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2 Epstein Ties

Bass wants Wasserman out.

3 CA Crime Cut

Community schools as key factor.

4 Meet The Candidates

Insurance commissioner race.

6 LA Health

Hits record care delivery.



Volume 25 Issue 65

WEDNESDAY 2/18/26

sm dp.com

Flash floods impact ongoing work in Palisades Fire burn zones



Courtesy of Caltrans

ROADS: Rainstorms Monday brought mudslides and debris flows to recovery work zones along Topanga Canyon Boulevard/State Route 27 and Pacific Coast Highway in the Palisades Fire burn area.

The 3.6-mile stretch of SR-27 between PCH and Grand View Drive was closed after crews identified at least eight locations where debris flows blocked the roadway.

Monday's storms also damaged a section of wall on northbound PCH just north of Porto Marina Way, reducing the highway to one lane at that location. Mud and debris flow also narrowed northbound PCH to one lane just south of SR-27.

Motorists were advised to plan alternative routes and avoid unnecessary travel during rainstorms. Drivers are urged to check weather alerts before heading out, use headlights and wipers in rain, expect delays and never drive through moving water. Current traffic conditions are available on the Caltrans Quickmap at <https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov/>.

Caltrans asks for input on extending bus-only lanes along Lincoln

MATTHEW HALL

Daily Press Editor

The public has until April 17 to weigh in on a Caltrans feasibility study exploring whether bus lanes on Lincoln Boulevard should be extended southward through Los Angeles, with online feedback now open through the agency's engagement portal.

Caltrans is inviting residents, commuters and transit riders to

SEE BUS PAGE 7

School district prepares for layoffs of janitors and reading aides

MATTHEW HALL

Daily Press Editor

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District is moving to lay off more than two dozen employees at the end of the current school year, including teachers who help struggling readers and scores of custodial workers, even as the union representing many of those workers pushes back against what it calls disrespectful and destabilizing

SEE SCHOOL PAGE 8

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LA Mayor Bass joins calls for 2028 Olympics head Wasserman to leave over Epstein ties

Pressure built Tuesday on Casey Wasserman as head of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics organizing team after the city's mayor urged him to leave over his historic ties to Jeffrey Epstein's former girlfriend.

L.A. Mayor Karen Bass told CNN late Monday "my opinion is that he should step down" despite Wasserman getting support last week from the games organizing board to stay.

The issue has been a distraction for the International Olympic Committee this month since Wasserman's flirtatious emails from 2003 with Ghislaine Maxwell were published in a release of United States government files days before the Milan Cortina Winter Games opened.

The IOC had consistently deflected questions in Milan about Wasserman, saying it was a matter for the LA28 board, though its language shifted slightly Tuesday.

"I understand there are many conversations happening at this moment but I will not make any further comment," IOC spokesman Mark Adams said Tuesday at the Olympic body's daily news conference in Milan.

"This is obviously a matter for the board of LA28 still at this stage," Adams said.

Mayor Bass noted of Wasserman that "I cannot fire him" in a studio interview with CNN's Dana Bash but publicly stated she thought he should leave.

FALLOUT AT WASSERMAN AGENCY

Wasserman has looked more embattled since the entertainment and sports agency he founded and bears his name lost clients in

the fallout from the emails release including pop star Chappell Roan and Abby Wambach, the former world's best player in women's soccer. He is now in the process of selling the agency.

**I understand
there are many
conversations
happening at
this moment
but I will
not make
any further
comment**

- Mark Adams, IOC spokesman

“

July and August of 2028.

KEY OLYMPIC FIGURE FOR 11 YEARS

Wasserman has been a driving force of the L.A. Olympics since the bid was launched in 2015. Questions about his status have swirled since before he arrived in Milan two weeks ago to meet with IOC members and attend the Winter Games opening ceremony.

The L.A. organizing team gave IOC members at their annual meeting an update of the hosting plan.

SEE OLYMPICS PAGE 7

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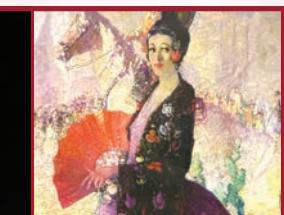
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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Community schools are key ingredient of California's tumbling crime rates



PROGRAM: Students hang out at the Shop 55 Wellness Center at Oakland High School in Oakland on May 10, 2024. Oakland High offers a variety of medical services to students through the California Community Schools Partnership Program.

In a recent State of the State address, Gov. Gavin Newsom highlighted data showing gun violence in California fell to a record low in 2025, with drops in every major crime category.

Oakland recorded its fewest homicides since 1967; Los Angeles, its fewest since 1966; Fresno also hit a 50-year low. And this progress occurred alongside measurable improvements in youth wellbeing.

A key reason this happened is that communities across California — and the nation — led campaigns to replace punishment-first systems with systems of support and healing.

They fought to dismantle the “school-to-prison pipeline,” to expand educational opportunities and end mass incarceration. They won hundreds of state and local policy victories that invested in youth and families to create safe, thriving schools and neighborhoods. We are now seeing the fruits of those efforts.

California's historic investment in community schools was one of those victories. This year, we have the chance to lock in these gains and build on them by making our investment in community schools permanent.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE FOUNDATIONAL

A community school is a public school that serves as a neighborhood

hub, combining academics with health and youth development services. It builds strong partnerships with families, community-based organizations and local governments to meet the needs of the “whole child” and strengthen the surrounding community.

In 2021, California launched the \$4.1 billion Community Schools Partnership Program, which now reaches more than 2,500 schools. It's guided by a California Community Schools Framework that prioritizes mental health and restorative justice.

The first major evaluation of California's community schools found clear impacts after just one year: chronic absence was down 30%, suspensions were down 15%, and academic achievement was up, with Black students and English learners gaining the equivalent of at least 50 additional days of learning.

THE MOVEMENT BEHIND THE GAINS

The improvements outside of school also are not accidental. They are the result of more than two decades of youth and family-led campaigns that reshaped California's approach to education, community safety and youth wellbeing — part of what many call the 21st Century Civil Rights Movement.

SEE COMMUNITY PAGE 7



Surf report

WATER TEMP: 61.5

WEDNESDAY | SURF: 2-3ft+
POOR

Thigh to stomach

W swell peaks in the AM then backs down. PM low tide looking interesting. The chunky W swell picks up overnight and will hold pretty steady in the morning before gradually backing down through the day. There's a high tide in the morning but the wind doesn't look great then. The window to watch will be the afternoon low tide at the points. Swell eases but there's still enough of it to have a look, and the wind shifts more NW for side-offshore conditions at the more sheltered/tucked away points.

THURSDAY | SURF: 1-2t
FAIR

Knee to thigh

Conditions are the wildcard as another coastal low slides into the region. Still enough swell likely for decent size, but the conditions outlook isn't exactly a clean slate. Models are somewhat at odds on local winds as they try to resolve another coastal low expected to slide into the region. Still some hope (albeit low confidence) for improving conditions in the afternoon.

Weather

Wednesday: A 20 percent chance of rain before 10am. Sunny, with a high near 58.

Wednesday Night: A 30 percent chance of rain after 4am. Mostly clear, with a low around 45. West wind 5 to 15 mph.

Thursday: Rain likely, mainly between 10am and 4pm. Partly sunny, with a high near 57. West southwest wind around 15 mph.

Thursday Night: A 40 percent chance of rain, mainly before 10pm. Partly cloudy, with a low around 44.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2026/02/18	Wed	03:15 AM	1.06	L
2026/02/18	Wed	09:18 AM	5.61	H
2026/02/18	Wed	3:58 PM	-0.58	L
2026/02/18	Wed	10:13 PM	4.68	H
2026/02/19	Thu	03:57 AM	0.84	L
2026/02/19	Thu	09:56 AM	5.15	H
2026/02/19	Thu	4:23 PM	-0.18	L
2026/02/19	Thu	10:41 PM	4.91	H
2026/02/20	Fri	04:44 AM	0.69	L
2026/02/20	Fri	10:39 AM	4.52	H
2026/02/20	Fri	4:49 PM	0.34	L
2026/02/20	Fri	11:13 PM	5.09	H
2026/02/21	Sat	05:37 AM	0.64	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>



Draw Date: 2/16
16 18 19 56 58
Power#: 6
Jackpot: 169 M



Draw Date: 2/16
1 3 15 17 21



Draw Date: 2/13
34 40 49 59 68
Mega#: 1
Jackpot: 395 M



Draw Date: 2/16
EVENING: 2 8 1
Draw Date: 2/16
MIDDAY: 0 4 3



Draw Date: 2/14
5 13 14 26 42
Mega#: 20
Jackpot: 29 M



Draw Date: 2/16
1st: 04 - Big Ben
2nd: 09 - Winning Spirit
3rd: 05 - California Classic
Race Time: 1:47.31

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The Santa Monica Daily Press publishes Monday - Saturday with a circulation of 8,200 on weekdays and 8,000 on the weekend. The Daily Press is adjudicated as a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Los Angeles and covers news relevant to the City of Santa Monica. The Daily Press is a member of the California Newspaper Publisher's Association, the National Newspaper Association and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. The paper you're reading this on is composed of 100% post consumer content and the ink used to print these words is soy based. We are proud recipients of multiple honors for outstanding news coverage from the California Newspaper Publishers Association as well as a Santa Monica Sustainable Quality Award.

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Who's running for California Insurance Commissioner? Here's a look at the field of candidates

PATRICK WOLFF

"Solving our insurance crisis starts with reorienting the California Department of Insurance. It is too lax regulating insurance companies' behavior, yet too strict controlling their market access. Customers lose both ways..."

"I will have the insurance department release company-specific data and publish a claims performance report card for each insurance company, empowering customers to reward good actors and punish bad actors. Customer empowerment requires robust choice and competition, yet the insurance department strangles both with bureaucratic red tape."



CalMatters
Patrick Wolff, a Democrat, is a financial analyst, investor and a U.S. chess champion.

BENJAMIN ALLEN

"We need to modernize how the state reviews insurance rates while preserving strong consumer protections. That means allowing responsible use of modern tools to predict wildfire risk and account for the actual cost of coverage, while dramatically speeding up state timelines so decisions are made in months, not years..."

"I would push for neighborhood-scale fire prevention and risk reduction programs that lower losses across entire communities and make it possible for insurers to responsibly write policies again. Many parts of the state are already implementing these programs, and they're working. We need to scale these — and quickly."



CalMatters
State Sen. Benjamin Allen, a Democrat, represents the Pacific Palisades, Santa Monica and other parts of Los Angeles County.

STACY KORSGADEN

"California does not need to choose between consumer protection and a functioning insurance market. We can have both. Achieving that balance requires a recommitment to basic principles: Free markets, actuarial soundness, California managing wildfire risks and allowing private sector innovations."

"Insurance thrives on predictability and trust. When those elements are restored, capital returns, coverage expands and our working families benefit from greater choice and better service."



CalMatters
Stacy Korsgaden, a Republican, owns an insurance and financial services agency.

STEVEN BRADFORD

"I support the implementation of Assembly Bill 226, which will allow for the issuance of bonds to finance the costs of claims, to increase the liquidity and claims-paying capacity of the FAIR Plan, to refund bonds previously issued for that purpose and reduce the reliance on expensive reinsurance..."

"I want to evaluate including the FAIR Plan in the California Insurance Guarantee Association, as a means to more efficiently spread risk among all of the parties that are benefitted by — and burdened by — the realities of the California market."



CalMatters
Steven Bradford, a Democrat, is a former state Senator and Assemblymember.

ROBERT HOWELL

"One reform worth pursuing is tying homeowners insurance participation to broader market access. If an insurer operates in a region and sells other lines of insurance, it should also be required to offer homeowners coverage there, subject to reasonable standards. Allowing companies to profit from California while abandoning homeowners pushes risk onto families and onto the state."

"Stronger enforcement around cancellations and nonrenewals is also critical. Entire neighborhoods are being dropped with little explanation and little notice. Families who have paid premiums for years are left scrambling through no fault of their own."



CalMatters
Robert Howell, a Republican, is president of a cybersecurity equipment manufacturer in Silicon Valley.

EDUARDO VARGAS

"I will freeze any further rate hikes. I will lead the department in market conduct investigations of the 10 largest property and casualty insurance companies in California. Investigations will expose the exploitative nature of internal claim procedures, unfair competition or illegal coordination between insurance companies..."

"Public insurance in California would not be modeled after the FAIR plan. Without the motive of private insurance, which is structured to deny and limit claims as much as possible, a public insurance plan would allow maximum coverage through a tax on those who are responsible for the climate crisis. California without billionaires could fund a public insurer."



CalMatters
Eduardo "Lalo" Vargas is a Los Angeles Unified school teacher who is running via the Peace and Freedom Party.

JANE KIM

"We need Natural Disaster Insurance for All. This universal, affordable disaster insurance program would also invest in statewide climate resiliency and infrastructure. A universal system — which currently exists in countries like New Zealand and France — stabilizes coverage, prevents mass cancellations and creates a pool large enough to handle natural disasters. It also allows California to invest directly in mitigation and resilience — the kind of long-term risk reduction private insurers are not mandated or incentivized to invest in..."

"We also must do more to cap CEO pay and excessive insurance profits. Californians are being asked to accept higher premiums and worse coverage while insurance executives take home tens of millions of dollars and companies use our premiums as an investment engine."



CalMatters
Jane Kim is a leader of the California Working Families Party and is a former San Francisco Supervisor.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

CalMatters has provided each of the candidates for Insurance Commissioner with an opportunity to provide a commentary on their candidacy and the issues in the race. Excerpts from each commentary have been provided here but full statements are available online at <https://calmatters.org/commentary/2026/02/insurance-commissioner-race-current-field/>

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Los Angeles

NFL, LA28 Unveil Flag Football Olympic Emblem During Super Bowl Broadcast

The National Football League and LA28 unveiled a custom emblem during the Super Bowl LX broadcast on NBC, Peacock and Telemundo to celebrate flag football's Olympic Games debut in 2028.

The emblem spotlights Los Angeles' creative spirit and marks the first Olympic appearance of flag football, governed by the International Federation of American Football. The sport represents an inclusive, accessible and contact-free format of American football.

Flag football is among the fastest growing sports domestically and internationally, with approximately 20 million players in more than 100 countries with gender-balanced participation. The sport was confirmed for the LA28 Olympic program in 2023, joining more than 50 sports featured in the Games.

The NFL clubs passed a resolution allowing NFL players to participate in the LA28 tournament. Fans can register for the LA28 Ticket Draw at tickets.la28.org.

"This emblem is another step in building excitement and momentum toward LA28, giving fans a new way to connect with the sport and the Games," said Peter O'Reilly, NFL Executive Vice President of Club Business, International, and League Events.

The emblem draws inspiration from football laces wrapped in the sport's flowing flag, featuring yellow as it will be showcased in Los Angeles. The design captures speed and energy, emphasizing swift and fluid movements throughout.

"The release of this new emblem with the NFL is an exciting moment on our shared road to 2028 and the Olympic debut of Flag Football, contributing to the immense momentum behind the Games," said Janet Evans, LA28 Chief Athlete Officer.

Pierre Trochet, president of IFAF, called the collaboration "awesome," reflecting excitement across the worldwide American football community ahead of the sport's historic Olympic debut.

Launched in 2020, the LA28 emblem system is inspired by the city's grid, anchored by a static and bold L, 2 and 8. At the center is a dynamic, animated 'A' built for the digital age. The flag football emblem joins a collection of more than 50 unique emblems representing voices and partners that reflect the host city's vibrant culture, creativity, inclusiveness and self-expression.

For more information about LA28, visit www.la28.org.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



Courtesy image

EMBLEM: Spotlights Los Angeles' creative spirit and the first appearance of flag football.



CITY OF SANTA MONICA
NOTICE INVITING BIDS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that bids will be received by the City of Santa Monica until 3:00 p.m. on the date indicated at which time they will be opened and posted for:

BID #4507 RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS
Submission Deadline is February 27, 2026 at 3:00 PM Pacific Time.

Bids must be submitted on forms supplied by the City of Santa Monica. Bid packages containing all forms, specifications, terms and conditions may be obtained on the **CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL**. The website for this Notice of Inviting Bids and related documents is: OpenGov (<https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca>). There is no charge for bid package and specifications.

66 This emblem is another step in building excitement and momentum toward LA28, giving fans a new way to connect with the sport and the Games

- Peter O'Reilly, NFL Executive Vice President of Club Business, International, and League Events

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CHEVRON 432 Wilshire Blvd	\$5.09
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*Prices paying in card

Average gasoline prices in Los Angeles have risen 10.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$4.55/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 2,135 stations in Los Angeles. Prices in Los Angeles are 22.7 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 15.1 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 1.0 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$3.624 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Los Angeles was priced at \$3.79/g while the most expensive was \$5.99/g, a difference of \$2.20/g. The lowest price in the state was \$2.89/g while the highest was \$6.79/g, a difference of \$3.90/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 2.6 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.87/g. The national average is up 4.9 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 24.5 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

COMMUNITY NEWS

LA Country

County Board Advances Disaster Recovery Rebuild Authority

The Board of Supervisors approved a motion to establish a Disaster Recovery Rebuild Authority for the unincorporated Santa Monica Mountains and Altadena, marking an important milestone in the county's long-term rebuilding and recovery from the devastating 2025 wildfires.

The action builds on work led by Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath, who convened the Blue Ribbon Commission on Climate Action and Fire Safe Recovery to bring together experts and community voices. The commission recommended establishing a unified rebuilding authority to coordinate recovery, reduce costs and support communities in rebuilding safer and more resiliently.

"A Rebuilding Authority is essential to recover at the scale the 2025 wildfire disasters demand," Horvath said. "This Authority will help families return home faster while ensuring we rebuild safer, more resilient communities that are better prepared for the future."

"Our wildfire survivors deserve focused support and follow-through," said Supervisor Kathryn Barger. "As the County takes on more than \$2 billion in infrastructure repairs in Altadena, we need a dedicated team whose only job is to move this work forward."

The motion directs county leadership to return with a framework for standing up the authority, including a launch plan, staffing and resource needs, and a comprehensive financial strategy. It also advances continued development of an infrastructure master plan for fire-impacted areas, strengthens disaster recovery coordination within the Chief Executive Office and bolsters permitting capacity to keep rebuilding moving efficiently.

The motion follows the creation of Disaster Recovery Financing Districts for both fire areas to ensure local tax revenue is reinvested in local public infrastructure.

The Feb. 10 board meeting also included a companion motion authored by Horvath to advance implementation of the Blue Ribbon Commission's other recommendations.

Together, these actions strengthen the county's ability to help residents return home and ensure rebuilding decisions reduce future wildfire risk and improve long-term resilience for communities across Los Angeles County.

- Lindsey P. Horvath, Supervisor

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A Rebuilding Authority is essential to recover at the scale the 2025 wildfire disasters demand

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

LA Country

LA Health Services Reports Record Care Delivery Despite Budget Challenges

The Los Angeles County Department of Health Services released its 2025 Annual Report this week, highlighting expanded services and national recognition across the nation's second-largest municipal health system despite significant budget constraints.

The report showcases achievements including increased rehabilitation capacity at Rancho Los Amigos, the opening of the Skid Row Care Campus, record specialty care levels and groundbreaking medical research. In 2025, LA Health Services delivered 2.9 million patient visits, provided coordinated care to nearly 480,000 patients and administered more than 150,000 flu vaccines.

"Even in one of the most challenging years in our history, our teams continued to rise," said Dr. Christina Ghaly, director of LA Health Services. "This report reflects a health system that innovates out of purpose, not abundance — one that shows up for patients every day with compassion, skill and an unwavering commitment to equity."

The department operates four hospitals and 23 health centers and clinics, serving as the safety net for 10 million Los Angeles County residents. Services are provided regardless of income, insurance, housing or immigration status.

LA Health Services facilities and staff earned national and international recognition in 2025. Los Angeles General Medical Center and Olive View-UCLA Medical Center received Forbes Top Hospital rankings. The system also earned Magnet nursing recognition, national patient safety honors and global leadership acknowledgment in nursing education and advocacy.

Beyond clinical excellence, the report highlights the system's role during crises, including wildfire response, disaster readiness and support for displaced staff members who continued caring for patients.

The report features stories of patient recovery, workforce resilience, technological innovation and partnerships transforming care delivery across Los Angeles County. Award-winning workforce development programs also received recognition.

LA Health Services is recognized nationally as a model public health system serving the most diverse and medically underserved communities in the country.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

BUS

FROM PAGE 1

review its Extension of Bus Lanes on Lincoln Boulevard Feasibility Study Report and submit comments at engage.dot.ca.gov/m45175. The report examines opportunities to enhance mass transit frequency and reliability along a three-mile stretch of Lincoln Boulevard, also known as State Route 1, between Venice Boulevard and West Manchester Avenue.

The agency emphasized that the study is a preliminary investigation and that no projects are currently planned.

This marks the fifth opportunity for the public to engage on the study. Previous outreach efforts included two online surveys, two in-person surveys, two open houses and corridor canvassing. The project webpage also includes a timeline of the feasibility study and a link to a StoryMap with additional background and details.

The study segment was flagged as a "hotspot of low speeds that could benefit from bus lanes" through Caltrans' Better Buses for California initiative, which the agency's deputy director for planning and modal programs sponsors.

The history of bus lane efforts on Lincoln Boulevard stretches back nearly a decade. In 2017, the City of Santa Monica installed peak-hour bus lanes on Lincoln Boulevard between Pico Boulevard and Ozone Avenue. That project reduced travel times and increased speeds for the Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Route 3 and Rapid 3 lines within city limits.

Three years later, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation and Caltrans partnered on the Lincoln Fast Forward project to extend bus lanes further, adding a segment between Commonwealth Avenue and Venice Boulevard, just north of the current feasibility

study area. Then in 2024, the Los Angeles City Council District 11 office submitted a proposal for additional bus rapid transit on Lincoln Boulevard under the Better Buses for California initiative, helping to kick off the current feasibility study effort.

The current study focuses on the gap that remains between Venice Boulevard and West Manchester Avenue, where congestion continues to limit the effectiveness of existing bus lane improvements.

Although the study segment falls entirely within the City of Los Angeles, Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus is the primary transit provider along the corridor, operating its Route 3 and Rapid 3 lines through the area. Several other operators also serve the segment, including Culver City Bus Lines, LADOT's LNow On-Demand Shuttle, LADOT Commuter Express and LA Metro.

The study was completed by Caltrans District 7's transit branch, which provides planning and technical expertise to advance transit improvements, accessibility and multimodal integration on the state highway system. The branch also leads development of the District Transit Plan and administers state and federal transit grants.

Caltrans noted the feasibility study is separate from both the Lincoln Fast Forward project and the State Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Project, which are distinct efforts also underway along the corridor.

Members of the public can view the full report and submit feedback online at any time before the April 17 deadline by visiting engage.dot.ca.gov/m45175. The portal is accessible around the clock, and no in-person attendance is required to participate.

editor@smdp.com



Courtesy of Caltrans

LINCOLN: Caltrans is proposing extended bus lanes along Lincoln..

OLYMPICS

FROM PAGE 2

Wasserman and other officials were quizzed on issues such as visa processing for global visitors to the U.S., though not on personal matters. They did not meet later with international media which officials from other future Olympic hosts did.

He has not been accused of any wrongdoing in connection with Epstein and Maxwell.

In a statement issued before coming to Milan, Wasserman said "I deeply regret my correspondence with Ghislaine Maxwell," which was "long before her horrific crimes came to light."

Maxwell was convicted in 2021 on five counts of sex trafficking and abuse of minors, and is serving a 20-year prison sentence.

By GRAHAM DUNBAR AP Sports Writer

rates have plummeted. Incarceration rates and police budgets also are trending lower.

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Unified School District announced the highest test scores in its history. And students are achieving more while being suspended less. School suspensions have dropped 80% in LAUSD since 2012. Statewide, suspensions have been cut in half and test scores are rising.

Communities have shown we can create safety and wellbeing without feeding a school-to-prison pipeline and mass incarceration.

California's investment in community schools has delivered transformative results — but the funding is temporary. In his State of the State speech, Newsom proposed an additional \$1 billion in ongoing funding. It's a critical investment.

We applaud the governor for taking the lead to make community schools funding — and the California Framework — permanent. The future of our youth and our state depend on it.

John H. Jackson is president of the Schott Foundation for Public Education. Castle Redmond is senior advisor at the California Youth Wellbeing Fund.

COMMUNITY

FROM PAGE 3

Communities most impacted by violence and mass incarceration organized to stop both. They pushed government to shift hundreds of millions of dollars from youth prisons and school police toward youth development, employment, mental health and healing.

In Los Angeles, coalitions such as Brothers, Sons, Selves; the Dignity in Schools Campaign, and Police Free LAUSD secured major wins, including a School Climate Bill of Rights in 2013. In 2021, they won tens of millions of dollars for a Black Student Achievement Plan, Dream Centers for immigrant youth and supports for LGBTQ+ students — instead of more school police.

At the same time, the Los Angeles Youth Uprising Coalition helped move tens of millions of dollars more from county probation to a new Department of Youth Development. Communities across California waged similar campaigns. The organizers who built this work deserve credit for today's progress.

What the data shows Los Angeles just recorded its safest year in decades; crime

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SCHOOL

FROM PAGE 1

proposals at the bargaining table.

At their Feb. 19 meeting, the Board of Education will discuss three separate layoff resolutions that together eliminate more than 27 full-time equivalent positions across certificated and classified staff categories, with cuts set to take effect at the conclusion of the 2025-2026 school year.

Among those targeted for layoff are five teachers — four multiple subject instructors and one Spanish teacher — whose elimination has alarmed parents of students who rely on Language and Literacy Interventionist, or LLI, services.

A petition circulating among district families warns that the loss of reading interventionists will fall hardest on the district's most vulnerable students.

"My child is one of many students in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District who currently depends on the specialized support of a Language and Literacy Interventionist," said Yaso Thiagarajah in their Change.org petition. "I have seen firsthand how this targeted instruction acts as a critical bridge between struggling to read and academic success."

The petition urges the board and administration to maintain and fully fund LLI positions, arguing that eliminating the roles will disproportionately affect students from disadvantaged backgrounds and widen the achievement gap. "Every child deserves a chance to succeed," the petition reads. "LLIs make that chance possible."

The layoff resolution cites a reduction of particular kinds of services as the basis for the cuts and notes that no permanent employee will be terminated while a less senior employee is retained to perform a service the more senior employee is credentialed and competent to render. The resolution also includes specific provisions related to English Learner authorizations, reflecting the district's obligation under the Williams Settlement to ensure EL students are served by appropriately credentialed staff.

The layoffs extend well beyond the classroom. The board also approved resolutions eliminating more than 20 full-time equivalent classified positions, the majority of them custodians.

A resolution targeting classified services calls for eliminating 18 full-time custodians working 12-month, eight-hour schedules, along with additional part-time custodial positions totaling roughly 2,425 FTE, and one lead custodian position. In all, the classified custodial cuts amount to approximately 20,425 full-time equivalent positions.

A separate resolution targets classified management, reducing two plant supervisor positions for a total of 2.0 FTE.

The resolutions direct the district superintendent or designee to notify affected employees no later than March 15, consistent with state Education Code requirements governing classified and certificated layoffs. Employees laid off under the resolutions retain reemployment rights under the Education Code.

Seniority for classified employees will be determined in accordance with the district's agreement with SEIU Local 99 and the Personnel Commission's Merit Rules. In cases of tied seniority, a tiebreaker process will first consider total service in probationary or permanent status and, if still unresolved,

require affected employees to draw lots.

The layoff announcements come as SEIU Local 99, which represents many of the district's classified employees, is engaged in active contract negotiations with SMMUSD and growing increasingly frustrated with what union representatives describe as the district's unwillingness to improve working conditions.

At a Jan. 29 bargaining session, the union's negotiating team put forward a series of proposals aimed at increasing hours and improving conditions for paraeducators, cafeteria workers, instructional assistants, health office specialists, campus monitors and bus drivers.

Among the union's proposals: moving bus drivers to an 11-month work year, securing additional paid time for drivers to inspect and clean buses, and reducing unpaid lunch time so drivers are not effectively working without compensation during breaks. The union framed the proposals as essential to student safety and worker dignity.

"These proposals are about stability, safety, and respect for the work we do every day," the union said in a written update to members.

The two sides did reach tentative agreements on some procedural matters, including changes to how employee evaluations are timed and a restructuring of chief steward responsibilities to expand member representation through a steward council.

But the union said the district's counter-proposals were a step backward. According to SEIU Local 99, management sought to require documentation for bereavement leave even in cases the union described as clearly legitimate, add multiple supervisors to already stretched workloads, continue contracting out work performed by union members, preserve lengthy disciplinary timelines and limit the number of union representatives permitted at the bargaining table.

"Your bargaining team strongly opposed these proposals and made it clear they would make working conditions worse — not better," the union said.

The union also accused the district of moving to lay off workers without transparency, saying management announced plans to cut positions while declining to identify who would be affected or explain the reasons for the cuts.

"Despite having the money, the District has announced plans to lay off workers — while refusing to tell us who or why," the union said. "These layoffs could possibly affect YOU."

SEIU Local 99 is calling on members to show solidarity by wearing purple or union gear every Tuesday and to mobilize ahead of future bargaining sessions.

The layoff resolutions set March 15 as the deadline for the district to issue notices to affected employees, consistent with state law. The cuts are slated to take effect at the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year.

Employees subject to layoff under both classified and certificated resolutions are entitled to reemployment rights under the Education Code and, for classified workers, under applicable provisions of the district's agreement with SEIU Local 99 and the Personnel Commission's Merit Rules.

The School Board meets on Thursday, Feb. 19 at 5:30 p.m. in the District Office: 1717 4th St.

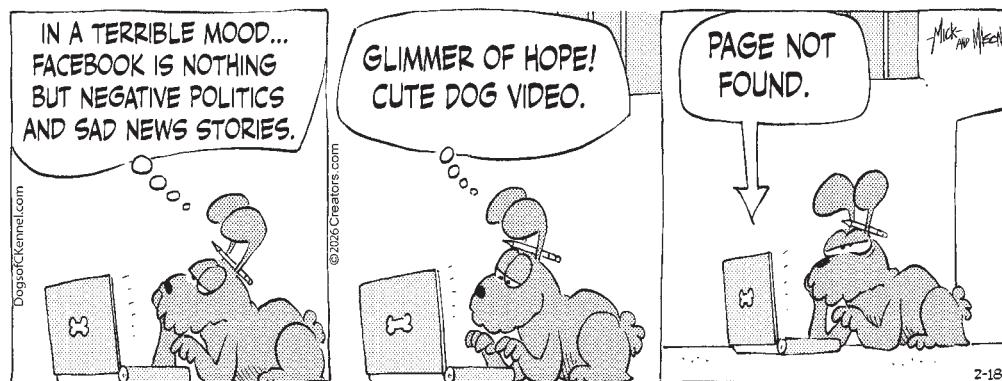
editor@smdp.com

Agnes



By TONY COCHRAN

Dogs of C-Kennel



By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART

Zack Hill



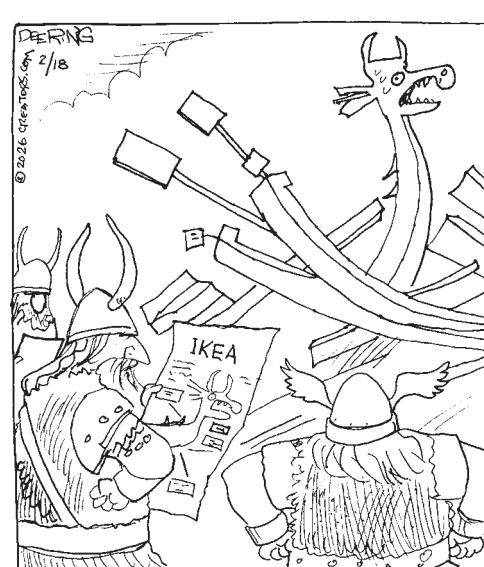
By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE

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

© australianwordgames.com.au 6855

Heroes on the beach



Adults	Dangers	Lanes	Rules
Airways	Dive	Legs	Sand
Alarm	Drown	Marine	Scan
Belt	Effort	Oars	Shark
Breaststroke	Famous	Paddler	Ski
Caps	Girls	Panic	Summer
Carnivals	Guys	Relax	Training
Children	Help	Rips	Tube
Club	Hidden	Risk	Undertow
Concern	Junior	Rubber	Wash
Crew	Kick	duckies	

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.

Needs to be fair for all



TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 18)

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Each group of people has its own little culture. Families, neighborhoods, workplaces, classrooms - all have rules worth learning, habits worth noticing, so you can decide to follow, bend or ignore them.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Today's theme: the intelligence in repetition. Routines conserve energy. Sure, there are a lot of different ways to play the day, but grooves come with momentum of their own and require much less of you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You can disagree without voicing it. And when you must voice it, you do so without provocation. That's diplomacy: choosing negotiation over conflict, making agreements that protect everyone involved and presenting a unified front.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You help others through their feelings. You wish your loved ones were spared every bad feeling. If you could take it on instead, you totally would. And you really want the good feelings to last. You're a true, strong ally, and they feel it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). People process experiences at different speeds. Some reflect quietly, some act quickly and some need time to sort through emotions before they respond. Today, someone doesn't respond in the way you would, but they are feeling something similar inside.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The job looks like it'll be a real grind, but that's OK. A grind has its benefits. The knife gets sharp, the stone is polished, and it's how you make the coffee, the bread and, of course, the money.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll be proud of yourself for trusting in a slow accumulation process. Affection grows steadily. Savings add up. Work builds. Collections expand. Each careful decision stacks on the last. In a few months, you'll have a tower of power.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your focus is your superpower. It's not about doing more than anyone else but about doing the exact thing that matters. You learn fast, study deeply and work without distraction. Your attention carries more weight than words ever could.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're being pulled in two directions at once, which makes it more challenging to decide who and what should get your time. Just remember, there's a third option: opt out and do what you want.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). An unrelentingly positive attitude can be as toxic as negativity because it negates certain inalienable realities, such as gravity, shadows and human imperfection. Aim for realism with a 20% pump of hope - a perfect recipe.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're no stranger to soft sales, attraction-based strategies, roundabout methods, paying your dues and various other routes to "manifesting." But today's most effective tactic for getting what you want is simpler: just ask.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Quiet is a sanctuary. Yes, the sacred wisdom that visits the wooded trail, the cathedral and the library is rather obvious. But chaos can be its own kind of enlightening hum. Your instinct will find truth between the vibrations.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD



Newsday Crossword

UNREAL PEOPLE by Steven Jopek
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Julius Caesar attire
5 Baby cow
9 Pigeon sounds
13 Memo "Pronto!"
14 Peek-__ (tot's game)
15 "Black" cattle breed
17 Kid's cutout person
19 French hat
20 Hurricane's center
21 __ Majesty, the Queen
22 German bread rolls
24 Baseball glove
25 Song to sing
26 Actor Hawke
29 Person guarding a cornfield
34 Rests atop
36 Oodles
37 Yoko __
38 Put up a fuss
39 Playful river mammal
41 Tolkien trilogy, for short
42 "Either you do it, __ will!"
43 Literary inspiration
44 Scents
46 Person seen in Madame Tussauds museums
49 The Sphinx's home
50 __ upswing (rising)
51 What a grape grows on
53 Lasagna cheese
56 __ out a living
57 Genetic identifier
60 All grown up

61 Person in a store

e.g. window

9 Kitchen storage

10 "Hold on a moment"

11 Storybook monster

12 Plaintiff

16 Frequent ave.

crossers

18 Nose-horned beast

23 High-latitude sky

display

24 Goalie's protection

26 Macaroni shape

27 Small jeweled crown

28 57-Across shape

30 Feed a party

31 Spacious

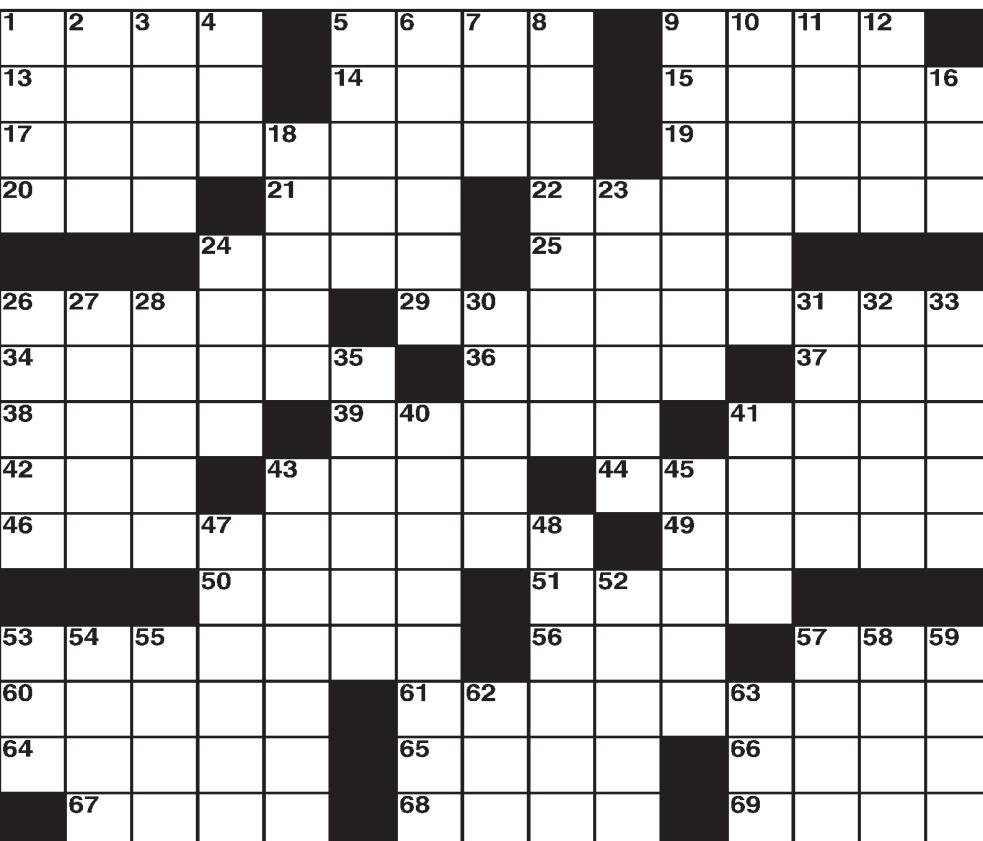
32 Served from a keg

33 Most unfavorable

channel

DOWN

1 Roll for gift wrapping
2 Anthem starter
3 Stare in surprise
4 Chimp, for instance
5 West Point student
6 Cancels a launch
7 Texter's ha-ha
8 Paul Bunyan story,

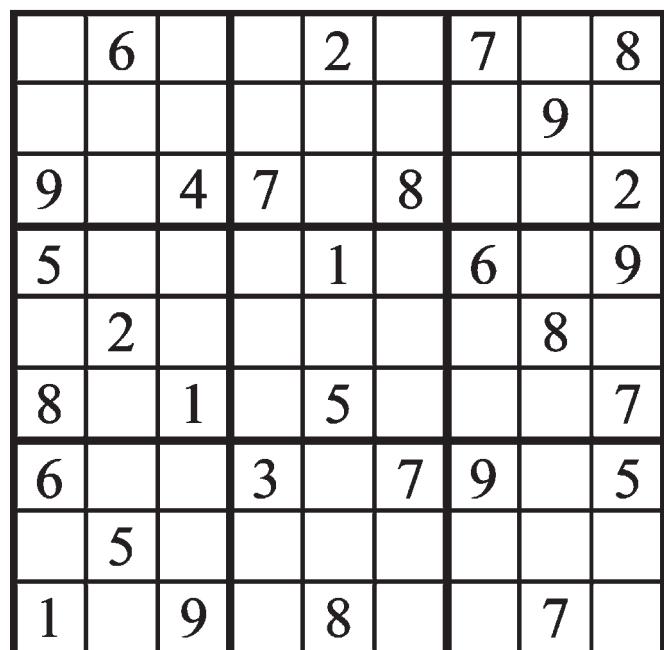
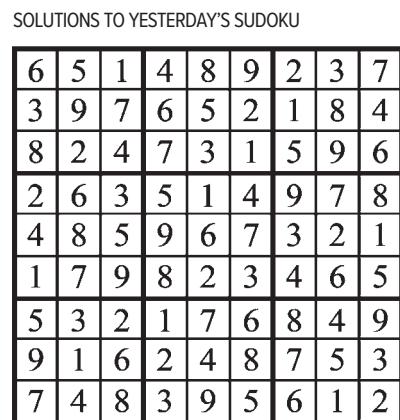


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02/18/26

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.



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

Santa Monica Daily Press

Classifieds

DBA

DBA

Petition to Admin Estate

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026012668. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: BLOOM CERAMICS, 1011 4TH STREET APT 211, SANTA MONICA, CA 90403, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): BLOOM CLUB LA LLC, 1011 4TH STREET APT 211, SANTA MONICA, CA 90403. This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 01/2026. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000)). /s/ ANSEL JEFFRIES, MEMBER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 1/20/2026. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 02/11/2026, 02/18/2026, 02/25/2026, 03/04/2026

Name Change

Help Wanted

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. NC-120. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Petition of Emily Rene Biehl for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Emily Rene Biehl filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Emily Rene Biehl to Emily Rene Biehl Erbach. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter 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: 02/20/2026, Time: 8:30 AM, Dept: K. The address of the court is same as noted above. A 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. Date: 01/09/2026. Lawrence H. Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 01/30/2026, 02/06/2026, 02/12/2026, 02/18/2026

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WEDNESDAY | FEBRUARY 18

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET - WEDNESDAY MARKET

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Downtown Santa Monica Arizona Avenue (Between 4th & Ocean) Santa Monica. One of the largest grower-only Certified Farmers Market in Southern California and a favorite for local chefs! Enjoy one of Santa Monica's farmers markets, widely considered to be among the best on the west coast and featuring field-fresh produce, hundreds of kinds of vegetables, brilliant cut flowers, breads, cheeses, and more. Downtown Farmers Market Locations: Wednesdays at Arizona Ave & 2nd St and Saturdays at Arizona & 3rd St. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/downtown-farmers-market-wednesday-market/12382446/2026-02-11T08>

FRIENDS OF VENICE LIBRARY: YOGA FOR EVERYONE!

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Venice Branch Library 501 S Venice Blvd. Venice. Through body awareness, movement, and breath, you will be guided on how to bring your body, mind, and spirit back into balance for overall well-being. All levels are welcome. Generously funded by Friends of Venice Library. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/friends-of-venice-library-yoga-for-everyone-/17751141/2026-02-11T12>

BIZ@SUNSET MIXER

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Lunetta 2420 Pico Blvd Santa Monica. Get ready for a fantastic evening at this month's Biz@Sunset Mixer at Lunetta! Join us for an unforgettable night of networking. \$25.00. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/biz-sunset-mixer/16613817/2026-02-18T17>

WINE WEDNESDAY AT THE WHALER

101 Broadway CA 90401 Contact Info (424) 330-0166 info@venicewhaler.com Does not apply on holidays Santa Monica. \$15 wine flights & half off bottles of wine all day every Wednesday! Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/wine-wednesday-at-the-whaler/16952883/2026-02-11T00>

THURSDAY | FEBRUARY 19

THE GENESIS INVITATIONAL: THURSDAY ADMISSION

7:00 a.m. The Riviera Country Club 1250 Capri Pacific Palisades. One of the PGA TOUR's most prestigious events, the Genesis Invitational returns to Los Angeles in 2026 at the iconic Riviera Country Club, where the world's top golfers compete on one of the sport's most famous courses. Hosted by Tiger Woods, the tournament offers fans an unforgettable four days of championship golf, premium hospitality and unforgettable Southern California scenery. Schedule: Feb. 19: Round 1 - Gates open at 7 a.m. Feb. 20: Round 2 - Gates open at 7 a.m. Feb. 21: Round 3 - Gates open at 7 a.m. Feb. 22: Round 4 - Gates open at 7 a.m. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/the-genesis-invitational-thursday-admission/17408701/2026-02-19T07>

CLUB LATINO PARA ADULTOS MAYORES

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Virginia Avenue Park 2200 Virginia Ave. Santa Monica. Venga, aprenda, y diviertase cada jueves de 11 AM a 1 PM en el salón 3 del parque Virginia. Cada semana será algo nuevo: Ejercicio, Hablando con amigos, Aprendizaje, Presentadores

Invitados, Salud y Bienestar. Hay comida para los adultos mayores que participan durante las dos horas. Para más información llame al (310) 458-8688. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/club-latino-para-adultos-mayores/13943928/2026-02-19T11>

RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Santa Monica City Hall 1685 Main St. Santa Monica. The Commission shall act in an advisory capacity to the City Council and Director of Community Services in all matters pertaining to public recreation including playgrounds, music and entertainment. The Commission will consider the budget of the Community and Cultural Services Department and make recommendations to the City Manager and the City Council. The Commission will also assist in the planning and promotion of a recreation program for residents and solicit the cooperation of school authorities and other public and private agencies. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/recreation-and-parks-commission/13349132/2026-02-19T18>

JBNZO

9:30 p.m. Harvelle's Santa Monica 1432 4th St, Santa Monica. Doors open at 8 PM. Show starts at 9:30PM. Online ticket sales end at 7 PM, tix available at the door after 8 PM. 2 drink minimum. Please note, we are 21 and over only! Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/jbnzo/17932598/2026-02-19T21>

FRIDAY | FEBRUARY 20

BRUNCH FRIDAYS WITH LIVE MUSIC IN OUR GARDEN PATIO!

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Tato Kitchen & Venue 2700 Colorado Ave Santa Monica. Our newly launched Brunch Fridays just got vibey-er! Every week enjoy great eats, summer libations, and a featured music artist on our beautiful garden patio! So come toast to summer with our uniquely crafted brunch menu including our Turmeric Spiced Cloud Egg dish, Smoked Gouda Scramble with Smashed Ube, Vietnamese French Toast, along with Mama An classics such as Famous Garlic Noodles, Shaken Beef, and Seafood Egg Fried Rice! And of course, it wouldn't be brunch without bottomless mimosas & summer punch bowls, so grab your brunch crew and enjoy the fair along the beautiful backdrop of Al fresco dining. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/brunch-fridays-with-live-music-in-our-garden-patio-/14639006/2026-02-20T11>

NEW EXHIBITION AT THE HISTORY MUSEUM CELEBRATES FOOD & FAMILY

11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Santa Monica History Museum 1350 Seventh Street Santa Monica. Explore the evolution of African American and intercultural food traditions in Southern California, tracing the impact of the Great Migration and global immigration on Santa Monica's culinary landscape. Through the lens of shared meals, recipes, and community gatherings, the exhibition examines how food fosters a sense of belonging, connection, and cultural continuity. \$0.00 to \$5.00 Free for Children, Students, Seniors, SNAP/EBT card holders. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/new-exhibition-at-the-history-museum-celebrates-food-family/17896821/2026-02-20T11>



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