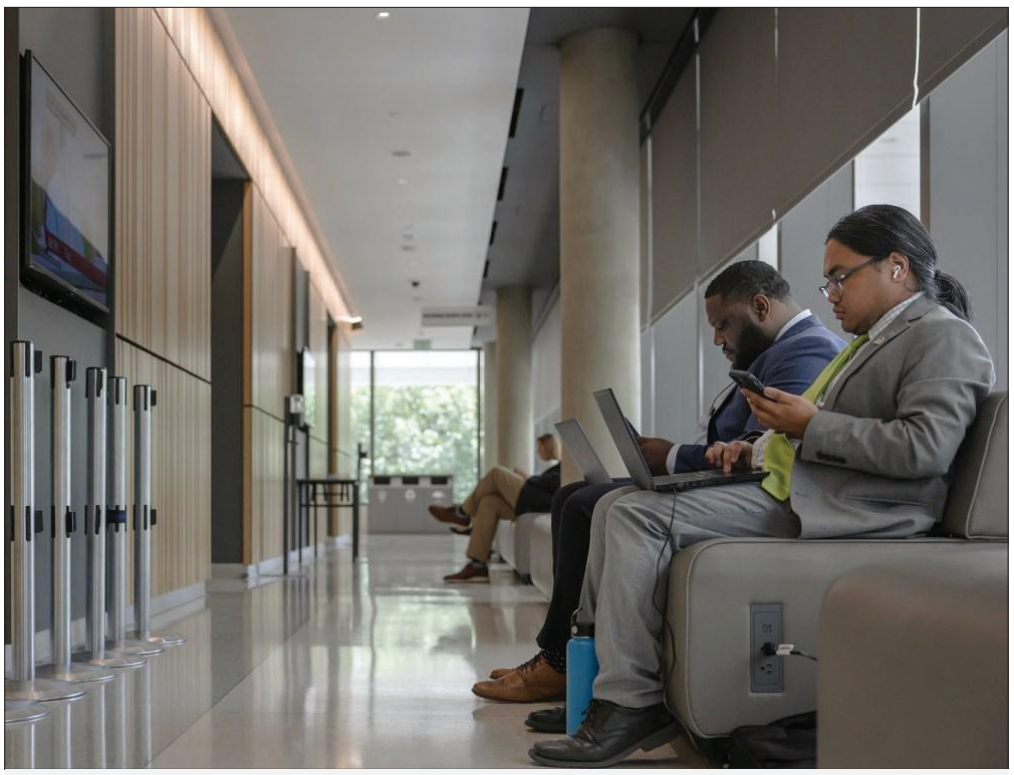


Photo by Rahul Lal for CalMatters

LOBBY: James Michael Agpalo, an intern lobbyist, views the state Senate Appropriations Committee session on suspense file day at the state Capitol in Sacramento on Sept. 1, 2023.

#1: CHEVRON

Chevron, a California-based oil company, is a prolific spender on lobbyists, forking over $74.5 million since 2005 to influence state government. In the final quarter of 2023, Chevron reported spending $1.2 million to try and get its way with state officials, including Gov. Gavin Newsom, and several state agencies, such as the Public Utilities Commission, the Air Resources Board and the Energy Commission. One of its primary advocacy goals was to influence the implementation of a bill — signed by Newsom last March — that empowered the Energy Commission to establish a maximum profit margin for refining gasoline.

#2: HAWAIIAN GARDEN CASINO

The Los Angeles County-based Hawaiian Garden Casino went all-in last year, spending more than four-fifths of all the lobbying dollars it has invested over the past two decades. It continued to lobby on a bill related to casino regulations and reported trying to influence the Bureau of Gambling Control on a blackjack proposal. The casino really ramped up its spending as the year drew to a close, racking up nearly 45% of its lobbying bill in the last quarter.

#3: WESTERN STATES PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION

The Western States Petroleum Association, an oil industry trade group, is consistently a top employer of lobbyists aimed at the state and has been one of the top three spenders in every legislative session going back at least a decade. In the fourth quarter of 2023, it reported lobbying the Legislature and the governor's office and other state agencies. Among other issues, the trade group lobbied on a proposed windfall profit tax on refining gas.

#4: MCDONALD'S

McDonald's spent more than $5.6 million on lobbying in 2023, making it the fourth largest spender, and just over $680,000 in the fourth quarter. That level of spending on state advocacy is new for the company, which had previously spent only $100,000 lobbying the state government since 2005.

So why the big lobbying push? McDonalds, along with other fast food chains, fought hard against a fast food council created by AB 257 in 2022 charged with setting workplace standards. The industry successfully got a referendum on the ballot for this year to repeal the law, but a compromise was reached with AB 1228, which modified the jurisdiction of the council, and the industry agreed to pull the referendum off the ballot.

#5: PACIFICORP

Pacificorp — a power company that has customers in California, Oregon and Washington — spent $2 million in the fourth quarter and more than $5 million in total for 2023, making it the fifth largest spender for the year. The company lobbied the Public Utilities Commission throughout the year on several issues, including rates and an application to construct a substation in Shasta County that was originally submitted nearly a decade ago. The subsidiary of Berkshire-Hathaway is no stranger to Sacramento and reported nearly $15 million spent on lobbying in the state in the last decade and a half.

#6: SEIU

The SEIU State Council, which represents workers including public employees, spent $3.9 million total last year and $638,000 in just the fourth quarter, making it the sixth largest lobbyist employer for the year. But just because the council didn't spend much last quarter doesn't mean it never does. Since January 2005, the group has dropped more than $73 million on hired advocates.

#7: ENERGY FOUNDATION

Next up is the Energy Foundation, which spent $4.3 million in total last year on lobbyists but a relatively paltry $280,000 in the fourth quarter. The San Francisco-based nonprofit gives grants for clean energy projects and tried to influence the Air Resources Board's implementation of "clean fleet" regulations.

#8: WAYMO

The eighth biggest spender, Waymo, a subsidiary of Alphabet which also owns Google, paid $3.8 million for lobbying efforts, nearly $1.9 million just in the last quarter of the year. The "robotaxi" company reported trying to persuade the Legislature on a bill that would have required human back-up drivers in vehicles that weighed over 10,000 pounds. The bill was ultimately vetoed by Gov. Newsom. Two months later, the company contributed $9,500 to the governor's campaign committee supporting Proposition 1, the mental health measure on the March 5 ballot. In 2022, Waymo contributed $5,000 to Newsom's re-election campaign but has made no other state campaign contributions

#9: CALIFORNIA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

The California Hospital Association, a trade group that represents more than 400 hospitals and health care systems, spent more than $3.5 million on lobbying last year, nearly $600,000 of which was spent in the final three months. It might be ninth on this year's spending list, but the association has reported spending more than $57 million since 2005, making it the seventh largest buyer of advocacy services during that period.

The trade group lobbied the Legislature on 17 bills, most related to health care workers and hospital regulations. This includes fighting the Climate Corporate Data Accountability Act, a new law that requires companies with revenues exceeding $1 billion to disclose their greenhouse gas emissions.

#10: CALIFORNIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The California Chamber of Commerce closed out the top ten lobbying spenders from last year. The business-boosting group reported trying to influence more than 150 bills, at a cost of more than $3.4 million during the year, with about a third of that, nearly $1.2 million, billed during the last quarter. The chamber has spent nearly $60 million on sweet-talking the state since 2005.

HONORABLE MENTION: UTILITIES

Pacificorp wasn't the only utility trying to influence state officials. In fact, four of the major utility companies operating in California spent some scratch on selling their point of view.

Pacific Gas and Electric, which supplies power to most of Northern California, reported spending more than $1.2 million on lobbying in the fourth quarter, and $3.1 million total in 2023. The utility has been the eighth largest lobbyist employer in the state over the last 18 years, spending more than $36 million on advocacy or an average of $2.4 million per year.

Last year, PG&E lobbied the Legislature on several bills, including one related to electrical and gas service to accessory dwelling units, the governor's office regarding the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant, and reported advocating before the Air Resources Board, the Energy Commission, and the State Water Resources Control Board, and the Public Utilities Commission.

Sempra, which owns SoCalGas and San Diego Gas & Electric, reported spending more than $1.5 million in 2023 to influence more than 150 bills. On average,the company has spent $1.49 million per year since 2005.

And the parent company of Southern California Edison, Edison International, invested $3 million in lobbying the state during 2023 on hundreds of pieces of regulation. But that is nearly double its yearly average of $1.7 million since 2005.

HONORABLE MENTION: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Finally, local governments frequently lobby the state to make sure their needs are heard by decision-makers. In fact, 2023 was a record-breaking year for local and regional government spending on lobbyists as well, with more than $55 million collectively, up from $53 million the year before.

The government entity that spent the most in 2023 was the Metropolitan Water District in Los Angeles which reported just more than $2.12 million, followed by San Diego County, which put more than $1.9 million into influence efforts.

Both were outspent by the statewide lobbying group for municipal governments, the League of California Cities, which spent $2.13 million last year and $28.4 million over the last 18 years on lobbying the state.

Orange County spent the most of any government entity in the fourth quarter, more than $682,000 out of an annual bill of $1.5 million. In just the last quarter, the county reported advocating on property tax legislation as well as trying to influence the state Department of Veterans Affairs regarding a cemetery. In the third quarter, the county attempted to influence 14 different pieces of legislation on a range of topics, including fentanyl, motel conversions for housing, and the bills that ultimately brought Prop. 1 to March's ballot.

This article was originally published by CalMatters.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Citywide

SMC to Host Stress Management Leader Joe Robinson in Talk on "The Wellness Toolkit" Feb. 20

Santa Monica College (SMC) will host renowned stress management leader Joe Robinson in "The Wellness Toolkit," a talk about how to work smarter and break out of the stress and burnout cycle. Robinson will cover issues ranging from the art and science of working more effectively to how to switch off stress, build resilience and optimism, and activate life skills. The presentation includes an audience Q&A. The presentation is free, and will be held online as a live virtual event at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 20. A Zoom link will be posted with the listing Feb. 20 on the SMC Events calendar at smc.edu/events.

Robinson is author of "Work to Live," which shows how to avoid reflex defaults to unhealthy work; "Don't Miss Your Life," on the science and skills of activating the most gratifying life; and "Work Smarter, Live Better," his latest book on the tools of smarter work. He has appeared on news and lifestyle shows that include "The Today Show," "NBC Nightly News," and National Public Radio's "All Things Considered," and written for the Wall Street Journal, Fast Company, New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, and CNN.com.

The event is sponsored by the SMC Associates (smc.edu/associates), a private organization that funds speakers and special programs on campus.

More information is available by calling the SMC Office of Public Programs at 310-434-4100.

SUBMITTED BY GRACE SMITH

Downtown

Year of the Dragon

Santa Monica Place welcomes visitors and shoppers to ring in the Year of the Dragon with its free Lunar New Year Celebration on Saturday, February 17, 2 - 5 p.m., hosted by comedian Paul "PK" Kim.

Santa Monica Place's annual Lunar New Year programming returns this year with traditional Chinese lion dance performances, balloon and dough artists and the enchanting cherry blossom Wishing Trees where well-wishers will hang their hopes for prosperity and renewal in the new year. Overhead red and gold lanterns will illuminate Center Plaza and red envelopes with special deals from participating shops and restaurants including Nordstrom, Elie Tahari, BOSS, Coach, Pandora and more will be provided to those in attendance. Wishing Trees, overhead lanterns and limited-time red envelope offers are available now through February 21.

Santa Monica Place is located at 395 Santa Monica Place, Santa Monica, at Broadway and Third Street Promenade. The celebration will take place on level one in Center Plaza.

SUBMITTED BY GABRIELLA SILVA

Los Angeles

LA Councilwoman Park Asks City Departments to Explore the Potential Impacts of Measure HLA

Councilwoman Traci Park, in a motion introduced last week, called on City Departments to assess the potential impacts of the Healthy Streets Los Angeles Ballot Measure ("Measure HLA"), a citizen-led ballot initiative appearing on the March 5, 2024 Primary Election Ballot.

If approved, Measure HLA would mandate the City to install modifications outlined in the City's Mobility Plan 2035 whenever the City undertakes a street or sidewalk improvement greater than ⅛ of a mile (660 feet), inclusive of street resurfacing and slurry sealing.

"Any traffic-related death in the City of Los Angeles is too many. We must make our streets safer for everyone, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to deliver those improvements to residents," said Councilwoman Traci Park. "With an uncertain fiscal future and potential impacts to the design and structural health of our roadways, it's important for the City to understand how we will fund and implement Measure HLA, if approved."

> Any traffic-related death in the City of Los Angeles is too many. We must make our streets safer for everyone, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to deliver those improvements to residents
> - Traci Park, Councilwoman

In her motion, Councilwoman Park shares that while the City has carried out many elements of the Mobility Plan, including more than 300 miles of bicycle lanes and other mobility elements, certain modifications under HLA may necessitate the removal of vehicle travel lanes and parking spaces. Within Council District 11, streets that could see the removal of traffic lanes include Lincoln Boulevard, Santa Monica Boulevard, Venice Boulevard, and Sepulveda Boulevard.

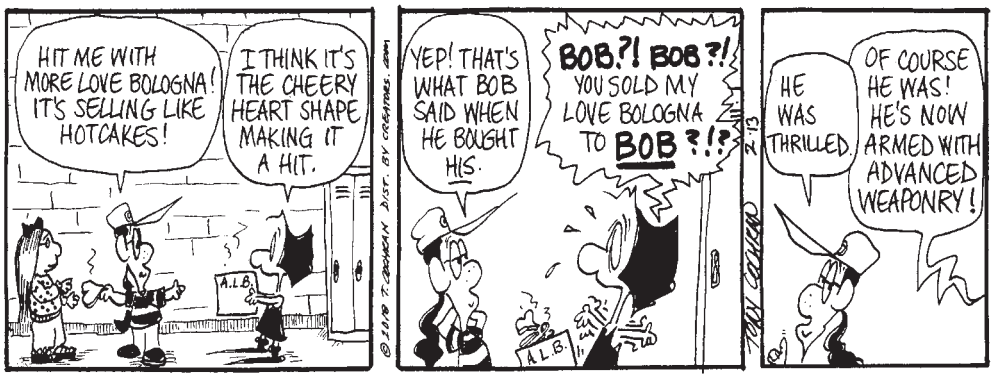
Park's motion instructs City departments to report on possible impacts to the City's street resurfacing schedule; a list of corridors that may necessitate the removal of parking and travel lanes; an outreach and engagement plan for communities along HLA-impacted corridors; funding sources to pay for HLA; and an implementation plan for HLA that will comply with all applicable Fire and Vehicle Codes.

SUBMITTED BY JONATHAN DAVILA



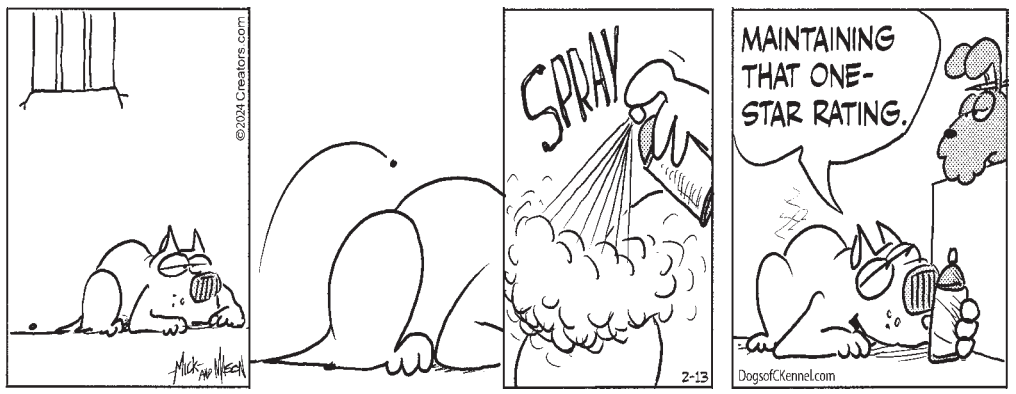
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



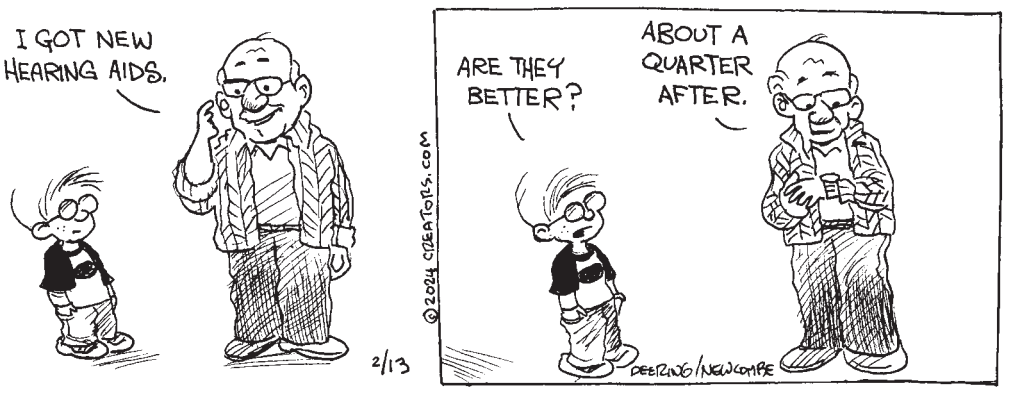
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



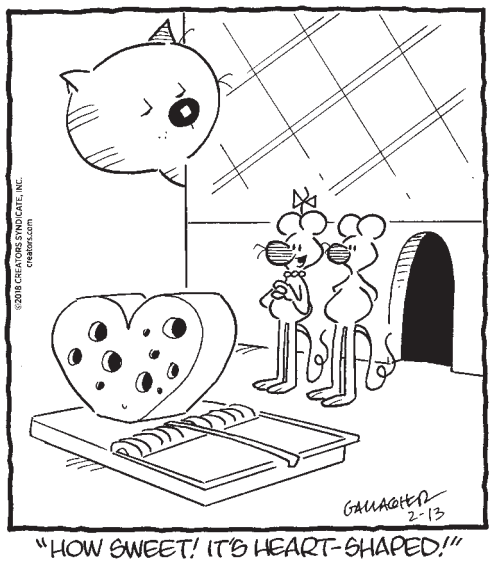
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 21 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

© australianwordgames.com.au 6119

Stay in your lane

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

Aware	Dirk	Noise	Smash
Ball	Face	Note	Solo
Battle	Fail	Party	Speed
Bench	Fast	Pins	Strike
posts	Foul	Play	Studied
Bowler	Game	Point	Take
Burner	Gutter	Rectangle	Thumb
Calculated	Holes	Refreshment	Total
Carry	Indoor	Roll	Wait
Competition	Lane	Score	
Count	Lose	Shoot	
Curl	Love tap	Skill	

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

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 13)

You are a gold thread in the intricate tapestry of existence, weaving a design that delights all who observe. Though you're only trying to bring people together, your manner is entertainment that draws fans. More highlights: You'll be paid well to endorse, coach and sell. You'll save the day six times. Old business fades to make way for the new. Cancer and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 17, 2, 39 and 1.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). To have an optimal experience, you don't have to add a single thing to what you're doing, who you are or what you have. Your power will come in the form of subtraction. You'll strip away the excess and get stronger.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Should you go with the tried-and-true or take a chance that there's something better out there for you? Much depends on diplomacy, tact and timing. With social savvy, you may just be able to have it all today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Whether or not you land the prize will depend partly on luck and mostly on strategy. People respond to your game, which is on point. You'll leverage what you have into ever-greater arrangements.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You have an excellent sense for team building and will bring people together to set a tone that helps all work together in harmony. A little competition doesn't hurt the situation, but too much is toxic. You'll lay out the boundaries.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You don't believe in burning bridges because it seems like shortsighted or prideful behavior. Besides, life's journey is often loopy in unimaginable ways. Harmonious relationships take work, which you consider to be an investment -- a gift to future you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Keeping your secrets is self-protection and self-respect. Let no one sway you to give more of yourself than you want to. You're entitled to your own mystery. Privacy is sacred. Working things out between you and you is completely acceptable.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It sometimes feels like you're giving your sweet attention in too many directions to pay proper respect to your own needs and wants. You don't have to be needy to be deserving of your own tenderness.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You prefer to live in an attitude of adaptability and openness. When you're in that space, you continuously evolve and expand. Safety makes it possible. You can't expect yourself to feel like embracing a situation that offers you no security.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll be the bigger person and rise above an annoying situation, mostly because staying in it cramps your style. You'd rather be happy and free than right. And once you let go of the need to have things your way, more becomes possible.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You don't always get to do what you want to do, but the funny thing is, doing what you don't want to do can turn out to be mighty fine. This is especially true regarding very inconvenient and yet objectively correct moves.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). For an instant energy boost, just open up your arms and let go. What to let go of, now that's the golden question of the day. The main stressor is a persistent one. If that one is too tricky, start with a smaller one.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You may feel philosophical about situations that don't affect you directly, but when it comes to the things that impact your world, it's action, not philosophy, that puts things right.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

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

Newsday Crossword

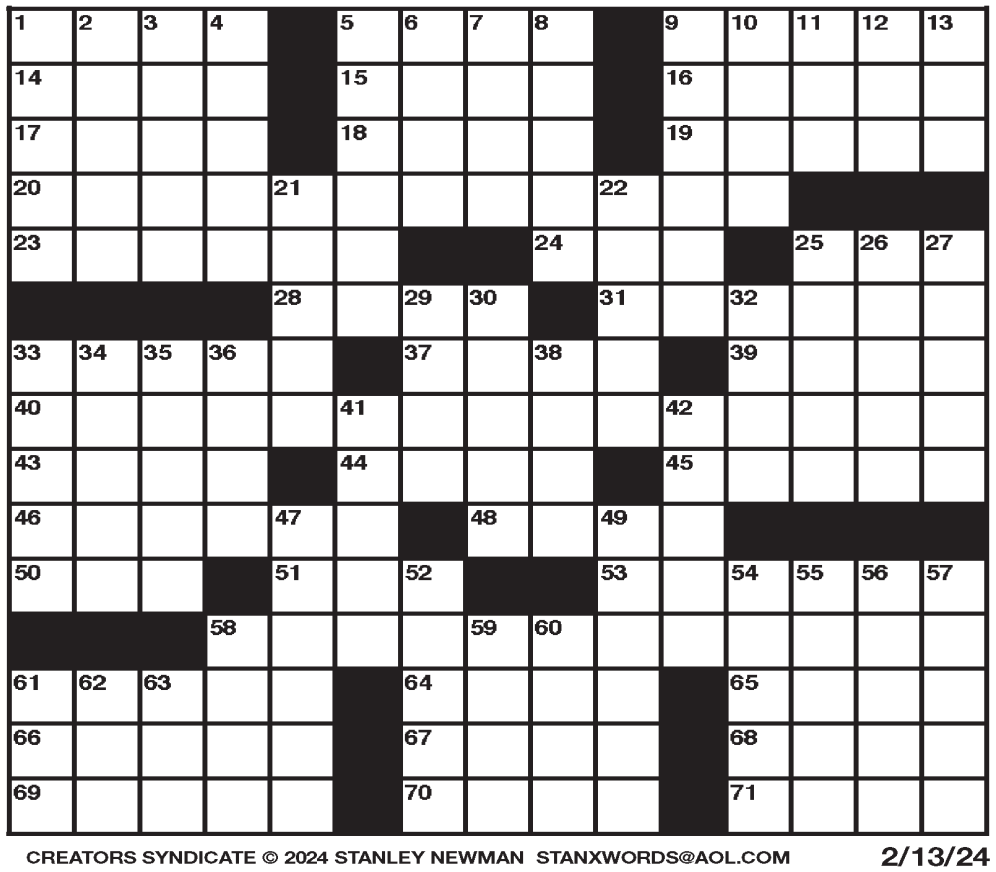
PLAY THINGS by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Male singing voice
5 Opera solo
9 Location
14 Golden Rule preposition
15 School exam
16 Brother of Moses
17 Ginger cookie
18 Of great height
19 Pay out
20 "Way up" circus performances
23 Soldier's affirmative
24 "Steady as __ goes"
25 __-tac-toe
28 Showroom sample
31 Llama's South American cousin
33 Plentiful
37 "Pay __ mind" ("Ignore that")
39 Destroy totally
40 Out of public view
43 Lotion's botanical soother
44 Any shopping list line
45 Houston ballplayer
46 Muscle-bone connector
48 Wander around
50 Letters for broad shoes
51 Sales __ (worker on commission)
53 Make changes to
58 Rod-and-reel cords
61 Sneezing sound
64 Follow instructions
65 Swiss mountains
66 Compete in a bee
67 Blue-green color
68 *Star Wars* princess
69 Unruly crowd
70 Fairy tale bruin
71 Remain

DOWN

1 Thick and shaggy, as hair
2 Sharpshooter Oakley
3 Antlered males
4 Second-year students, for short
5 Clothing
6 Bring up, as kids
7 Bit of land in an ocean
8 Book of maps
9 Chalklike crayon
10 Racetrack circuits
11 "__ you serious?"
12 Negative side of a debate
13 Conclude
21 Make broader
22 Total confusion
25 Tease with mean comments
26 More frosty
27 Defiant "I'll show you!"
29 Catcher's glove
30 Turn the __ cheek
32 JFK or FDR
33 Lessen gradually
34 Free-for-all fight
35 Texter's device
36 Was untruthful
38 Verne sub captain
41 Has an evening meal
42 Desert caravan beast
47 Black-and-orange bird
49 Diamond sock pattern
52 Snapshot
54 Perfume bottles
55 Narrow arm of the sea
56 Brown snapshot tint
57 Short opinion piece
58 Make a crease in
59 "__ your pardon!"
60 In the vicinity
61 Bonfire remnant
62 Navy noncom: Abbr.
63 That woman's



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VOTERS

FROM PAGE 4

use disorders from the same severely diminished funds.

It's simply not possible to expand services while slashing their funding. Prop. 1 provides no new funding for behavioral health services, which means there's nothing to plug the new gaps it'll create. Instead, it pilfers voluntary services to subsidize a new empire of private behavioral health facilities. Prop. 1 shifts almost a billion dollars a year out of services and into "housing interventions," which will "sustain the necessary treatment centers" built under the companion bond. But that doesn't necessarily mean new homes.

Of the $6.4 billion bond, $4.4 billion is designated for an infrastructure program with grants for private businesses to build clinical treatment facilities they will operate. With interest, the bond costs could be 60% more over their lifetime, which deserves consideration when the state faces the worst budget deficit since the Great Recession.

Infrastructure spending is already in the works to build the facilities California needs – and does not yet have – to implement its other recent initiatives, such as Senate Bill 43, which loosened the state's landmark conservatorship law and expanded the criteria for involuntary treatment to include people with substance use disorders. Of course, there's also CARE Court. Yet all but two counties chose to delay SB 43 from taking effect for two years because there are no locked facilities to place people. Prop. 1 can build those facilities.

The measure is being marketed as the latest panacea to address homelessness, but it will fail to do so. Last year, a comprehensive UCSF study found that homelessness is not caused by serious mental illness or substance use disorders but by high rents, low incomes and sudden loss of incomes. The research offered different solutions: small amounts of rental assistance to help keep people housed.

We also know that a housing-first strategy is what stabilizes people with behavioral health needs, allowing them to receive care they want in a permanent home. Expensive treatment facilities and vague, broad, force-first civil commitment laws will just temporarily disappear some of our unhoused into revolving-door systems that rarely end with a permanent home.

Prop. 1 is bad policy. The public mental health system needs the MHSA services funding to keep people with serious mental illness well-stabilized and housed. The only reason the MHSA is on the ballot is because of protections that do not allow it to be fundamentally altered without voter approval.

That gives voters the opportunity to save the MHSA and vote against Prop. 1.

Clare Cortright is the policy director at Cal Voices. This article was originally published by CalMatters.

MENTAL HEALTH

FROM PAGE 5

at public meetings for Alameda County's behavioral health department simply because MHSA money paid for them. I eat them now because, well, people have to eat – and because I dare to ask for so much more from the system.

At first, my group, FASMI, wasn't sure what to make of Prop. 1. We initially opposed Senate Bill 326, one of the legislative parents of Prop. 1, as not going far enough to reform the system. It doesn't include a right to treatment – something families have been asking for and which ought to be a human right for everyone with a no-fault illness.

But the Prop. 1 package provides many good things, including state oversight and evaluations of county outcomes, which the MHSA sufficiently lacked. It includes treatment of substance abuse so our dual-diagnosis family members don't fall between stools. It also moves population-based prevention programs (5% of the MHSA budget) to the state, where oversight officials can decide free of local lobbying what it might mean to prevent mental illness.

Furthermore, Prop. 1 retains local funding that can prevent relapse and deterioration of people already diagnosed with serious illness, which was the original meaning of "prevention" in the MHSA.

The $6.4 billion bond measure included with Prop. 1 designates $2 billion for supportive housing and $4.4 billion for mental health treatment beds – 10,000 of them. I was overjoyed that the bill was amended late to make clear that at least some of the bond money could be used to build secure beds, locked or unlocked, temporary or longer-term – not only hospitals but crisis residentials, residential drug-treatment and dual-diagnosis programs, and peer respites.

Prop. 1 is not intended to solve homelessness. It's about the mentally ill, treating conditions that affect 82% of the homeless population at some point, according to a UCSF study. To solve the kind of homelessness that is due to rising rents and stagnant income, we need totally different measures.

Prop. 1 will not "hide" anyone, either. Many of our loved ones are already being hidden in jails and prisons, and – for a day or two at a time – in psychiatric emergency rooms. We will not allow them to drop out of sight or out of mind.

A vote against Prop. 1 is a vote to preserve a failed system. This measure will give the state more control over spending and provide new money for actual countable facilities that will give the system a footprint.

Rest assured, this is not blind optimism. When money is thrown at the powerless, it doesn't necessarily stick, and it can create an increasingly entitled and entrenched bureaucracy wherever it goes. But California has a chance to steer change under Prop. 1 and move in the direction that saves lives.

The state is finally beginning to force counties to evolve and give the public a unified, responsible system. FASMI and others will watch the implementation of Prop. 1 closely, and we will help the state watch over that implementation.

We won't be fooled by ham sandwiches.

Alison Monroe is a retired editor in Oakland and co-founder of Families Advocating for the Seriously Mentally Ill, or FASMI. This article was originally published by CalMatters.



TUESDAY | FEBRUARY 13

COUNTER CULTURE

The Rainbow Room at Lady & Larder, 828 Pico Blvd Suite 1, Santa Monica, hosts "Counter Culture in Los Angeles," connecting cheesemakers, importers, mongers and buyers in an interactive, educational setting. These trade-only events are intensive, full-day sessions with ample opportunity to talk one-on-one and network with industry peers. In addition to educational content, there is the Tasting Table, a heaping farm table of cheese, charcuterie and accompaniments that attendees are encouraged to sample throughout the day. Begins at 9:30 a.m., tickets $25. To purchase tickets, visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/counter-culture-in-los-angeles-tickets-779694225417.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council is made up of seven members elected at-large for staggered four-year terms. Every two years, after each election, the City Council selects one of its members to serve as Mayor and another to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore. Begins in Council Chambers at Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main St., at 5:30 p.m.

CHOCOLATE TASTING + NUTELLA CHALLENGE

6:30 p.m. Donald Bruce Kaufman - Brentwood Branch Library, 11820 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles. Taste dark chocolate made from cacao beans from around the world, take the American vs. Italian Nutella taste challenge, and learn more about the world's favorite addiction. No advance registration required. For adults and teens. For ADA accommodations, call (213) 228-7430 at least 72 hours prior to the event. https://www.lapl.org/whats-on/events/chocolate-tasting-nutella-challenge

DECODEN DESIGN

Personalize a picture frame or claw hair clip in decoden, a Japanese style of decorating with faux frosting and kawaii charms. BYO phone case to decoden as well. All other materials provided. For ages 10-18. Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Avenue, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

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

Help with family nutrition and health care access is resuming at Virginia Avenue Park thanks to Providence St. John's Community Health Program. Trained community health workers will be available to meet in person with community members at the Park Center Building in Virginia Avenue Park. The first Tuesday of the month 11:30 am to 7 pm and 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Tuesdays from 9:30 am to 5 pm. Virginia Avenue Park 2200 Virginia Ave. 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

MARDI GRAS IN SANTA MONICA

Harvelle's Santa Monica, 1432 4th St., begins a Mardi Gras event at 9:30 p.m. with New Orleans funk and more music from Hambone Relay and PEDRO. Beads, King Cake and New Orleans-inspired drink specials will be offered. General admission tickets $9.99, two drink minimum. For more, visit santamonica.harvelles.com.

WEDNESDAY | FEBRUARY 14

COMMUNITY SUPPORT EVENT

WIN-LA in partnership with Virginia Avenue Park and the City of Santa Monica will distribute diapers, cleaning supplies and groceries to the first 100 households on a first-come, first served basis while supplies last. Begins at 12 p.m. at Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave., Santa Monica. For more information, call 424-222-9237.

BEAR SUPPLY HOUR

Bear Supply, named one of "The 100 Best Things in Comedy" in 2016 by The Comedy Bureau, is a fast-paced sketch and long form improv team, performing at M.i.'s Westside Comedy Theater, 1232-A 3rd St. Promenade, Santa Monica, CA every other Wednesday at 9 p.m. Every show is accompanied by a live DJ, creating a high-octane, freakishly entertaining and one-of-a-kind improvised spectacle. Bear Supply (SF Sketchfest, Miami Improv Festival, Las Vegas Improv Festival) is led by a cast of veteran improvisors. Featuring Joey Green, Shaun Boylan, James Heaney and Caroline Cotter. Tickets $10 and can be purchased at: https://www.westsidecomedy.com/events/event/bear-supply-hour/.

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET:

Widely considered to be among the best on the west coast. Runs from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Arizona Ave and 2nd St.

SPORTS

FROM PAGE 2

Mariners win 62-43

Mariners Record: 21-9 (10-2 Camino Real League)

Next Game: Wednesday vs Jordan, 2024 CIF Southern Section Girls' Basketball Championships- Division 3A, 7 p.m.

Saint Monica Boys Soccer:

Friday, February 9:

Mariners at Covina, 2024 CIF Southern Section Boys' Soccer Championships- Division 7

Covina win 5-0

Mariners Final 2023-24 Record: 8-9-1 (7-3 Santa Fe League)

SAINT MONICA GIRLS SOCCER:

Thursday, February 8:

Mariners vs Hawthorne, 2024 CIF Southern Section Girls' Soccer Championships- Division 7

Mariners win 10-0

Saturday, February 10:

Mariners vs La Reina, 2024 CIF Southern Section Girls' Soccer Championships- Division 7

Mariners win 2-0

Mariners Record: 19-0 (12-0 Santa Fe League)

Next Game: Wednesday vs Oakwood, 2024 CIF Southern Section Girls' Soccer Championships- Division 7, 5 p.m.

thomas@smdp.com

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